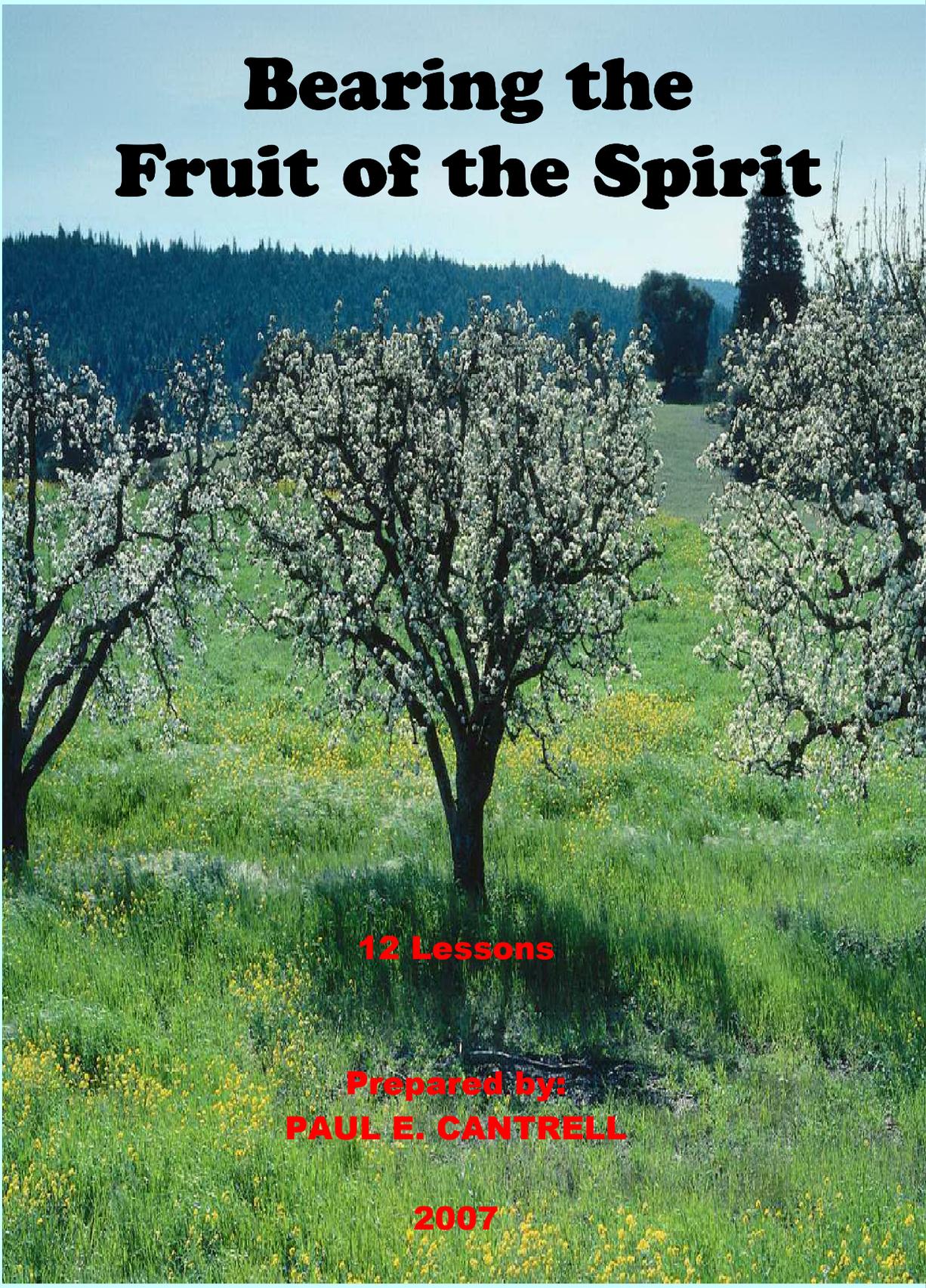


Bearing the Fruit of the Spirit

A photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there are several trees with white blossoms, likely cherry or apple trees, standing in a green field with yellow wildflowers. In the background, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees on a hillside under a clear blue sky.

12 Lessons

**Prepared by:
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2007

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Lesson One

"The Need to Bear Fruit"

God has blessed this world with trees that bear beautiful, delicious, and beneficial fruit for us to enjoy. For a person (for whatever reason) not to be able to eat such fruit, he is losing out of one of the great joys in this life. But for a tree to be planted, nurtured, and then not bear the fruit it is supposed to, it is also a great shame. Jesus told a parable indicating that such trees should be cut down and replaced with one that will bear fruit (Luke 13:6-9). He also contrasted trees that bring forth "good fruit" and those that bring forth "bad fruit." (Matt. 7:15-20). He used such to illustrate the differences between a teacher of truth and a teacher of error. Jesus seemed to be able to take the ordinary things around him and teach great spiritual lessons from such. It certainly made it easier for people to not only "get the message," but to "remember the message."

In this series of study, we will be looking at the emphasis placed upon the kind of fruit that is produced in the life of one who is allowing the Spirit of God to lead or guide his life. It is important to notice that in Galatians 5:19-26 that the Apostle draws an obvious contrast between those who follow the desires of the flesh or the teachings of the Spirit. Both bring forth fruit! In this first lesson we want to look at the emphasis of the need to bear "good" fruit!

EVERYONE IS "SOWING SEED"

Most of us realize the principle that states: "What you sow you will reap!" What does the Apostle state are the two things to which we can sow and what is reaped? (Gal. 6:7-8)

Who does the sowing and who does the reaping? _____

Who makes the decision as to whether one walks in the Spirit or walks in the lust of the flesh? (Gal. 5:16-17) _____

When one sows the seed of disobedience, what is the crop he will reap? (Rom. 6:16) _____

When one sows the seed of obedience, what is the crop he will reap? (Rom. 6:16) _____

What lesson do we learn from the Law of Sowing and Reaping? _____

Whether we accept the conclusion or not, it should be obvious that God holds us not only responsible for what we sow, but He will see to it that we reap according to what we have sown!

NECESSITIES OF FRUIT BEARING

We not only need to bear fruit, but it needs to be "good" fruit! But in order to bear good fruit, there are things that Jesus states are necessities!

1. We must be connected to the vine (Christ). (John 15:1-4) _____

We cannot bear fruit unto God unless we are connected to His Son. It becomes extremely important that we learn how one gets into Christ

- a) Acts 2:38 _____
- b) Gal. 3:26-27 _____

2. We must continue to abide in the vine (Christ). (John 15:4) _____

If we turn our back on Christ, we are no longer abiding in Christ!

- a) 2 John 9 _____
- b) 1 Jn. 1:7 _____
- c) Heb. 3:12-19 _____
- d) John 15:2, 6 _____

3. We must continue to abide in His Word. (John 15:7-8) _____

God has designed for His children to bear fruit!

- a) Eph. 2:10 _____

His Word is the source of knowledge and understanding that directs our paths so that we can bear fruit unto God. He also purges us so we can bear much fruit.

- b) Jn. 15:2, 8 _____

KINDS OF "GOOD" FRUIT

It is important for us to know that we can bear different "kinds" of good fruit as a Christian with which God is pleased.

1. There is the fruit in our own lives that the Scriptures talk about!

- a) 2 Cor. 7:1 _____
- b) Rom. 6:13 _____
- c) Rom. 6:19-22 _____

2. There is the fruit that we help to bring about as we work with God to save souls!

- a) 1 Cor. 3:5-6 _____
- b) John 15:5 _____

I am sure that all of us understand this and desire to bear both kinds of good fruit. Our lives need to be filled with the fruit of the Spirit; so that we can more effectively be used by God to help reach lost souls about us!

HOW DOES THE SPIRIT PRODUCE FRUIT IN US?

He does not do it miraculously, nor will He force this fruit into our lives; but He does it in a very natural way—sowing and reaping! When we open up our hearts to the seed (Word of God), and we believe and obey it, a crop of good fruit will be produced. If there is no sowing of the seed, there will be no fruit harvest! Paul talks about our being "led" by the Spirit in order to produce good fruit in our lives (Gal. 5:16, 22-26), but we make the decision for Him to lead us! The responsibility to have this fruit in our lives is placed upon us! Look at the following Scriptures:

- 2 Pet. 3:18 _____
- 2 Pet. 1:8-11 _____
- 1 Pet. 1:22-23 _____
- 1 Pet. 2:1-3 _____

If the fruit of the Spirit is not in our lives—it is not the Spirit's fault, but ours! We are not listening nor submitting to the Spirit's teaching.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this series of studies is not only to see the need and the how of having this fruit in our lives, but to see the great benefit that comes from such fruit. If you will remember that the first "qualified" servants in the early church were to be men of ***"good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom."*** (Acts 6:3). To be full of the Holy Spirit was not a reference to having miraculous gifts, but rather it denoted a person who was wholly given to be obedient to the teachings of the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Spirit is an actual command of God for the Christian (Eph. 5:18-19). A person "full of the Holy Spirit" will certainly have the "fruits of the Spirit!"

Lesson Two

"The Fruit of Love—Its Concept!"

First on the list of fruit that the Apostle gives is Love. In order to do justice to this part of our study, it will be necessary to spend two lessons on this fruit. It is important that we first define the concept of love from a Biblical standpoint. Then, we will need a second lesson to show the many actions of love itself.

The Greek language has a way of making those fine distinctions by a word rather than a descriptive phrase. We use the word "love" in the English language to refer to several different concepts. We often have to follow this word with something that shows its meaning in what we are talking about. To say that I love ice cream is not the same as saying I love my wife or my children. In the Greek language there are basically four words that are used to denote "love" in different ways or relationships. We want to look carefully at each one and draw conclusions of what this particular fruit is.

GREEK WORDS FOR LOVE

1. **"EROS"**--This word, as such, does not appear in the Scriptures, but was used much among the Greek speaking world. We have carried this Greek word over into our English language that gives a clue to its meaning—"Erotic!" The idea is that of sexual desire, passion, lust for another, etc. Many people in our society today use the word "love" with reference to their passion or lust for another person. Such does not do justice to the concept of love that the Spirit brings into our lives.

2. **"STORGE"**—This word is used in the Bible, but is combined with other terms to show its intended concept. It is found in the following passages:

- a) **"ASTORGOUS"**—"Without natural affection." (Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3). Families should have a natural "affection" for one another. When they do not, it is a "sin" for which the Gentile world was condemned.
- b) **PHILOSTORGOS**—"Kindly affectioned" (Rom. 12:10). This verse also adds: ***"Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love."*** Since we are brothers and sisters in Christ, we should have or show a natural affection to one another.

While this term has a good connotation to it, it is not a strong concept of love like the next two terms used in Scripture.

3. **"PHILEO"**—This word is used over 20 times in the New Testament. It carries with it the concept of a warm, tender, intimate relationship with another human being. The words: "friend" or "companion" identifies with this Greek word. It denotes the closeness between human beings. David and Jonathan's relationship illustrates this concept (2 Sam. 1:26). Jesus' relationship with Lazarus, Mary, and Martha illustrates this concept also (John 11:3). In Romans 12:10, two words are combined that gives an idea of the closeness of this relationship: "brotherly love" (Phila-delphia). This kind of affection or love can be between any other human being that we have

drawn close unto—but not indicating "eros" nor necessarily "storge." This love is prompted by the mind and the emotions and usually denotes an attachment with another person.

4. **"AGAPE"**—This word is used over 100 times in the New Testament. This word does not necessarily require an emotional, affectionate, or passionate response to another. This love is more from the mind, reason, or intelligence. It is a concern for the well-being of another person even if he is your enemy. Jesus said we were to "love" (agape) our enemies (Matt. 5:43-44). You want his welfare even if he doesn't want yours. Jesus is here showing that we can exercise our will to seek the good for another person no matter what he has done. Jesus illustrated this in the 23rd chapter of Matthew. Jesus obviously love the world of human beings who were in rebellion to God...to the extent that He gave His life to redeem us (John 3:16). But His strong rebukes were obviously given to these religious leaders to try to awaken them to their doomed condition and their need of immediate repentance. He ended the chapter with a compassionate picture of God's love for them illustrated by a "mother hen" (Matt. 23:37-39). When the Apostle Paul told the Corinthians that they were carnal, it was not because he hated them, but rather that he loved (agape) them! (2 Cor. 12:15).

THE HIGHEST CONCEPT OF LOVE—AGAPE!

Agape is Godly love! There is no higher concept of love than this. God's love for His creatures, even though undeserved, was freely offered to all (Jn. 3:16). Jesus showed the importance of this concept of love when he pointed out what the two greatest commands were: (1) To love God with our whole mind, soul, and heart; and (2) To love our neighbor as ourselves. (Matt. 22:37-39). Then, He added something that is very important to see—"***On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.***" (Matt. 22:40). Another time, Jesus stated it this way: "***If you love Me, keep My commandments.***" (John 14:15). Or, as the Apostle Paul expressed it: "***Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the Law.***" (Rom. 13:10). Love causes us to do what is right, even if it means our physical death (1 John 3:16).

Love (Agape) needs to regulate and guide "eros" so that our actions will be for the best to all concerned. Love (Agape) needs to be added to "storge" so that even though my family is not deserving of my affection, I will extend it anyway. Love (Agape) needs to be present even when there is "eros," "storge," and even "phileo" in my marriage—because the first three may wane over time, but "agape" can grow stronger and cement that relationship all the way to the end. "Agape" is the primary reason why I remain faithful as a Christian, even when things seem to be coming apart (1 Cor. 15:58).

Abraham sets an example of "agape" when he started on the journey to offer his son as a sacrifice unto God. This was not his idea, but God's! His love (agape) for God was so strong that he was determined to be obedient to God in the face of what all would say was "far out!" Yet, he and his song made the journey to Mount Moriah. When Isaac asked his father where the sacrificial lamb was, you know that the fatherly emotions must have been strong when he said: "***God will provide!***" When the altar was prepared, Isaac knew then that he was to be the sacrificial lamb. The example of his father must have given him strength to also be obedient to his father as Abraham was to the heavenly Father. As Abraham raised his hand to strike the

blow, the Angel of the Lord stayed his hand—for he had proven his love to the Father. Abraham had to control the emotional love of "storge" (family affections) and "phileo" (closeness to his son) in order to be obedient to God. What an example of "agape" for us to follow!

CONCLUSION

When Jesus said: ***"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me..."*** was trying to help us see that "agape" supersedes any other love of man (Matt. 10:37) and will be rewarded here and hereafter by God (Matt. 10:29). God wants us to love our family and to show brotherly love and friendship to those about us; but, these are not to override our love for Him. He must come first and foremost in our lives if we are to be saved eternally—even before our own desires (Matt. 16:24-25). Obedience from our hearts and minds to the will of God is our way of clearly saying to God...*"I love and respect and honor you."* The Apostle John stated: ***"but whoso keeps his word, in him verily has the love (agape) of God been perfected."*** (1 John 2:5). And the Apostle Paul concludes chapter thirteen of 1 Corinthians in his discussion on love by saying: ***"Now abides faith, hope, love, these three: and the greatest of these is love (agape)"*** (1 Cor. 13:13).

Lesson Three

"The Fruit of Love—How Expressed!"

Life is before us and we will live it just once; therefore, what is the supreme good to which we may devote our life? What is the noblest object to seek after and to attain unto? God says that **LOVE** is the supreme thing! (1 Cor. 13:13; 1 Pet. 4:8; Rom. 13:10). The results of Love bear testimony to its greatness! It changes society for the better. It makes better citizens, workers, fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters. It helps to keep down evil and brings happiness and contentment to mankind, etc. Love can be defined, but it is much better to see what Love does. That is the purpose of this second lesson on the Fruit of Love—to see how God describes what Love will DO! (1 Cor. 13:4-8).

WHAT LOVE WILL DO!

(1 Cor. 13:4-8)

1. Love is Patient. “Love suffers long.” “Love is slow to lose patience.” Love is passive, waiting, calm, and understanding. In society, we encounter many occasions of irritation, conflicts of disposition and bad habits. This is also true in the family, as well as in the church. Impatience and irritability are among the most common problems we have. Forbearance, tolerance, patience is greatly needed to overcome them. To follow Christ, we must be willing to suffer, bear up under, and endure things. Love enables us to suffer long under provocation and injury. Love helps us to bear burdens that others may be freed from such. Love helps us to endure injuries, and avenge not ourselves.

2. Love is Kind. Love looks for ways of being constructive, useful, profitable, and encouraging to others. Mark’s Gospel pictures Christ as busily engaged in doing good for people. His life was filled with kind deeds and a sympathetic heart. And.....one of the bases of judgment will be on whether we have shown this Love to those about us (Matt. 25:31-46). The Golden Rule states it clearly: **“Do unto others what you would have them do for you.”** (Matt. 7:12). It is doing kind deeds to others—because we would enjoy those same things ourselves. *“I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.”* It is important to do good deeds for the poor and needy where it is easy.

3. Love is Generous. *“Love envies not.” “Love never boils with jealousy.”* Love is being generous hearted to others. This is Love in competition with others. Any work that we try to do, there will be others doing the same thing and maybe even better. Love helps us to rejoice with them—not envy them. Envy is generally defined as:

- a) A feeling of ill-will to those who are in the same kind of work as we.
- b) Pain at the sight of superior excellence in another.
- c) Discontent at one’s own condition in comparison to others.
- d) It is jealousy of others’ honor or success.
- e) It is to harbor hard feelings toward those used more than we.
- f) It is to have bad feelings when given a lesser important job.

Envy can reveal that we have selfishness in our hearts, or malice, hatred, or strife. Envy can be a main cause of division in the home or church.

4. Love is Humble. *“Love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up.”* Love is not arrogant, conceited and does not put on airs, nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance. This is Love hiding itself! It does not “toot” its own horn. It does not do good works to be seen of men, but rather to be seen of God. It does not seek to win praise or applaud. It is not a “show off,” nor a braggart. Love is not pretentious or arrogant, nor does it have a mind full of itself.

5. Love is Courteous. *“Love does not behave itself unseemly.”* Love is not rude, unmannerly, nor is it indecent. The church at Corinth had all kinds of unseemly behavior. They were using their gifts without concern for other people. They were elevating men beyond what they should have. They were wrangling over possession of spiritual gifts. They were guilty of division, immorality, going to Law with brother, etc. Love causes our behavior to be very fitting for the occasion. This is love acting in society. It is courtesy in little things. It is to be considerate of others—their feelings, wishes, well-being, etc. (1 Pet. 3:8). *“Noble manners are the fruit of noble minds.”*

6. Love is Unselfish. *“Seeks not her own.”* Love does not insist on its own way. It does not insist on its rights. It is never self-seeking, nor does it pursue selfish aims. Selfishness is at the root of most of our problems in life. Most sin can be attributed to seeking for self, rather than for others. (1 Cor. 10:24, 33). Love helps us to become other-person centered, rather than self-centered. *“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”* (Acts 20:35). There is no real happiness in having and getting—it is only in giving!

7. Love has a good Temper. *“Not easily provoked.”* Love does not bear malice toward others, nor is it quick to take offense, or to be irritated, or become resentful or touchy. A seeming good disposition can be marred by easily ruffled, quick-tempered, touchy disposition. The elder brother in the story of the “Prodigal Son” illustrates this disposition. (Luke 15). Love is needed to control such actions towards others. *“Much of peevishness, anger, resentment springs from wounding the imaginary being whom we call by our name, pet and pamper with our caresses, and idolize in our vanity.”*

8. Love is Guileless. *“Love thinks no evil.”* Love does not keep score of wrongs, nor does it keep account of evil. Love is what the overly-suspicious person needs. Guilelessness is one secret of personal influence. The reason is that they believe in you. In an atmosphere of suspicion men shrivel up. In an atmosphere of faith and trust men expand and find encouragement. So, Love thinks the best of people. It does not impute bad motives to others. It sees the bright side of things. It puts the best construction on others’ actions. Love is forgiving and does not hold a grudge. Many people are unhappy and are unable to get along with others because they keep score.

9. Love is Sincere. *“Love rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.”* Love takes no pleasure in others’ wrong doings, It does not gloat over other men’s sins. It is never glad when

others go wrong. Rather, it rejoices in the victory of truth in a person's life. It joyfully sides with truth. It is always glad when truth prevails. Love does not take pleasure in people who sin, nor in those who fall into sin. It does not like to expose the weakness of others or make "capitol" out of other's faults. It does not rejoice in error, but accepts, keeps, and upholds truth. It also rejoices when truth triumphs in the lives of others.

10. Love bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things. Love can overlook the faults of others. It wards off the insults and injuries of others. It can bear up under many things. Love is always eager to believe the best about others. There is no end to its trust in others. Love makes our hope strong that can keep us steadfast, faithful, and stable. Love gives us endurance under all kinds of undesirable circumstances.

11. Love never fails. All else will come to an end, but not love. It is the ever-enduring quality of God Himself.

Concluding thoughts:

What a challenge we have and what a life to be lived. The greatest goal in life—the supreme goal or purpose—is to have and express the Love of God towards God and others. (1 John 4:8). We have many opportunities each day to learn. The world is not a playground, but a school room. Life is not a holiday, but a means to an education. One eternal lesson to be learned, and learned well is **HOW TO LOVE LIKE GOD! This is a "fruit of the Spirit of God!"**

Lesson Four

"The Fruit of Joy"

Joy is often associated with happiness or the blessedness of our situation. Other terms that are often used are: *joyful, rejoice, gladness, or mirth*. Joy or rejoicing is a fruit that is brought into the life of a devoted Christian by the Spirit of God. The word is used many times in both the Old and New Testaments. Some have counted as much as 133 times the Greek word "Chara" is used in the New Testament. While all kinds of people can have emotional feelings of joy over various things, the Bible seems to be using this word (both in Old and New Testaments) with reference to the person who has a relationship with God that was made possible by their obedient faith. This joy does not seem to be an emotional feeling for the moment and then it is gone, but something that is lasting. The following passages can illustrate this concept.

REASONS FOR JOY

1. Joy over a right relationship with God (Old Testament):

- Ps. 16:11 _____
- Ps. 51:12 _____
- Ps. 35:9 _____
- Isa. 61:10 _____

2. Joy over a right relationship with God (New Testament):

- Matt. 13:20 _____
- Matt. 13:44 _____
- 1 Pet. 1:8 _____
- Rom. 15:13 _____

3. Joy over the Hope of our Heavenly Reward:

- Luke 6:23 _____
- 1 Pet. 4:13 _____

4. There is also an emphasis upon joy that comes to a Christian from another Christian being faithful and obedient to God and His Word:

- Phil. 2:2 _____
- Phil. 4:1 _____
- 1 Thess. 2:19-20 _____
- 3 John 4 _____

5. Various things that bring Joy to the child of God:

- Prov. 21:15 _____

- Isa. 29:19 _____
- Jer. 15:16 _____
- Luke 2:10 _____
- Heb. 13:17 _____
- James 1:2 _____
- 1 John 1:4 _____

JOY AND CIRCUMSTANCES

It would seem that this "joy" in Gal. 5:22 does not depend upon external circumstances, but in spite of such. This joy comes because of a relationship with God that is deep and abiding.

- John 15:11** _____
- John 17:13** _____

This joy is there in the midst of "manifold temptations! (Jas. 1:2). It is there, with deepness, even in the midst of persecution of all kinds (Matt. 5:10-12). This joy comes from living righteously and living in peace with our fellow-man (Rom. 14:16-19). It should be obvious that the "joyful" life can be lived in the midst of any kind of circumstances. The devout child of God finds joy in truth, righteousness, godliness, and faithfulness to God (1 Cor. 13:6; Rom. 12:9). And because the above is true, no man with all of his vile ways can take away our joy (John 16:22).

Possibly, one of the best examples to show the above concept is that of our Lord. The Hebrew writer stated: *"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."* (12:2). What he had to endure was not joyful, but the outcome of what he endured brought salvation to many souls. Thus, the Christian who sows tears because of the terrible circumstances of life can also reap joy because of his relationship with God (Ps. 126:5; Matt. 5:4; Jer. 31:13). He can also make a joyful noise unto the Lord in spite of those circumstances (Ps. 66:1).

CONCLUSION

We believe that "joy" is a state of mind based upon our relationship to God and the promises of God. It is not some emotional feeling of exuberance for the moment and then gone; but rather an abiding outlook and quality of life that is so needed in the world in which we live. As long as we maintain our relationship with God, our joy should be full (Rev. 2:10).

Lesson Five

"The Fruit of Peace"

We need to keep in mind that we are studying about "fruit" that is produced in the life of a Christian when he or she opens their heart to be directed by God. The Spirit of God produces this fruit only if the Christian is willing to listen to His teachings and put them into practice in his or her life. This fruit is not forced upon anyone or given directly by the Spirit without the Christian doing his or her part. It is the same as Salvation—men play a part in "saving themselves" by an obedient faith in God.

"Peace" is said to be a fruit that comes into a Christian's life as they continue in an obedient faith. Peace is the opposite of discord, strife or dissension. Peace comes when there is unity and harmony. A soul in rebellion against God cannot have peace with God! Peace can only come when there is harmony between God and man. Three things are said about this peace in:

Phil. 4:7 _____

If we want this peace, we need to set our mind on proper things and do them:

Phil. 4:8-9 _____

As long as we remain in Christ we have the promise of this peace. The world around us is filled with deceptive teachings, temptations, errors, fears, etc., that are desiring entrance into our hearts and thoughts. With Christ in our hearts, these things cannot gain an entrance. If we fill our minds with the proper things to think upon and do, they cannot gain a foothold into our mind or heart.

KINDS OF PEACE

Not all peace is the peace that the Spirit of God produces in our lives. Jesus, Who is called the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6), made it very clear that He did not come to bring a false peace. He knew that His teachings would not bring peace to some homes, but a sword (Matt. 10:34). He was not offering peace through the compromise of truth. Jesus was not like those who cry "peace, peace," when there is no real peace (Jer. 6:14); but He does offer true peace with God and with our fellow-man.

Christians are encouraged to live peaceably with all men (Rom. 12:18); but, he adds: if it is possible and as much as such depends on you. But there are some people that make such hard (Ps. 120:7). In another sense, Jesus' coming brought peace to both Jew and Gentile (but only to those in Christ Jesus) (Eph. 2:13-14). This peace is in the sense of reconciliation.

The Gospel is called a message of peace (Eph. 6:15; Acts 10:36). The Psalmist stated that there is peace given to those who love God's Law (Ps. 119:165). Man is no longer at enmity with God, because he has made his peace with Him in his turning from his disobedience to be an obedient servant of God.

PEACE WITH OUR FELLOW-MAN

When a person has made his peace with God through his obedience to the Gospel, he is then expected to live at peace with all man.

- Heb. 12:14** _____
- 1 Thess. 5:13** _____
- Rom. 12:18** _____
- Eph. 4:3** _____

In a special way, the Christian is to become a peacemaker among men.

- Matt. 5:9** _____
- 1 Pet. 3:10-11** _____
- Rom. 14:19** _____

One of the obvious things that certainly will help us in our efforts to live peaceably with both God and man is **Godly Love!**

- Matt. 22:37-38** _____
- Matt. 22:39** _____
- Rom. 13:10** _____

This love is concerned for the welfare of another. He is even willing to put his own interest in a secondary place in order to keep peace. Both Abraham and Isaac had this kind of an attitude.

- Gen. 13:8** _____
- Gen. 26:22** _____

The Apostle admonished the church at Corinth to be willing to suffer wrong in order to keep peace among themselves.

- 1 Cor. 6:7** _____

PEACE AND RIGHTEOUS LIVING

The way that we maintain our peaceful relationship with God is to continue to walk in the light of God's truth (1 Jn. 1:7). The person who does right is righteous before God (1 Jn. 3:7). This does not mean that he is perfect or without sin in his life at times. But it does give an emphasis to the direction that a man is walking. If we are to maintain peace with God by living righteous; then, it would seem that by the same walk we can be at peace with all men—who will

allow such. The admonition given by the Apostle Paul would certainly help make for peace when he admonishes us to pray for men (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

CONCLUSION

Living in peace requires that we deal properly with **TIME ALSO**. Paul's inspired statement about forgetting the things that are **past** (Phil. 3:13) is a necessity. Sins, mistakes, wrongs in the past must be properly put behind. We do what we can to make right those mistakes and go on with our life. God remembers them against us no more (Heb. 8:12). Blessed is the man whose past sins have been covered (Rom. 4:7-8). Also, it is important that we not worry about the **future** (Matt. 6:31-32). The only time that we really have is in the **present!** We need to so live today that our future will be secure (Matt. 6:33-34). So, make each day count so that we can look back on it with pleasure. Herein is the peace that passes all understanding and will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus! (Phil. 4:6-7).

Lesson Six

"Fruit of Longsuffering"

The study of language can be fascinating! How does a word come into use that is able to portray an idea to our mind? We understand that words are often started from a sound, or something that in common around us, or even taken over from another language. The English language has many words that have been taken over from the Latin or Greek languages. The Greek word "Bapto" originated from a sound that was made when garments were dipped into a pot of dye. The Indians in this country gave names to people that identified with an animal, bird, or something in nature. If we can trace back to the origination of a term, we can usually gain a better insight with how it is being used. Longsuffering is a word that has this kind of a background.

LONGSUFFERING DEFINED

Sometimes we can reverse a word and it seems to give more emphasis to its usage, such as longsuffering or one who suffers long with another or with circumstances. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew for longsuffering is: EREKH HAPPAYIM; which means literally, "*long of nose* (or breathing)." Since anger is often indicated by a rapid and hard breathing through the nostrils, the origination would have been connected to the appearance of the person in anger—but he did not carry out his anger by outward actions of harm or hurt. Thus, the idea of being "*long of anger*," or more appropriately, "*slow to wrath*."

In the New Testament, the Greek for longsuffering is: MAKRO THUMIA; which means literally, "*long of mind or soul*." The term is translated "longsuffering" or "patient." There is another word in the New Testament that is a synonym to MAKRO THUMIA—HUPOMONE, which literally means, "*to remain under*." In most instances this word is translated "patience." The idea is that a person is not too quick to act, to punish, or to react to offenses and injuries of others; or, he endures long under hardships, misfortunes, or troubles without giving up or giving in to wrong reactions. This person is determined to see a thing through without giving up and admitting defeat. Observe the following passages with the above in mind:

HUPOMONE:

- Luke 21:19** _____
- Rom. 5:3** _____
- Rom. 15:4** _____
- Col. 1:11 (both Gk. words used)** _____
- Heb. 12:1** _____
- Jas. 1:3** _____
- Rev. 2:3** _____
- 1 Pet. 2:20** _____
- Rom. 12:12** _____

MAKROTHUMIA:

Matt. 18:26, 29 _____

Acts 26:3 _____

Eph. 4:2 _____

Col. 3:12 _____

1 Cor. 13:4 _____

GOD IS OUR EXAMPLE

God is longsuffering with His creatures! His longsuffering shows His goodness, kindness, and forbearance toward those who persist in wickedness—and patiently calls him to repentance rather than to perish (Luke 13:3; 2 Pet. 3:9). As God appeared before Moses on Mt. Sinai, His character is portrayed in these graphic terms: *"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."* (Exo. 34:6-7). God's longsuffering with sinful man is clearly demonstrated in Genesis chapter six. The condition of men was so bad that there was no longer any hope for or reasons for their continued existence on earth; but, God gave them one hundred and twenty years to change their ways or else. His patience and long suffering came to an end and the great flood came that destroyed mankind from off the face of the earth—with the exception of eight souls! The following passages help to express the longsuffering of God:

Luke 18:7 _____

Rom. 2:4 _____

Rom. 9:22 _____

OUR CHALLENGE

The need for patience or to be willing to endure or suffer long is because we are not alone in this world. We are surrounded with people, things, events, catastrophes, etc., that challenge us. If every thing was rosy all the time there would be no need for this fruit of the Spirit. Thus, because of these things, we are challenged to handle these undesirable things with the same spirit with which God handles us—patience or longsuffering. The following Scriptures indicate the areas in which such is called for:

1. With life in General:

Heb. 6:12 _____

Heb. 10:36 _____

Heb. 12:1 _____

2. With General Circumstances beyond our control:

Phil. 4:11 _____

3. With all kinds of afflictions, troubles, and misfortunes:

Jas. 5:10 _____

1 Pet. 2:20 _____

2 Cor. 6:4 _____

Rom. 12:12 _____

4. With one another in the body of Christ:

Eph. 4:2 _____

CONCLUSION

The idea behind the concept of patience and longsuffering is the challenge of having the right attitude in showing such. This attitude is expressed in Col. 1:11-12: ***"strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."*** It is not enough to endure, but endure whatever with joy and thanksgiving! We should be longsuffering towards all people and things or events, but it is critical that we are such to God's people; for by such we show that we are the children of God (John 13:35). God had the Apostle Paul to again say to the Colossians: ***"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."*** (3:12-14).

Lesson Seven

"Fruit of Kindness"

We are given to understand that **LOVE (Agape)** is the fulfilling of the Law towards one's neighbor (Rom. 13:10). It should be obvious from our previous study on the fruit of longsuffering that love needs to be in our mind or heart in order to be patient and slow to anger with others. We believe the same can be seen in this fruit of kindness—God's love needs to be there also! The fruit of kindness comes out of the love of God in our hearts (1 Cor. 13:4).

The Hebrew word for kindness is CHESED. The Greek word is CHRESTOS. It is generally defined as:

1. **Being useful, beneficial, or helpful to others;**
2. **Showing friendship;**
3. **Being merciful and compassionate.**
4. **This deals with the motive behind the act.**

Kindness being shown by one man to another is detected by:

1. **How he speaks.**

2 Kings 25:28 _____
Prov. 31:26 _____

2. **How he acts or by his deeds.**

Gen. 21:23 _____

3. **By his attitude.**

Ruth 1:8 _____

Kindness is:

1. **Something commanded.**

Eph. 4:32 _____

2. **Something desired to be shown by people.**

Prov. 19:22 _____

3. **Something to be returned.**

2 Sam. 2:6 _____

GOD, OUR EXAMPLE AGAIN

Jesus' admonition: *"Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."* (Matt. 5:48). It is obvious from Scripture and common sense that our attitudes and actions are to be copied after the perfect Being—**GOD!** The ultimate aspiration of every Christian should be to be like God in all things and in all ways. God has shown His kindness in many ways to man.

1. In the creation:

Matt. 5:45 _____

Gen. 8:21-22 _____

2. To Israel:

Neh. 9:17 _____

Isa. 54:8 _____

3. To Sinful men:

Titus 3:4-5 _____

Rom. 2:4 _____

Eph. 2:7 _____

THE GREAT VALUE OF KINDNESS

Just as the kindness of God leads or motivates men to repent (Rom. 2:4), in the same way the kindness of Christians toward others can achieve good results:

Rom. 12:20-21 _____

Showing kindness to our enemies rather than evil helps to overcome the problem that exists between them. To say the least, we do not propagate evil by doing evil, but we overcome evil by doing kind deeds. Kind deeds and attitudes win more victories than returning evil for evil.

Teaching and preaching of the Gospel needs to be done with kindness. Paul expressed it this way: *"speaking the truth in love."* (Eph. 4:15; 2 Cor. 6:4-7; 2 Tim. 2:24-26). However, the Christian is also to contend for the faith (Jude 3), be set for the defense of the Gospel (Phil. 1:16), and stand fast and strive for the faith of the Gospel (Phil. 1:27). If we look to Jesus for our example, we notice that he plainly rebuked the errors of the Scribes and Pharisees, and called them by name (Matt. 23:13-15, 23, 25-27, 29, etc.). Instead of this being evil, it was the greatest of kindness because He was trying to save their soul. There is no greater kindness to be extended to our fellowman than teaching them God's truth plainly in contrast to the errors of men. To compromise our teaching is to cause people to continue in error and be lost—which is not kind at

all. But, our attitude and approach must show to those who hear that we are sincerely concerned for their condition and want them to be saved eternally. Kindness does not mean to compromise with error. God hates every false way, and so should we (Ps. 119:104, 128; Heb. 1:9; Rev. 2:15). The Christian needs to realize the harm that error does and be willing to challenge it and oppose it with the right spirit.

CONCLUSION

As Christians, we need to be known as kind people. Let us use this powerful tool to accomplish good in this world. Brother N. B. Hardeman expressed the thought very well:

"There is no man against whom I would do anything destructive to his fair name or to retard his influence. I pray God that I may not be filled with envy and with jealousy that will make me see things other than the truth demands. With the Spirit of Christ paramount, I stand against error, from whatsoever source it may spring....I contend for the truth, as I see it, against the claims of all persons who oppose it, but for any man, personally, I have but the kindest of feelings."

Lesson Eight

"Fruit of Goodness"

The terms, "good," goodly," and "goodness" are found throughout the Bible. In Genesis chapter one, the term "good" is found in verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, and 31 where God said that what He had created was "very good!" In the general use of these terms in the Old Testament, they are indicating the following:

1. **That which possesses desirable qualities, beneficial qualities, or agreeable qualities.** (Gen. 2:9; Num. 10:29).
2. **Serviceable, adequate, sufficient.** (Gen. 1:4; 2:8).
3. **Something full or complete.** (Gen. 15:15; 30:20; 1 Sam. 25:3).
4. **Not blemished, fair, honorable.** (Gen. 18:7; 27:9; 1 Sam. 2:24; 2 Sam. 11:2).
5. **That which is pleasure giving.** (1 Kgs. 8:66; Esther 5:9).
6. **That which is kind and Benevolent.** (1 Sam. 25:15; 1 Chron. 16:34; Ps. 73:1).
7. **Moral excellence or piety.** (Gen. 3:22; Deut. 6:18; Ps. 37:27).

The New Testament uses these terms in much the same way. To illustrate:

1. **That which is quality (physical or moral).** (Matt. 5:45; 7:11; Mk. 10:17; Jn. 5:29).
2. **Show a contrast between a good man and a righteous man.** (Rom. 5:7; 7:16; Heb. 5:14).
3. **There is a strong emphasis on God's goodness.** (Rom. 2:4; Lk. 18:19).

THE STANDARD OF GOODNESS

Jesus' statement about only God is "good!" must be understood in its ultimate sense. There is none good, but God! (Lk. 18:19). There is none righteous; no, not one! (Rom. 3:10). These have to be understood in the ultimate sense, because these same Scriptures call men "good" and "righteous." (3 John 11; 1 John 3:7). All men fall short of being like God, but men can be good and do good; and, men can be righteous and do righteousness. And it is obvious from the study that we are in the midst of that the Spirit of God helps us to bear the fruit of goodness! (Gal. 5:22).

How does man determine what is good or goodness? I am convinced that the way we are made and with our ability to evaluate and reason, we generally know what is good. But we can become so hardened by sin and unbelief that our concept of goodness, as well as, right and wrong can be greatly hampered. The Apostle Paul, by inspiration, gave a long list of sins that were committed by the Gentile world (Rom. 1:18-32). He stated clearly that the wrath of God will be poured out on such people who commit these sins. In verse 32, he stated that these people knew such deeds were evil, wrong, sinful, but they did them anyway. Then, in Rom. 2:14, He pointed out that even though the Gentiles did not have the Law (of Moses understood), they showed the work of the law written in their hearts!

But, it is obvious that the Bible is the ultimate standard to determine what is good.....and the God who is portrayed in its pages (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Lk. 18:19). A good man is thus portrayed as one whose life is committed to God and directed by His authority in all areas of his life. This goodness comes from a God-centered and God-controlled life (John 14:15). If we love God, we will not only show "kindness" but "goodness" as well. Look how the Apostle used this term in his writings:

Rom. 15:14 _____

Eph. 5:9 _____

2 Thess. 1:11 _____

THE GOOD!

When we talk about doing good or that someone is a good person, we show that we have evaluated their deeds or actions and believe that such generally are acceptable. But men have a tendency to "lower" the bar of goodness so that more people can be included. Instead of lowering the bar, the Bible raises the bar in order to challenge men to the greatest good. We want to take two approaches to discuss the idea of that which is good or goodness.

1. What does the Bible say about that which is good?

Rom. 12:2 _____

1 Pet. 3:13 _____

Rom. 12:9 _____

Rom. 13:3 _____

1 Thess. 5:15 _____

Rom. 12:21 _____

2. What are some factors that show that a man is a good man?

Matt. 25:21 _____

Rom. 12:1-2 _____

Acts 9:36 _____

John 5:28-29 _____

CONCLUSION

The Christian is being called upon to demonstrate to the world God's goodness through his life of goodness! Thus, his life will bring glory to God because of his good works (Matt. 5:16). We are admonished not to allow ourselves to be overcome by evil, but that we overcome evil by doing good (Rom. 12:21). When we purify our hearts, then our speech will be pure (Col. 4:6); we will refrain our tongue from evil speech (Eph. 4:29); and we can bring good things forth (Matt. 12:35). Not only do we govern our tongue, but our personal habits, our dress, our recreation, and our relationship with both men and women. Let's be challenged to be men and woman of goodness!

Lesson Nine

"Fruit of Faithfulness"

The wise man threw out a very pertinent question: *"Who can find a faithful man?"* The word for man is used in its generic sense which includes both men and women.

- Why would he ask such a question?
- Are such people scarce?
- Is it too hard for people to be faithful?

As we look closer at this concept, we need to define the term. How would you define it? _____

The Scripture speaks of certain Ones being "faithful!"

Ps. 119:86 _____

Hebrews 3:5 _____

Hebrews 2:17 _____

"Faithfulness" is said to be a _____ of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22).

Derivation of the word comes from the concept of faith, belief, trust. To be faith-ful is to be "full of faith!"

What do the following Scriptures say about "faithfulness?"

Col. 2:5 _____

Col. 1:23 _____

1 Tim. 3:11 _____

What is God calling on his people to be?

1 Cor. 4:2 _____

Rev. 2:10 _____

Heb. 3:14 _____

Many of the early Christians faced strong trials and temptations that tried their faith in God. Because we live in a time of relative peace and prosperity, our faith may not be put to the test as strongly as some of them faced.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

What would be our decision if we had to endure the kind of hardship that they faced? _____

Would we deny our commitment to Jesus? _____

If we are tempted to complain about services lasting a few minutes longer, what would we do if we faced real hardship as a Christian? _____

If we complain because the building gets too hot or too cold, what would we do if we faced terrible persecution for Christ? _____

Have we grown too soft? _____

Are we too caught up in this materialistic age? _____

If we are addicted to our material things, what would we do if suddenly we were called upon to surrender them all up in order to be faithful Christ? _____

Which do we love most? (1 John 2:15-17) _____

FAITHFULNESS IS A VIRTUE

- 1. Because there are so few.
Prov. 20:6 _____
- 2. Because God praises men by calling them faithful!
Col. 4:7 _____
2 Tim. 2:2 _____
- 3. Because blessings are promised upon the faithful!
Rev. 2:10 _____
Prov. 28:20 _____
Ps. 31:23 _____
Ps. 101:6 _____
Matt. 25:21 _____
- 4. Because such are like God!
Lam. 3:23 _____
Ps. 119:138 _____

CONTRAST

The Faithful (Matt. 25:21) _____

He was given a job to do and he did it well.
He was dependable.
He did what was expected of him.

The Unfaithful (Luke 16:1-2, 10-12) _____

He was a wasteful steward and did not do his job well.
If not dependable in few things, he won't be over many.
Faithful men and woman can give a good accounting.

Dan. 6:4 _____

He was true to his responsibilities—no fault found.
He was honest to the core.

It seems to be obvious that God judges more by man's character than by the number of talents, abilities, opportunities that he has. (Matt. 25).

THE VALUE OF FAITHFULNESS

A young lady who was a Christian married a non-Christian. He was attending services with her before marriage and thought he was interested and learning. After they got married, he stopped attending and even tried to get her to quit. But, she kept attending "faithfully!" After the first child came, she missed a couple of Sundays. But on the third Sunday she got in the car to go to services, but the car would not start. He had taken the coil out of it so that it would not start. But...she was determined to go and starting walking. Her husband then began to feel ashamed of himself. He went and took her to the services. That night he went with her to services. And shortly after that he became a Christian.

What would have happened if the wife had given in and stayed Home? _____

Was she rewarded for her "faithfulness?" _____

God has had recorded in His Book of Life the lives of many who have been faithful in their service to Him. As far as we know, all of the Apostles (except for the John) faced persecution and died a violent death because of their devotion and service to Jesus, the Son of God. He had recorded in Heb. 11 a long list of men and women that were examples of faithfulness. The chapter ends with these wonderful words:

"Of whom the world was not worthy!" (Heb. 11:38)

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

We trust and pray that God may continue to grant us the opportunity to serve Him in quietness and peace. But, if the time should come when our faith will be challenged to the fullest, may we be prepared and faithful to the end.

- o What about your life—could it be looked upon as a faithful Christian?
- o Can people see in your life that trustworthiness, dependability, and steadfast obedience to Christ's Will?
- o Or, do they see **wavering, uncertainty, on & off, Hot & Cold, and Instability?**

Faithfulness is a virtue! It is there in a person's life because he wants it there. And it is there because he has seen the value of faithfulness in his own life and in the lives of others as well.

Lesson Ten

"Fruit of Meekness"

Sometimes a word may seem to overlap with other similar words or ideas. It seems to be true of the word "meekness!" For this reason, it is helpful to see how different versions of the Bible translate this word. I make use of a "27 Translations compared" that are only of the New Testament. The Old King James Version uses the word "meekness" but other words are used by different translators. The following can illustrate:

- Gal. 5:23—"Tolerance" (Phillips)
- Jas. 1:21—"Humble spirit" (TCNT)
- Jas. 1:21—"Humble modesty" (Moffat)
- Jas. 3:13—"Wise gentleness" (Weymouth)
- Jas. 3:13—"Humility" (Goodspeed)
- Jas. 3:13—"Humility" (Williams)
- 1 Pet. 3:15—"Modesty" (NEB)
- 1 Pet. 3:15—"Gentle" (Taylor)
- 1 Pet. 3:15—"Gently" (Weymouth)
- 1 Pet. 3:15—"Courteously" (Knox)
- 1 Pet. 3:15—"Gently" (Berkeley)

From the above, you can see that translators are struggling to find a proper synonym for meekness. It seems to closely resemble gentleness, humility, and moderation. One writer defines the word "meekness" as: *"Humility born of trustful submission to God and results in gentle, forgiving unselfishness towards others."* Let's study a little further to see if we can get a better hold on this word.

MEEKNESS IN BOTH OLD & NEW TESTAMENTS

One writer suggests that meekness in the Old Testament is generally associated with oppression or the trial of one's faith. If anyone would be mistreated, it would be the "meek." Also the "poor" and the "meek" seem to be used interchangeable in some instances in the Old Testament. Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1 (which uses the word "meek" in the KJV) but the New Testament words of Jesus are: *"and the poor have the gospel preached to them."* This could possibly indicate that the "poor" are the ones that would more likely possess the spirit of meekness. The meek also had the special attention of God and blessings were pronounced upon them:

- Psm. 22:26 _____
- Psm. 25:9 _____
- Psm. 37:11 _____
- Psm. 147:6 _____
- Psm. 149:4 _____

In the New Testament, the Greek word for "meekness" is translated by several other words in the above translations that were shown above. This word is often quoted in passages from the Old Testament which helps to some extent to define the word. Notice the following usages in the New Testament:

- Eph. 4:2** _____
- Col. 3:12** _____
- 1 Tim. 6:11** _____
- 2 Tim. 2:25** _____
- Titus 3:2** _____
- Jas. 1:21** _____
- Jas. 3:13** _____
- 1 Pet. 3:15** _____

The following passages are identifying those who are meek, or those who should show a spirit of being meek:

- Matt. 11:29** _____
- Gal. 6:1** _____
- 1 Peter 3:4** _____

EXAMPLES OF MEEKNESS

Two examples of meekness stands out in the Scriptures that can give us some insight as to the meaning of this word—Moses and Christ!

It is said of Moses:

Numbers 12:3 _____

Moses was a great man, especially extolled by God, Himself, in both the Old and New Testaments. Some of the characteristics of Moses may help to show why he was called a very meek man:

1. He was unassuming—he was not arrogant.
2. His ego did not demand that others constantly flatter him.
3. With God's help, he was able to face a Pharaoh and make demands of this powerful man.
4. He did not seem to possess any selfish ambitions.
5. He was a helper, a servant, a leader—but one of great power and authority.
6. He did not use his position to persecute his people, but rather to pray and plead for them.
7. He was gentle, kind, and tolerant and faithful to God.

The following passages talk about the meekness of Christ:

- Matt. 11:29** _____
- Matt. 21:5** _____
- 2 Cor. 10:1** _____

When we look at the life of Christ, as betrayed in the Gospels, we can also see what this meekness was not!

1. It was not characterized by a lack of conviction! Jesus was fully convinced of who He was and why He came and He did not compromise one inch from either. Some people may appear kind, gentle, and tolerant of others, but do not have a conviction that they hold to—they are what we call "wishy-washy." Jesus was certain not this—see (Matt. 23).

2. It was not characterized by cowardice! Jesus was certainly not a coward in any sense of the word. Jesus was meek, but He was also firm and militant at the same time. Christians are not only commanded to be meek, but also to defend the truth (1 Pet. 3:15); so, we can defend the truth meekly. We can bravely and forcefully defend what is right and true without stooping to bitter and ugliness on our part.

3. It was not characterized by an unwillingness to expose error! Jesus certainly exposed the errors of the religious leaders time and again (Matt. 23; 15:7-9, etc.). The meek do not sit back and refuse to fight for truth and expose falsehood and let such run on unassailed or to allow wickedness to run rampant without a word being said against such. Both Jesus and Moses were willing to uphold the truth and expose the false, commend the right and oppose the wrong. And they did so in meekness!

CONCLUSION

One of the best definitions of meekness that I have run across is: "*Strength under control!*" A person may be strong, but he controls that strength to do only good, not evil! A meek person would seem to be one of forbearance and kindness, one that is devoid of harsh intolerance and bitterness. Christians are encouraged to seek to be meek!

Lesson Eleven

"Fruit of Self-Control"

To be a Christian in the true sense of the word is to be challenged to the highest—*"Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect!"* (Matt. 5:48). As we study each of these fruits of the Spirit, it should be strongly dawning on each of us—*"what a challenge we have as children of God!"* "Self-control" is at the rock bed of all of these fruits that we are looking at! Without such, James says, that are religion is vain or useless (1:26). But, in reality, even to become a Christians requires a certain amount of self-control. To illustrate:

A sinner is challenged to desire truth.

2 Thess. 2:10-12 _____

2 Tim. 2:15 _____

John 8:32 _____

1 Pet. 1:22 _____

Prov. 23:23 _____

How many people do you know who desire truth like the above Scriptures indicate? How many really want to bring themselves into the control of God's truth? How many are really willing to do what the Scripture below requires?

Rom. 6:12-13 _____

God is calling upon His people to bring our bodies and spirits into the control of the Spirit of God. We are not to allow sin to reign in our bodies.

Rom. 8:13 _____

We are called upon to be in such control of our lives that we would willingly give ourselves up to serve only God.

Matt. 16:24 _____

THE STRUGGLE WITHIN

In Romans 8:1-14, is a long discourse on the struggle that Christians have between following after the flesh or after the Spirit. The same struggle is pictured in Gal. 5:16-26, where we are called upon to make a choice as to which we will follow. And both simply point out that to follow after the flesh brings death, but to follow after the Spirit brings life.

The appeal of the flesh is to satisfy the natural desires of the flesh that have been placed there by God. However, these desires must be satisfied in good, right, or righteous ways; not selfishly, greedily, or with lack of concern for others. The Apostle John stated that the appeal of sin is made to satisfy the "lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life." (1 John 2:16). There is no question that sin can be desirable—that is the reason why we need to be in

control (Heb. 11:25). And, all who would live godly lives, must be in control—make the right decision about which we will follow—the flesh or the Spirit.

HELP WITH OUR STRUGGLE

Unless we avail ourselves of the help that God offers, we will yield to the sinful desires of the flesh and suffer the consequences of such. God offers us insight as to how to bring ourselves into proper control.

1. Recognize that the battle is before us. Jesus was able to see what was ahead for Himself in the near future concerning His death (Matt. 16:21-28). Peter did not want to believe what Jesus was saying. Jesus made it clear that the temptation of the Devil was to take the easy way out, rather than to travel the hard road. Jesus earnestly prayed for the cup to pass, but ending with the statement—*"not my will be done, but your will be done."*(Matt. 26:39). Jesus knew that the temptation was from Satan, and that He had to reject his way out and stay with God's will.

2. Recognize the need of Patience! The admonition is there (Rom. 12:12)—we must be patient as we face the temptations of life. Without patience, we will give in to the temptation. The reason why patience is needed is because we don't like a struggle—especially when I can't see a good reason for having to suffer or struggle. James tells us that the testing of our faith produces patience (Jas. 1:3). But then he also adds that patience will help us to be complete in our character (Jas. 1:4). No progress, in the building of our character, can take place without trials, temptations, or struggles. The easy way makes us fat and lazy. The hard way challenges us to get up and fight the good fight of faith.

3. Recognize the need of Persistence! When we fail, we do not quit, but get up and try again. We keep on trying until we have won the battle. We learn from our failures as well as from our victories (Heb. 5:12-14). We learn what not to do as well as what to do. But in particular we are learning how to discipline ourselves as the Apostle Paul said that he had to do (1 Cor. 9:26-27), and thereby have hope of obtaining that imperishable crown of life. We learn gradually how to live a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ (Phil. 1:27) by learning to approve those things which are excellent (Phil. 1:9-10).

CONCLUSION

The wise man had a unique way of showing the need for self-control by saying that the person who controls his spirit is greater than the person who takes a city (Prov. 16:32). A person's character will not be mature (complete) until he learns how to control his desires, his tongue, his temper, his emotions, and his actions. What a great fruit to have in one's life.

Lesson Twelve

"Summary Thoughts on Fruit Bearing"

In this final lesson we want to make sure that all of us understand clearly our responsibilities in fruit bearing and to deal with the expression: *"Against such there is no law."* In Galatians 5:19-26, the Apostle is contrasting two ways of walking: (1) After the desires of the flesh; or (2) After the Teachings of the Holy Spirit. There are other contrasts that are drawn that are basically dealing with the same thing: (1) Darkness or Light (1 John 1:6-7); (2) Carnally-minded or Spiritually-minded (Romans 8:6); and (3) Being a Slave of Sin or a Slave of Righteousness (Romans 6:17-18). The challenge of the Christian is really two-fold:

- 1) To put to death the Lust of the flesh (to put off the old man with his deeds (Col. 3:9);**
- 2) To put on the new man that walks in righteousness (Eph. 4:20-24).**

We have taken the time to print out listings of Sins and listings of the fruit to be in the life of the Christian. You will find these at the end of this lesson. Hopefully, they will be helpful in getting an overview of both in this way.

WHO BEARS FRUIT?

Sins are called the "works of the flesh" in Galatians 5:16-21. The question we need to be concerned about is: *"Who produces these works (sins)? Is it the flesh that produces these works or is it the person who gives in to the fleshly desires?"* We believe the answer is obvious or we would otherwise have no control over doing these things! The person gives in to the desires and becomes guilty before God. Again: *"Who produces the fruit of the Spirit? Is it the Spirit of God or is it the person who gives in to the teachings of the Spirit?"* Without the fleshly desires we would not do these works of the flesh. And also, without the Spirit we would not produce the fruit of the Spirit. The Apostle states in Romans 7:4 that the Christian bears fruit to God! But before they became Christians, they produced fruit that led to death (Romans 7:5). The Apostle John says that God is glorified when we bear much fruit (John 15:8). We can only bear fruit unto God by abiding in Jesus (John 15:5). James says that *"the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."* (Jas. 3:17-18). The Christian is challenged by God to put off the old man of sin and put on the new man that has the fruit of the Spirit in his life. This fruit will not be there unless we do what the Spirit tells us. Peter's listing of the things that need to be put into our lives are found in 2 Peter 1:8-11. He adds: *"be even more diligent to make your call and election sure!"* How? *"if you do these things you will never stumble."* So, the Spirit produces good fruit in our lives, but only if we will listen to Him and do His bidding!

"AGAINST SUCH THERE IS NO LAW"

The New Testament has listing of sins that the Christian is to put away from his life! This may come across as a negative, but it is also positive. The reason for putting these things away is

that they are both hurtful to us here and will condemn us away from God for all eternity. So, the listing of "thou shalt nots" is for our good! We need to appreciate this fact. Also, God has given listings of good things to be put into our lives. This could also be looked upon as a "negative" by some for it is also "thou shalt!" But again we say that these also are "positives" because they are for our good. But the Apostle's expression is letting us know that the Law (which condemns the works of the flesh) do not condemn or find fault with the fruit of the Spirit. The Law of Christ (Gal. 5:21) approves of such actions and promises eternal rewards to those who have such fruit in their lives (they CAN enter the kingdom of heaven). In the great commission, Jesus told the Apostles to teach these new disciples to observe all that Jesus has commanded (Matt. 28:18-20). Jesus also made it very clear that the one who truly loves Him will keep his commandments (John 14:15).

CONCLUSION

It should be obvious that all of us are obedient to one of two laws: (1) The Law of Sin and Death; or (2) The Law of the Spirit of Life (the Gospel) (Rom. 8:1-2). We have no choice about being under Law, but a choice of which Law we will serve (Rom. 6:17-18). Those who are led by the Spirit produce the fruit of the Spirit!

LISTING OF WORKS OF FLESH

Gal. 5:19-21

1. Adultery
2. Fornication
3. Uncleaness
4. Lewdness
5. Idolatry
6. Sorcery
7. Hatred
8. Contentions
9. Jealousies
10. Outburst of wrath
11. Selfish Ambitions
12. Dissensions
13. Heresies
14. Envy
15. Murder
16. Drunkenness
17. Revelries & the like

Rom. 1:29-31

18. All unrighteousness
19. Wickedness
20. Covetousness
21. Maliciousness
22. Strife
23. Deceit
24. Evil mindedness
25. Whisperers
26. Backbiters
27. Haters of God
28. Violent
29. Proud
30. Boasters
31. Inventors of evil things
32. Disobedient to parents
33. Undiscerning
34. Untrustworthy
35. Unloving
36. Unforgiving
37. Unmerciful

Rom. 13:13

38. Lewdness
39. Lust

1 Cor. 6:9-10

- 40. Homosexuals
- 41. Sodomites
- 42. Thieves
- 43. Extortioners
- 44. Filthiness
- 45. Foolish talking
- 46. Coarse Jestings
etc.

LISTING OF FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Gal. 5:22-23

- 1. Love
- 2. Joy
- 3. Peace
- 4. Long-suffering
- 5. Kindness
- 6. Goodness
- 7. Faithfulness
- 8. Gentleness
- 9. Self-Control

Eph. 4:25-32; 5:9

- 10. Speak truth
- 11. Forgiving
- 12. Righteousness
- 13. What is acceptable to the Lord

Phil. 1:9-11

- 14. Love to abound in knowledge & discernment.
- 15. Approve things that are excellent
- 16. Be sincere and without offense
- 17. Be filled with fruits of righteousness

Phil. 2:1-4

- 18. Merciful
- 19. Like-minded
- 20. One accord
- 21. Esteem others better than self
- 22. Look out for interests of others also

Col. 3:12-14

- 23. Humility
- 24. Bearing with one another

1 Thess. 5:14-22

- 25. Warn unruly
- 26. Comfort the fainthearted
- 27. Uphold the weak
- 28. Be patient with all
- 29. Do no evil to anyone
- 30. Pursue what is good for you and for all.
- 31. Rejoice always
- 32. Pray without ceasing
- 33. Test all things—hold fast to the good.
- 34. Abstain from every form of evil.

2 Pet. 1:5-8

- 35. Virtue
- 36. Knowledge
- 37. Godliness
- 38. Brotherly kindness
etc.

