

How To Train Your Human

Rectifying Reluctant Righteousness

February 2, 2025

Today we're learning why we need to **do good deeds!** Cuz, like it or not, there's a *direct connection* between *who we are* and *what we do* – and we need to take a good look at our lives before we can answer this important question: **Are you a good person?**



Uncomfortable question? Well, okay, *I'll* go first. Let's see, I pick up *litter*. I give that *extra dollar* at the grocery store. I donate to *GoFundMe* people. I bought *socks* and a *sweater* for a homeless guy on campus. And earlier *this week*, I picked up *gum* from the men's room *urinal*.



So who thinks I'm a good person? Well you're *WRONG!* Cuz I didn't *want to do* any of those "*good deeds!*" In fact, I *fought* the urge to *look away*, *walk past*, or otherwise *ignore* almost every opportunity to *do something good* when *it got in the way* of what *I wanted* to do! And *full disclosure* – part of me wanted to spit my *own gum* where it didn't belong just cuz *someone else* started it!



So, as much as I'd *like to believe* that *doing good makes* me good, the truth is, **it's our heart, not our human that defines our character.** And that makes it *infinitely more important*, cuz *God* decides *our destiny*:



[And] The *LORD* does not look at the things *people* look at. *People look at the outward appearance*, but *the LORD looks at the heart.*" [Because that you is the *true you.*] – 1 Samuel 16:7 NIV

Remember a few weeks ago, when we went way back to the beginning to *clarify our composition* and saw that **the physical part of humanity is just a dirtbag built to contain for the spirit God breathed into us?** Well, *that's* why we gotta look *past* our *outer appearance* and see *ourselves* as the *emotions*, *opinions*, and *intentions* of our inner self. Otherwise, we're no better than the superficial *Pharisees* who got *chewed out* for foolishly *focusing* on dressing up *their dirtbag!*

[Cuz that's why Jesus dressed them *down*, saying:] On the *outside* you appear to people as righteous but on the *inside* you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. – Matthew 23:28 NIV

And it's *all* because they *wrongly* believed what we *see* is who we *are* – when in *reality*, the real you is *invisible*. *Want proof?* Just ask someone to *point* to themselves; and *wherever* they *aim*, ask if they mean *that part* of the body; **"You're a heart? A head? A brain?"** And they'll always say something like, **"No. I'm somewhere inside..."** Cuz as we've said before, **you're not a human who has a soul, you're a soul who has a human.** And though we're *responsible* for how our *human* lives *its* life, what *it* does, *doesn't* determine *our* righteousness, it comes down to the *heart* of each *soul*.

[So,] Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly. – John 7:24 NIV

And, now that we know *how* to judge, **who thinks I'm a bad person?** Well, *hold your horses!* What if I told you that I really truly wish that I *wanted* to do the right thing? And beyond *that*, when I *make* myself do good things, I really truly *enjoy* having *done* them. Well, *regardless* of what you think, *Jesus* says there's *still* hope for *me!* Cuz *here's* how He phrased things in His first big sermon:



Blessed are those who *hunger and thirst for righteousness*, for they *will* be filled. – Matthew 5:6 NIV



And that's good news for anyone having a hard time overcoming a wicked heart. Cuz in God's eyes, **we don't gotta *be* righteous to be blessed, we just gotta *want* to be righteous.** Even if we struggle *against* sinful desires, a heart that *longs* for righteousness *is* blessed because it *will* ultimately get there. And the very *fact* that we *desire* to have *better desires*, shows *God* is at work *in us!* Which is why I'm okay! Cuz, my human may have wanted to keep walking, but at least **"I fought the *urge* to ignore the opportunity to do good deeds."**



[And even Paul said:] In *my* inner being I delight in God's law; but I see *another law* at work in me, waging war *against* the law of my mind ... What a wretched *man* I am! Who will rescue me from this *body* that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my *mind* am a slave to God's law, but in my *sinful nature* a slave to the law of *sin*. – Romans 7:22-25 NIV



Even in the *middle* of our *struggle* to resist our flesh, our ***aim matters more than our success because God steps in where we fall short.***



[Cuz He offers assistance to everyone who asks! And] Therefore, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. – Romans 8:1-2 NIV

God knows we're at war in the *battle of wills* between our *flesh* and *spirit*, so **it's okay to be a work in progress!** We just gotta be "*in Jesus*" by inviting His *Spirit* to teach us to live *His way*.

[Cuz,] We have an *obligation* — but it is *not* to the sinful nature, to live according to it [that's **your human**]. For if you live according to the sinful nature, *you will die*; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the *body*, you will live, because those who are led by the *Spirit* of God are *sons* of God. – Romans 8:12-14 NIV

You get it? **Following God's Spirit is how we train our human** because **each good deed gets in the way of making human mistakes.** I *can't* bring myself to spit my gum somewhere *gross* if I *know* God's just gonna ask *me* to pick it up *later!* And *brilliantly*, He's found a way to use my *selfish human desires* to *make* me *learn* how to live a life led by the *Spirit's selfless desires*.

Because **it's easier to obey the orders we don't want if they're aimed at an outcome we do want.** So, the Spirit's *higher* desires motivate our *inner* self to *override* our *outer* human.



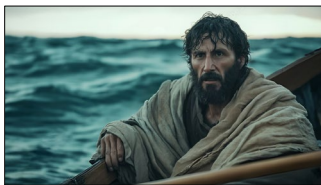
Kinda like *The Karate Kid*. Cuz like any *teenager*, Daniel had zero desire to do daily *chores* but when Mr. Miyagi promised to teach him the *karate* he *wanted*, suddenly ol' Danny boy was willing to wax all Miyagi's cars and *paint* all his *fences*. Until the day his *disgruntled human* lashes out and says, "***Where's all the karate?!***" At which point Mr. Miyagi starts throwing *punches* that Daniel instinctually *blocks* using the wax-on/wax-off and paint-the-fence *motions* he'd been *reluctantly* repeating all week! Cuz – *surprise, surprise* – the *chores* he *hated* were teaching him the *karate* he *wanted*!

Well, it works the *same* way with *us*! When we make God our Master and *obey* His instructions **even our most mundane moments are never meaningless!** You're never *just* picking up *gum* or handing out *socks* – you're *learning* the *karate* of *righteousness* that our *inner* self *wants* most. And just like Daniel, it's *okay* to get *grumpy* when you're sick of going through the *motions*. All *that* means is that you *haven't* connected the *pain* to the *training*. And until *then*, all you have to do is **want the right heart, obey your orders, and trust the process.** Cuz even *reluctant* obedience leads to the *change* it's aimed at. And at *some* point, we'll see the *purpose* and *change* our *heart*. So,

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. – Galatians 6:9 NIV

Which is what I've been telling myself for 4 *months*, since our family got a puppy. Cuz every day, I watch our pup Ding (short for *Shama-Lama Ding Dog*) *fight* against *her* flesh to do the *right* thing even though she's *dying* to eat everyone's *shoes* and get *on* that coveted *couch*! But just *recently*, you can start to *see* things *click* as her *higher* desire to *please* her *masters* has started *replacing* the *shallow* desires to please *herself*. Because **obedience isn't about agreeing, it's about trusting.** And with each disciplined *denial* of her doggie *dreams*, she's starting to *see* it's just part of the *process* to achieve a *better* dream: a life where *the master* is in charge.

Cuz *we're* the ones who can *provide* things to satisfy *deep* desires she never even *knew* she had! You should've seen her *face* the first time I gave her a *bacon bit* – it was like *all* her life had been a *lie*! And as *she* learns exactly *who* had the *goods*, she gets *better* and *better* at enduring the *difficulties* of *self-denial*. Cuz, **it takes a master we trust to obey an order we dislike.** And c'mon, if every domesticated *dog* can figure it out, *so can we*!



Yet **trusting the right master is something so hard for our human, that simply getting it straight was one of Jesus' defining differences!** Cuz while others made *money*, *influence*, or *image* their master, *Jesus* submitted *everything* in *His* life to His *Father* by obeying *His* Word. Which *showed* where God's will leads, whether we *understand* it or *not*.

But, **without God as our trusted Master, life feels like meaningless chores instead of valuable training.** Cuz without *trust*, it's *misery* when we *disagree*; which is what we see in *Jonah's* story.

Y'see, *Jonah* may have his own *book* of the *Bible*, but he was *far* from a *perfect* prophet! Cuz

[God said] "Go to the great city of Nineveh and *preach against it*, because its wickedness has come up before Me." But *Jonah ran away* from the LORD and ... sailed for Tarshish to *flee* from the LORD. – Jonah 1:2-3 NIV

Why?! Well, it usually takes *two* things: **his outer human *didn't agree with the orders* and his inner spirit *didn't trust God enough to make it obey!*** Which *is confirmed* at the end – cuz after the whole *storm-fish-spit deal*, *Jonah delivers God's warning*, *Ninevah repents*, and *God forgives*;



But to *Jonah this* seemed very wrong, and he became *angry*. ... "That [mercy] is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I *knew* that you are a *gracious* and *compassionate* God, *slow to anger* and *abounding in love...*" [but *me and my human wanted wrath! So,*] the LORD replied, "Is it right for you to be angry?" – Jonah 4:1-4 NIV



And *there's* the *convicting* question that *gauges* our *goodness*, **is it right for you to be angry?** This is the *question* we should ask *ourselves* whenever *we're* upset with *our* orders cuz it reveals the *inner trust* behind our *outer actions*. And **it's okay to be angry if your human finds it hard to do the right thing.** Cuz that means the *true* you wishes the *human* you would just *do* the good deeds *you* really want to do.



[Like Paul says,] I know that good itself does *not* dwell in me, that is, in my [outer human's] sinful nature. For [in my inner self] I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. – Romans 7:18 NIV

However, on the other hand, **it's wrong to be angry if your heart doesn't desire the right thing.** Cuz the *true* you is in *conflict* with God and your heart is easily enslaved by your foolish human!

For it is from *within*, out of a person's heart, that *evil* thoughts come ... and *defile* a person. [if not obstructed by the Spirit's better will.] – Mark 7:21-23 NIV

So, *are* you a good person? Well, **which part of you is against doing God's will?** The *inner* or *outer*? **If it's the inner, you gotta learn to trust the right master** – and all that takes is spending enough time with God to see that His *Spirit satisfies* all our *higher* desires. But if it's the *outer* you who has a hard time agreeing to do what you know is right, join the club! That's called *sanctification* and it happens when "**by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body.**" The same way Paul says:

I strike a blow to my *body* and make *it* my slave – 1 Corinthians 9:27 NIV

[Cuz like Paul, we *all* need to aim at that *higher* desire] I consider that our *present* sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. – Romans 8:18 NIV

Cuz once our human is under our soul's control, we can put our whole life under God's control. And that *might* mean making our *human* a little *angry*, but **we should trust our complaints will decrease as our compliance increases.** Because when we trust *God as Master*, even the orders we *reluctantly* obey will *start* revealing that *they're* leading us to a righteousness *more* satisfying than *bacon!*

Father God, thank You for loving me in spite of my sin; forgive me and cleanse me by the sacrifice of Your Son, my Savior; and free me and lead me by Your Spirit and Word, as I seek to trust and follow Jesus Christ, as the Lord of my life. Amen.