

Lesson 3: Serving as an Instrument of Change

Primary Objectives:

1. Reiterate the significance of the root to fruit analogy for why people do what they do and what to focus on for lasting life change.
2. Relate the key functions of an ambassador to the role of serving as an instrument of change.
3. Develop a visual model for pursuing lasting, fruitful life change.
4. Examine 4 distinct components of effective "heart-intervention."

1. Reiterate the significance of the root to fruit analogy for 1) why people do what they do and 2) what to focus on for lasting life-change.

1.1. Paraphrase in your own words the answer given in the following two passages to the question, "Why do people do the things they do?"

Luke 6:43–45: "For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, ⁴⁴ for each tree is known by its own fruit...⁴⁵ The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

James 4:1–2: What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.

1.2. Connect the observed fruit described to potential controlling root desires.

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| • Mike honks and makes irritated gestures at the driver who pulled in front of him on the highway. | ♥ Desire to do something fun |
| • Katie yells in exasperation, "Am I the only one that ever picks anything up around here!" | ♥ Desire for attention / affirmation |
| • Jack plops down on the couch after work and ignores the screaming kids. | ♥ Desire to be unimpeded |
| • Shannon regularly stays up past midnight on Facebook to catch up on all that her FB friends are doing. | ♥ Desire to not miss out (FOMO) |
| | ♥ Desire to not waste time |
| | ♥ Desire to not be taken advantage of |
| | ♥ Desire to emotionally unplug |
| | ♥ Desire to be respected |

1.3. List some potential benefits and drawbacks the two following strategies for life change.

Fruit-focused strategy for life change:

Root-focused strategy for life change:

2. Relate the key functions of an ambassador to the role of serving as an instrument of change.

2.1. Evaluate the following passages to determine some key functions of one acting as an ambassador representing Christ:

2 Corinthians 5:20–6:1: Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. ¹ Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

2 Corinthians 6:3–7: We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴ but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵ beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶ by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷ by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left;

Philippians 2:5–7: Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

Romans 15:1–3, 7: We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. ³ For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me." ⁷ Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

2.2. Formulate questions one should ask in order to fulfil each of the key representative roles of an ambassador listed below:

1. An ambassador represents the message of the king.

What is a good question an ambassador charged to speak on behalf of a king should ask?

Answer: What does my King want to communicate to this person in this situation?

2. An ambassador represents the methods of the king.

What is a good question an ambassador charged to act on behalf of a king should ask?

Answer: How does my King want to approach this person or situation?

3. An ambassador represents the character of the king.

What is a good question an ambassador charged to be present on behalf of a king should ask?

Answer: What is the disposition of my King in this situation?

2.3. As you consider the possibility of serving as an ambassador for Jesus in each of the roles above, list some specific steps you might take do to determine the answers to the following questions:

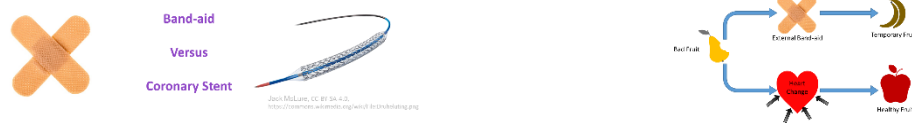
1. What does my King want to communicate to this person in this situation?
2. How does my King want to approach this person or situation?
3. What is the disposition of my King in this situation?

3. Develop a visual model for pursuing lasting, fruitful life change.

3.1. Create a diagram for life change by adding the following elements in the blank spaces below: Bad Fruit, Healthy Fruit, Band-aid, Heart, Temporary Fruit

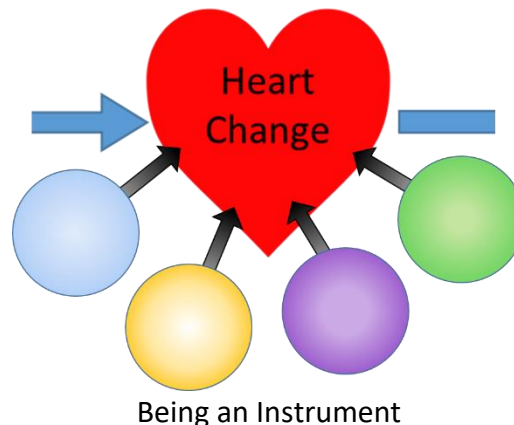


3.2. Write down some conditions that a band-aid is and isn't good for. Contrast that with what a coronary stent is used for. As an ambassador for Christ in the lives of others what does the diagram imply about the focus of your message, methods, and character disposition?



4. Examine 4 distinct components of effective “heart-intervention.”

4.1. Write the following labels in the circles below according to what you think the most logical order is: Do, Know, Love, Speak. Give your reasons for why you ordered them the way you did.



4.2. The diagram above will serve as the model we utilize for becoming effective instruments God uses to bring positive life change and healthy fruit in the lives of others. Summarize what is unique and important about each component:

Love: This points to the importance of relationship to the process of change. Covenantal model of change – God always brings change to his people in the context of a loving relationship. The context of loving relationship is essential to the lifelong process of change. We are called demonstrate the same as Christ’s representatives.

Know: This indicates that really getting to know beyond casual acquaintance and facts about a person is essential to being an instrument to help others change. It involves discovering and discerning what lies at the heart of a person’s life.

Speak: This involves bringing God’s truth to bear on a person’s life in their current situation. It seeks to address what we believe God wants a person to see, and helping them to see it, and what God wants to say, and saying it.

Do: Involves a commitment to help a person DO something with what God has been showing them. Lasting heart and life change must be applied to practical, specific reality of every day life.

Next Week: Building Relationships in which God’s Work Will Thrive