

Fruits & Graces
in the
Garden of God

Lessons Which Help Develop in Children 9 & Older the Fruits & Graces of Christian Character

Fruits & Graces *in the* *Garden of God*

Lessons Which Help Develop in Children 8 and Older
the Fruits and Graces of Christian Character

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A Note to Parents and Teachers

Although we know that the *Fruits and Graces of the Spirit* are especially necessary to develop in the New Creation, these character lessons will always be appropriate for anyone at any age and at any time. Our children will benefit now and in the future by developing the *Fruits and Graces of God's* character. Consider the following references in regard to this important element in the development of our children:

Reprint 4688: *[The Apostle Paul] shows us the fruits and flowers of sweet odor which belong to the Garden of the Lord.... The fruits of this garden are all the fruits of the Spirit of God — all such as He originally planted in man...*

Reprint 3432: *Blessed are we whose eyes and ears of understanding are now open to know the grace of God, to appreciate the same — we who are now in the school of Christ to develop the fruits and graces of his Spirit.... As for the world in general, it will be required of them during the millennial age that they also shall develop the fruits and graces of the Lord's Spirit if they would be accounted worthy of eternal life.*

With this in mind, the primary emphasis of this book is not only to provide a definition of each *Fruit and Grace of Character*, but also to point out a variety of illustrations from Bible stories and other lessons appropriate to growth in character. To make these lessons more clear, we have chosen to use the *New American Standard Version* of Galatians 5:22, 23 as the theme of this book, because these words are more easily understood. For the same reason, we used a variety of translations throughout the lessons. At times, the citations are paraphrased to enhance the story. These Scripture citations are critical to gain a better understanding of the lessons.

In a classroom setting, we encourage teachers to select readers who are able to read aloud with ease to the group. This will help in understanding the train of thought when presenting difficult concepts. We also suggest that, even if the lessons are covered in Bible class, parents should go through these with their children, as well. This way the process of learning and respect will revert to the parent.

The lessons in this book might be challenging for children under the age of nine, however, with adult supervision, they can be adapted for younger children. Although some words and concepts are slightly advanced, we have found the lessons to be more understandable with constant interaction and monitoring from the parent or teacher.

We present this book with the hope that our children might be fortified for the times ahead. Children are fertile ground for planting the seeds of truth and righteousness. Many of them may walk hand in hand with the Ancient Worthies in bringing the world of mankind up the *Highway of Holiness*. Let us do what we can to prepare them for this opportunity. And, if the Lord calls them to a position in the body of Christ, let us rejoice that we have witnessed God's truth to them, and He has provided the increase!

With Sincere Christian Love, Your Brethren in Christ,
The Associated Bible Students of Central Ohio
October 1, 2025

Fruits & Graces in the Garden of God

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THEY'LL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS BY OUR LOVE



We are one in the spirit, we are one in the Lord.
We are one in the spirit, we are one in the Lord.
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored,
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand.
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand.
And together we'll spread the news that God has a plan,
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will work with each other, we will work side by side.
We will work with each other, we will work side by side.
And we'll guard each man's dignity and crucify our pride,
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come.
And all praise to Christ Jesus, His only Son.
And all praise for God's spirit, which makes us one.
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

— Hymn # 101 from "I Will Sing!" Hymnal —



Fruits & Graces in the Garden of God

An Introduction

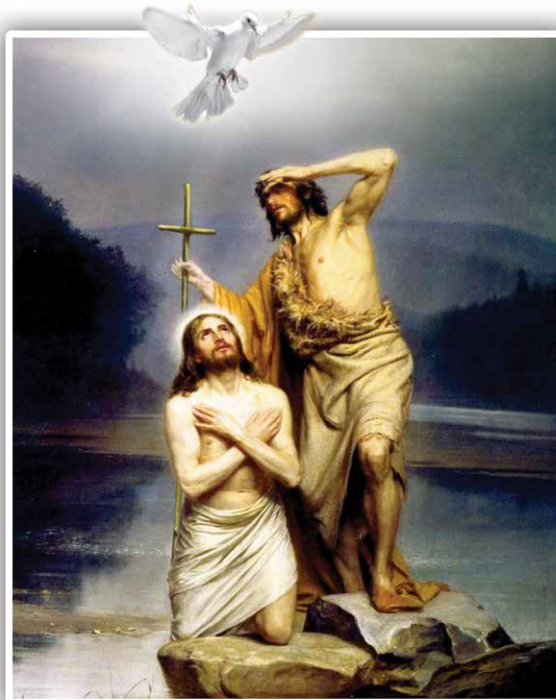


“The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” — Galatians 5:22, 23 (NAS)

Over and over again, God has used symbols and pictures in the Bible to explain important truths to those who love Him. These are sometimes called *parables*, and sometimes these are called *types* and *anti-types*. All of these help us to understand the Bible a little more clearly, so we need to look for these important clues which guide us to a better understanding of God’s plans and purposes.

FRUIT is just one symbolic picture that God has used to explain something very important. The many symbolic words we are about to learn in this Chapter are just a few examples of how God uses *word pictures* to explain important TRUTHS.

To explain His HOLY SPIRIT — His Holy Influence — God used the picture of a DOVE coming down upon Jesus’ head when he was baptized by John in the Jordan River.



To explain the CHARACTER of His Son Jesus, God used many illustrations in the Bible. One is a picture of a LION. God called His Son “*the Lion from the tribe of Judah.*” (Revelation 5:5) This shows how Jesus is sometimes as strong and mighty as a Lion.

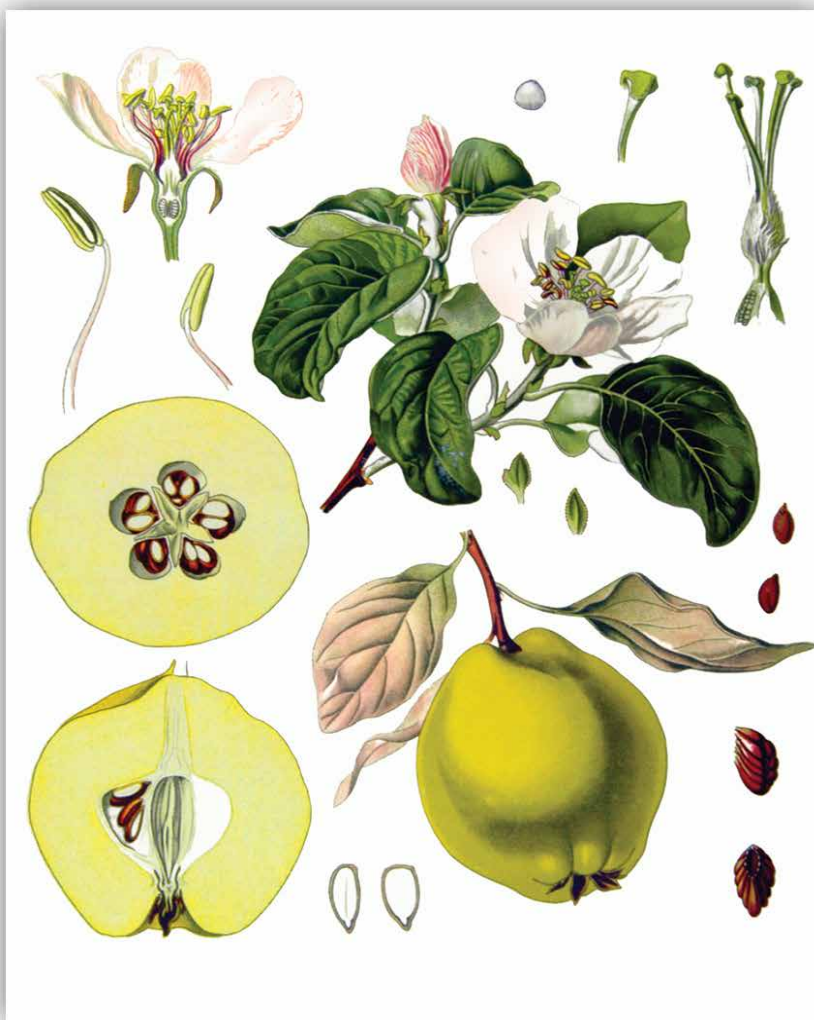


But God also used the picture of a gentle LAMB to describe His Son. He said that Jesus was His beloved “*Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” (Revelation 13:8) God used the word picture of a sounding TRUMPET to alert people to important announcements, prophecies and truths.



So, when we see words in the Bible like WATER, FIRE, CLOUDS, and WIND, we should look to see if these are a picture of something similar. WATER is cleansing and refreshing — just like TRUTH. FIRE can PURIFY, but it can also DESTROY things that need to be removed. CLOUDS can bring TROUBLE, but they can also bring cool SHELTER. And, God used a destructive WIND to illustrate WAR.

The word pictures we are going to study in this book are the many FRUITS & GRACES OF GOD'S CHARACTER. FRUIT is something that grows from a vine or tree that is flavorful, nourishing and is good for food. Every *fruit* starts out as a blossom, and then, with water, sunshine and time, the blossom loses its petals and a tiny green *fruit* appears. As it grows larger, the *fruit* begins to turn color, and it becomes sweet and full of vitamins and minerals which nourish those who eat it. Each different kind of *fruit* provides different elements that help our bodies grow strong.



From the word picture of FRUIT, God is showing us that thoughts, words and deeds should develop like the *fruit* on a tree or vine. These start out as a blossom, very delicate and beautiful, but not yet *fruit*. When the tree is watered with the truth of the Bible and the sunshine of God's love, tiny *fruits of character* begin to grow. These are *character traits* which help us become more and more like Jesus.

The lessons in this book on the different *Fruits and Graces of Character* will help us to see how we might develop in the *character-likeness* of Jesus. As you go through the lessons, see if you can come up with other Bible stories which describe these and other *Fruits and Graces*. There are so many more qualities of character to explore.

You might also see if you can find examples in your own life. Friends or family members who are good examples in what they have said or done may remind you of a particular *Fruit* or *Grace*. Here are a few examples. Perhaps a bully in school was picking on you and another student stood by your side and helped you out of a difficult situation. You would say that this student was a *peacemaker*. Or maybe your neighbor's car broke down and your dad offered to help him fix it, even though it wasn't at a convenient time for him. He would be showing *kindness*. Maybe you couldn't understand a subject in school, and your teacher spent extra time with you to help you understand. You would say that this teacher was *patient* and *good*. There are many other everyday words and deeds of people which can be very encouraging.



Jesus was our perfect example! He was *loving, joyful, peaceable, patient, kind, good, faithful and gentle*. Jesus also had complete *self-control* of all his thoughts words and deeds. These are the *Fruits and Graces of Character* which we want to develop in our own lives. That way, we can be examples to others, too.

Being an example to others will be like dropping *seeds* which will grow in their hearts. We know that we will never be as good an example as Jesus — he was perfect — but we should learn to do our best to develop the *Fruits and Graces of Character*. In doing this, we will please our Heavenly Father and glorify Him. John 15:8

Fruits & Graces in the Garden of God

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. God uses symbols to teach important truths.

True False

2. This is an example of a symbol used in the Bible:

- a. trumpets are a picture of sleep.
- b. fire is a picture of cleansing and of destroying impurities.
- c. clouds are a picture of cheerful sunshine.

3. The symbols that we see in the various *Fruits and Graces of Character* show:

- a. how to get more vitamin C from fruit.
- b. that people do not need to work on their characters, because it is not important.
- c. how we can learn to be better people if we learn about the loving character of Jesus.

4. *Fruit* starts out as a seed, then grows into a tree, which brings forth blossoms, which make a tiny green *fruit*, which ripens into a nutritious *fruit*.

True False

5. Jesus was a perfect Man and perfect in character.

True False

6. Jesus' character was like that of his Father in Heaven. Jesus...

- a. was kind even to those who hated him and who hurt him.
- b. yelled at people because they wouldn't listen to his parables.
- c. kept to himself, because everyone else was offensive to him — they were sinners.

7. When we first learn about the many good qualities of Jesus' character, we immediately become perfect.

True False

8. It takes time and study and prayer and effort to develop a good Christian character.

True False

9. Those who act like a bully:

- a. are really helpful and encouraging.
- b. need to learn by our example that it is better to be kind and encouraging.
- c. are exhibiting beautiful *Fruits and Graces*.

10. Being a good example to others is like planting seeds which will grow in the hearts of others.

True False

11. If someone we know is growing in their Christian character, we should:

- a. expect perfection, because developing the *Fruit of Righteousness* is easy.
- b. be happy for them and encourage them in their progress.
- c. not give them any praise, because they aren't perfect, and they should just give up.

12. In God's Kingdom, all will be given a chance to:

- a. develop pride and show how they are better than everyone else.
- b. gain riches and power.
- c. learn to be righteous and to develop the *Fruits and Graces of God's Character*.

FRUIT MIX-UP

UNSCRAMBLE THESE SCRIPTURE PHRASES

Look for the clues in the box on the left. The first letter is always correct.
The first one is answered for you. One star is from KJV* & two starts are from NAS.**

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FRUITS & GRACES in Action

All of the *Fruits & Graces of Character*
are found in 1 CORINTHIANS 13

LOVE 🍓 Love never fails. (verse 8)

JOY 🍌 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. (verse 6)

PEACE 🍎 Love does not envy; it keeps no record of wrongs. (verses 4 & 5)

PATIENCE 🍋 Love is patient. (verse 4)

KINDNESS 🍊 Love is kind. (verse 4)

GOODNESS 🍒 Love does not dishonor others; it is not self-seeking. (verse 5)

FAITHFULNESS 🍇 Love always protects, trusts, hopes and perseveres. (verse 7)

GENTLENESS 🍏 Love endures all things and is not boastful. (verse 4 & 7)

SELF-CONTROL 🍏 Love is not easily angered. (verse 5)

Continue Ye in My Love

“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.” — John 15:9



Savior more than life to us, please guide us on our way.
Trusting thee through ev'ry trial, we hear thee as you say,
*“As my Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.
Continue ye in my love.”*

We dare not trust our falt'ring steps one moment from thy side.
Comfort us again, we need thy voice to be our guide.
*“As my Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.
Continue ye in my love.”*

By this we have eternal life, that we should love thine own.
Till we reach the promised time,
When we shall share thy throne.
*“As my Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.
Continue ye in my love.”*

Blessed children of our God, the time is short before
Our fellowship will draw to close, as so the closing door.
*“As my Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.
Continue ye in my love.”*



— Page 16 from “I Will Sing!” Hymnal
(A song of the consecrated — an example to us all!)



LOVE

Lesson Text: Luke 10:25-37

First on the list of the *Fruits and Graces of Character* is LOVE. Some Bible translations call LOVE *CHARITY*. There are no other *Fruits and Graces* more important than LOVE. The Apostle Paul said that *without love, we are nothing.* (1 Corinthians 13:2) To be a *loving* person means that we will want to help others even when it might be difficult for us. It also means that we are to *love* those who may not be very lovable.

Consider the lesson Jesus gave about the *Good Samaritan*. There was a religious Lawyer who asked Jesus, “*What shall I do to receive eternal life?*” Jesus said, “*What is written in the Law?*” The Lawyer answered, “*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.*” Jesus replied, “*Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.*”



The religious Lawyer then asked Jesus, “*And who is my neighbor?*” Jesus gave him this parable in reply: “*A man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho was attacked by thieves who took his clothes and beat him. As he lay there half dead, a Jewish Priest saw him, but walked around him and went on his way. Then a man who worked in the Temple, a Levite, saw him and did likewise. But a Good Samaritan saw the wounded man and had compassion on him. He treated and bandaged his wounds, and, because the wounded man was too weak to walk, the Samaritan put him upon his donkey. The Samaritan then walked beside him all the way to an inn, where he paid for the inn-keeper to take care of him until the wounded man was strong again.*”

When Jesus finished the parable of the *Good Samaritan*, he asked the religious Lawyer, “Now which of these three men was neighbor unto the man who was beaten by the thieves?” The Lawyer responded, “He that showed mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go, and do thou likewise” — be loving and unselfish like the Samaritan.

There are several very good points in this parable which show that *love goes beyond just being nice to someone*. The Samaritan man not only stopped to give the injured man help, but he went the next step to give him a place to stay, food to eat, and money for someone to care for him until he was healed. This lesson teaches the kind of *love that God and His beloved Son have for all of mankind*. It is a *selfless, sacrificial love*.

We are all sick in different ways — like the wounded man. Some are poor, some are physically sick, some are born into homes where they have learned to be mean, and some live very hard lives because of where they were born. Did God create all of this sadness that makes life so difficult for mankind? No, but God did *permit* mankind to experience, *for a time*, what it is like to live under the influence of Satan’s rule. Satan, his hurtful influence, and all who follow him are like the thieves in our lesson who *rob and wound* the world of mankind on their journey through life.

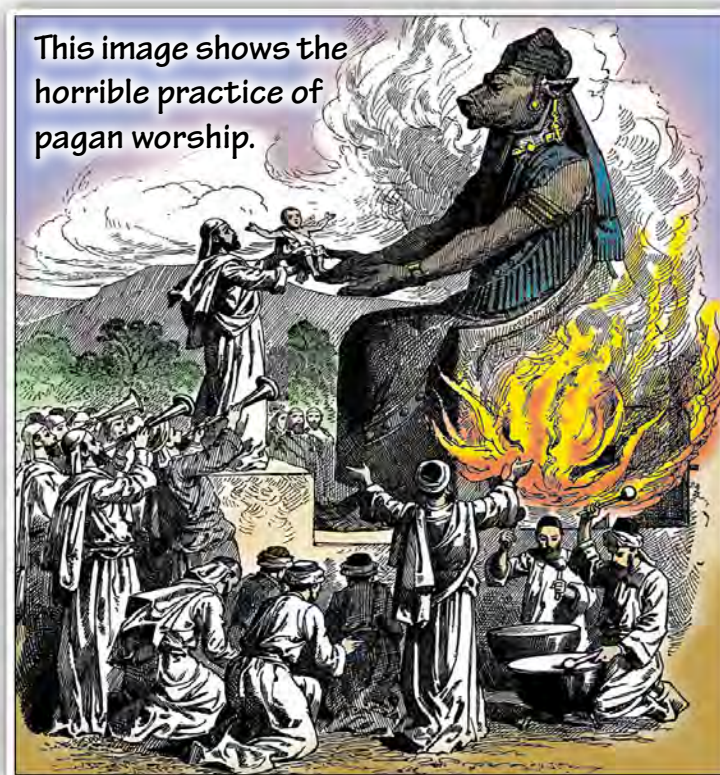


Although God now *permits* evil in the world, He does not *cause* it. Satan is described as the “*god of this world*,” and it was his influence over Adam and Eve that caused them to sin. (2 Corinthians 4:4) Since then, all of their children have been born under the curse of sin and death. By *allowing* this experience with sin and sorrow, God is teaching mankind the painful results of disobedience, and thus, the world will welcome the opportunity in the Kingdom to learn to *love God and His righteousness*.

Some people believe that God created a terrible, fiery place called “hell” where He will send those who never accepted Jesus as their Savior. But we know that this is not true. Why? Because our God of love could never cause such a horrible place to exist. God said, “*Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts [traditions and doctrines] of men...*” (Isaiah 29:13) The Apostle John states that “*God IS love... perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment.*” (1 John 4:16-18) These scriptures show that the idea of torture is not from our God of love. God cannot torture, because it is against His character of love.

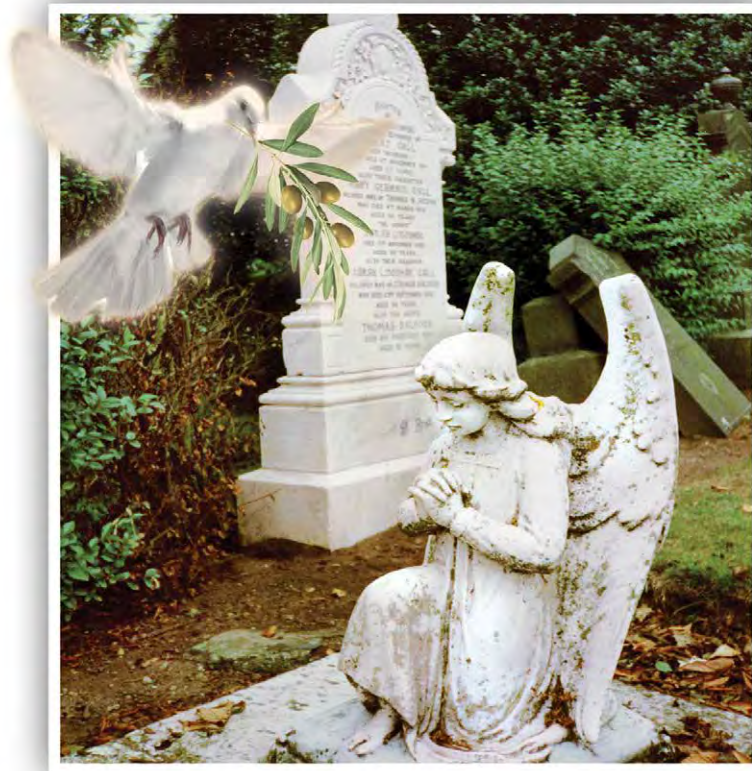
Fear of a place of eternal torment has terrified Christians for nearly 1,800 years. Is God honored by such fear? Of course not! God does not want people to love Him because they fear what He will do to them if they don’t worship Him. God desires that people obey and love Him because they want to do the right thing, and because they see how much He loves them.

Torture was strictly forbidden in the Law of the Jews. But, because some of the Jewish people were careless and did not honor God’s commandments, many were led astray by the ways of the pagans. They built sacrificial altars to their false god, Baal, where they burned their children alive in the fire! How horrible that even some Jewish people were led away by this terrible sin! Of such a practice God declared: “*I commanded it not, nor did I speak it, neither came it into my mind.*” Jeremiah 19:5



People who believe in a burning hell should ask themselves: which is more loving — sending people who are unrighteous to a place of eternal torment or sending them to the grave? We need to remember that the penalty upon Adam for his

disobedience was *death*. The foundation of God's throne is *justice*. Would it be fair (just) for God to send sinners to eternal flames, when the penalty for disobedience was *death*? Certainly not! (Genesis 2:17) Call to mind what the Apostle John said: "*God IS love.*" Even though God has *permitted* sadness, He has also provided that, *in due time*, ALL people will come forth from their graves to learn righteousness in a peaceful Kingdom. (John 5:28, 29 NAS) They will be given the means to become healthy again. "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" John 3:16



In God's *due time*, ALL will come to know of His *love* for them, "*from the least of them unto the greatest of them.*" (Jeremiah 31:34) Then will come the promised time when "*God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*" Revelation 21:4

God's *love* is TRUE LOVE, and everything we learn from the Bible should agree with this most important of all Bible teachings, that "*God IS love.*" (1 John 4:8) This is why LOVE is first on our list of the *Fruits and Graces of Character*, and this is why it is important for us to learn to *love* the way God *loves* — not selfishly but self-LESS-ly. TRUE LOVE is treating others the same way you want to be treated by them. We often call this the "*Golden Rule.*" (Matthew 7:12) When God's Kingdom is established "*on earth as it is in heaven,*" the world of mankind will learn to *love* as God *loves*. (Matthew 6:10) Since all of the *Fruits and Graces in the Garden of God* begin with LOVE, let us continue to develop God-like *love* now.

LOVE

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. *Love is nice, but is the least important grace.*

True False

2. If we are *loving*, we will:

- a. help others even if it is not *easy* or *convenient* for us.
- b. hope that someone gives us praise.
- c. get extra gifts from Santa Claus.

3. *Loving our enemies is difficult, but, if we do, it may make them a friend and a better person.*

True False

4. In the parable of the *Good Samaritan*, Jesus said that the Jewish Priest and the Levite were quick to help the traveler who had been robbed and beaten.

True False

5. The Samaritan man had compassion upon the poor traveler:

- a. but had an appointment to keep and couldn't take the time to help.
- b. only bandaged up his wounds.
- c. bandaged his wounds and provided food, lodging and medical help.

6. The one who was "*neighbor*" to the wounded traveler was the "*Good Samaritan*."

True False

7. The *Good Samaritan* parable shows Christians:

- a. that it costs too much to be *loving*.
- b. how to *love* like God loves.
- c. not to travel where there are Jewish Priests.

8. In the parable, the wounded traveler is like the poor, sick world of mankind wounded by Satan.

True False

9. Satan's influence upon Adam and Eve:

- a. was the first cause of all the evil today.
- b. made them both wiser and healthier.
- c. kept them safe in the Garden of Eden.

10. God did not *cause* evil, but *permitted* it.

True False

11. The *permission of evil* in the world:

- a. is no one's fault.
- b. has no purpose at all.
- c. will one day teach all to hate sin and *love* righteousness in God's Kingdom.

12. It never entered God's mind to create:

- a. a beautiful Kingdom in due time.
- b. a place of eternal torment.
- c. a world where *love* fills every heart.

13. One day, there will never again be evil, sorrow, sickness and death, because all will learn true *love*.

True False

14. The most important teaching in the Bible is that:

- a. no one ever had to die in the first place.
- b. people have the chance to be perfect now.
- c. GOD IS LOVE and everything He does will one day work together for the good of His entire creation.

The Loving Character of God & Jesus

All of the wonderful qualities of Jesus' character equal one of the most beautiful of God's attributes—LOVE. 1 John 4:8

Write between the spokes of the wheel the many loving character attributes of Jesus. Support these with a Scripture. One example is given.

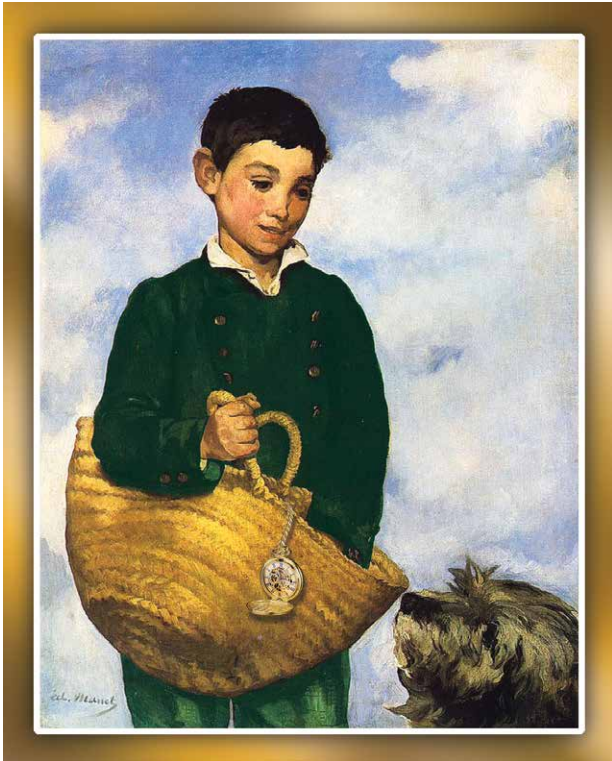


If you need help, here are some suggestions. But first, try to think of examples on your own.

Gentle — 2 Corinthians 10:1; Holy and Separate from Sinners — Hebrews 7:26; Blameless — 1 Peter 1:19; Perfect — Hebrews 2:10 & 5:9; Harmless — John 18:10, 11; Wise — Luke 2:40; Kind — Matthew 4:23 & 24; Zealous — John 4:34; Excellent Teacher — Matthew 13:54; Truthful — John 18:37; Just — Luke 6:41, 42; Selfless — Matthew 12:15; Sympathetic — John 11:35; Peaceful — John 14:27; Merciful — Hebrews 2:17; Meek — Matthew 11:28, 29; Generous — Act 20:35 & Ephesians 5:2; Tenderhearted & Sensitive — Hebrews 4:15; Faithful — Hebrews 3:2; Sacrificing — Isaiah 53:4, 5; Obedient — Hebrews 5:8; Loyal — Matthew 26:39; Joyful — Hebrews 12:2; Long-suffering — 1 Timothy 1:16; Compassionate — Matthew 9:36, Hebrews 5:2; Good Shepherd — John 10:11; Gracious — Luke 4:22

LOVE in Action

“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” — 1 John 3:18



The Beautiful Golden Watch

One day while walking his dog Cubby, Ethan saw something glistening in the weeds along the side of a country road. There, sticking out of the mud was a metal box. When he opened it, he found a beautiful gold pocket watch. The young boy was poor and his family could never afford to buy him such a valuable watch. *“This was the best thing I’ve ever found!”* he exclaimed. He couldn’t wait to get home to tell his parents about his special treasure!

His parents were very happy for him, but told Ethan that he must first check to see if anyone had lost the watch. So, that day, Ethan asked the local postman if he had heard if anyone had lost a gold watch, but the postman had not heard of anyone. Ethan also asked the local policeman, and he had not heard of anyone either. The policeman said, I will hold it for you, and if no one has claimed it in thirty days, the watch will belong to you.

Three weeks passed, and each day Ethan grew more fond of the watch. He had asked the town jewelry merchant what a watch like this would be worth, and he said about three hundred dollars! *“How I love this watch,”* Ethan said to himself. *“Oh, I hope I get to keep it.”*

On the thirtieth day, Ethan ran to the police station to see if anyone had claimed the watch. *“No, young man, it is yours,”* said the policeman. *“Oh, Yea!!!”* Ethan shouted, as he flew out the door to run home and tell his parents. *“It’s mine! It’s really mine!!!”*

When he got home, Ethan saw his mother holding her head in her hands and crying. The look on his father’s face was very sad. *“What’s wrong?”* Ethan asked. *“We had to take Cubby into the vet because he is very sick,”* said his father. *“The doctor said that if he doesn’t have an operation, he will die, but we can’t afford such an expensive operation.”*

“Oh, no, Cubby! My little friend! I love him so much.” Ethan looked down at his beautiful gold watch. *“How much will the operation cost, dad?”* His father replied, *“Three hundred dollars, son.”*

What do you suppose the young boy did? If Ethan kept his beautiful watch, Cubby would die. But, if he gave the watch to the veterinarian in an even exchange for the cost of the operation, Cubby would live. Now, you finish the story . . .

Sometimes things which we hold dear to us — *things* we think we really *love* — become less important when compared to the importance of the life of someone we *love*. Even though Jesus valued his life — a precious gift from God — he knew that exchanging it for the life of Adam would provide a way out of death for not only Adam, but for the entire world of mankind. *God loved* mankind so much that He was willing to give His only begotten Son as a *“ransom for all.”* Jesus’ life was an even exchange for the life lost by Adam — the father of the human race. Adam and all of his family had become sick after Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden. But, because Jesus took upon him the penalty of death for Adam’s sin, Adam and all of his family will have an opportunity for a fresh start in life to learn righteousness on the *“highway of holiness”* in God’s Kingdom.

GO IN JOY

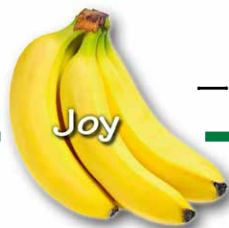
“For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” — Isaiah 55:12



For you shall go out in joy,
And you shall be led forth in peace;
Before you the hills break forth in song,
The trees of the field clap their hands.
Go in joy, be led forth in peace;
The hills, the trees rejoice.

For as the rain and snow come down
From heaven to water the earth;
So is my word that goeth forth,
It shall not return to me void.
Rain come down, water the earth;
His Word will water the earth.

For you shall go out in joy,
And you shall be led forth in peace;
Before you the hills break forth in song,
The trees of the field clap their hands.
Go in joy, be led forth in peace;
The hills, the trees rejoice.



— Page 36 from “I Will Sing!” Hymnal



JOY

Lesson Text: Philippians 4:4

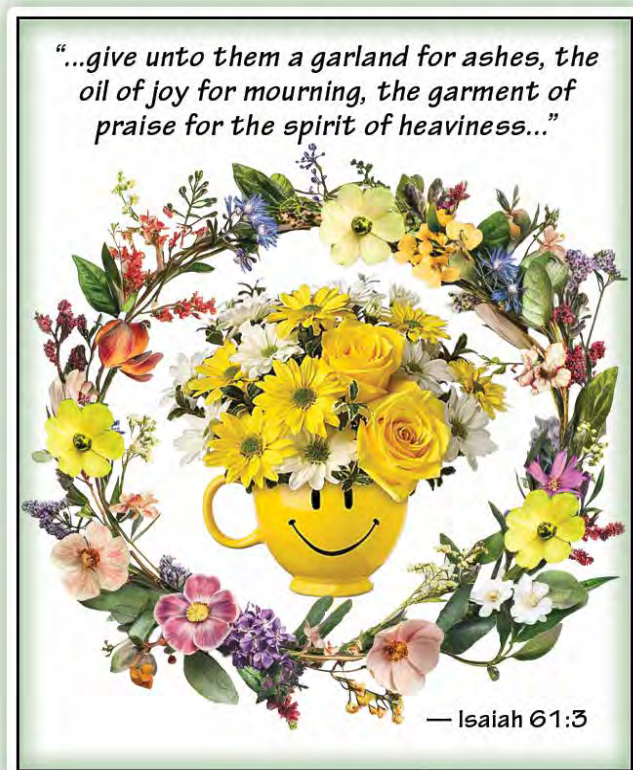
Another word for the *Fruit of Righteousness* called JOY is *HAPPINESS*. It is so much nicer to feel JOY than to feel sadness. It is no surprise that JOY follows LOVE in the list of the *Fruits and Graces of Character*. Those who have loving hearts are more *joy-full*.

It would certainly be wonderful to always be happy and never have worries. Philippians 4:4 says to “*Rejoice in the Lord always.*” But, how can we *always rejoice*, when sometimes it is very hard to do — especially when we are sick or when someone we love is sick or dies? The Apostle Paul also said that when we go through our hard trials in life, they are not *joyous*, but they are difficult and often make us sad. He continues to say that, if we can learn lessons from these, then we can be *joyous* after the trials, because they have made us stronger. By the lessons we learn, we might even be able to help someone else make it through their difficult times. Hebrews 12:11



The Apostle Paul had very good advice about sharing with others — both our *joys* and our *difficult times*. He said, “*Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*” (Romans 12:15) Jesus was such a good example of this — he brought *comfort* and *compassion* to those who needed *encouragement*. He took the time to bring *hope* and *joy* to others who were experiencing *difficulties* in their lives.

Learning compassion for others provides a very good purpose for all of our *joyful* and *sorrowful* experiences in life. We learn *sympathy* for one another and can help others by being *joyful* when they are *joyful*, and comforting them when they are *sad*. This is because we know what it is like to be *sad*. If we have the *fruit and grace* of *joy* in our hearts, we will want to help others to turn their tears of *sorrow* into tears of *joy*. Isaiah 61:3 gives us a beautiful example of this. It is like giving those who are *sad* a *garland of flowers* instead of *ashes*, and the *soothing oil of joy* instead of *sorrow*.

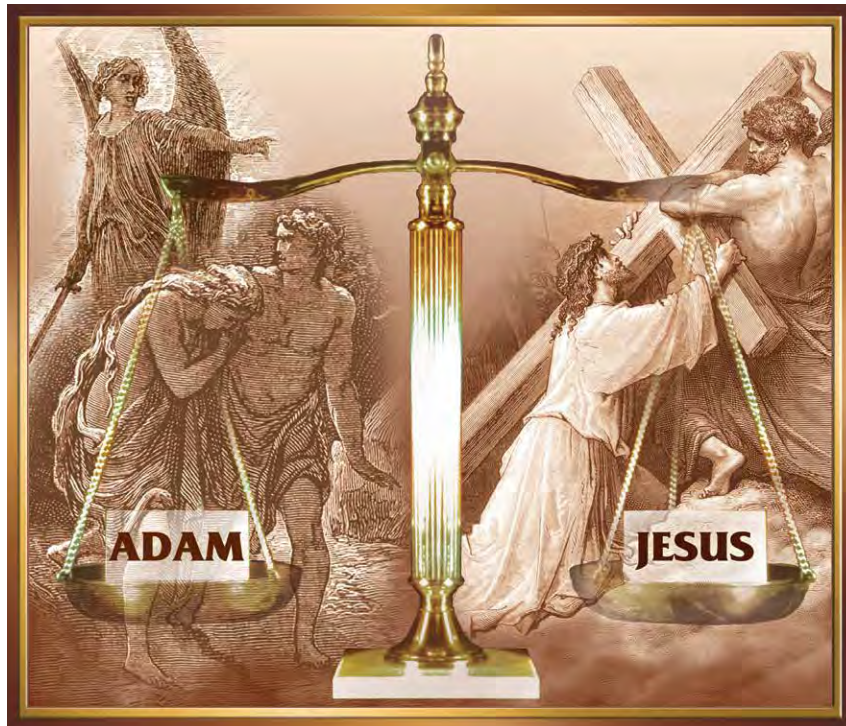


There will be times when we will need help and comfort from others in our lives, too. It is a blessing to have friends and family to help us through our sad times. We should allow others help us, because it will make them feel *joy* to have been helpful. We should never turn away the love of others who want to help. They want to give us the “*oil of joy*” to help us through our trials.

The Apostle Paul gave more good advice on learning to “*rejoice in the Lord always*” even when we are going through hard experiences in life: “*Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.*” (Romans 12:12) The key in this scripture is to go to the Lord in prayer that we might receive help in learning to be *joyful*, even when it is difficult. We will learn more about being patient in tribulation later, because *patience* is another *Fruit and Grace in the Garden of God*.

What does it mean to “*rejoice in hope*”? We have faith and hope that someday all sickness and sorrow will be replaced by God’s beautiful coming Kingdom. We look forward with hope, just the way Jesus did: “...for the joy set before him, Jesus endured the cross...” Hebrews 12:2

We have a reliable hope that other religions of the world do not have. For this reason, our *joy* will carry us through our hard times. Our *joy* is a hope of life and happiness not just for ourselves — this would be a selfish hope. No, our hope is not selfish, it is a hope for ALL mankind. And this is a promise repeated over and over in the Scriptures. For example, read Jeremiah 31:31-34 and 1 Timothy 4:10.



“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have ALL men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for ALL, to be testified in due time.”

— 1 Timothy 2:3-6 —

This Scripture contains one of the most important truths in the entire Bible. Everything we believe should harmonize with what this text is telling us. God wants ALL mankind to learn the truth of His merciful plan, and we know that what God says will be done! *“Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure... yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.”* (Isaiah 46:10, 11) God declared that His only begotten Son will be a *“ransom for ALL... in due time.”* We can trust that God will bring all from their graves to learn of Him. Not everyone has this knowledge now, but we can be sure they will *“in due time”* — God’s time. Now, that is something that should bring us all JOY!

So, even though we see all kinds of sadness and sorrow when we watch the news, we know that, in God's "due time," He will "ransom all" from their graves and give them the opportunity to learn the "knowledge of the truth." And while this is something which causes us to be happy and to "rejoice always," others are not able to be joyful now, because they do not understand this beautiful Plan of God. But just imagine when people come back from their graves — they will be eager to learn about God's Plan of the Ages! "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isaiah 35:10) We need to keep looking forward to this time when absolutely everyone in the world will be happy forever! Is this hard to believe now? Maybe, but this is just what the Bible promises: "Joy cometh in the morning" of God's Kingdom! Psalm 30:5



When God puts an end to all the pain, sorrow, wars and death, and His Son rules in righteousness over all the earth, then the world of mankind will begin to seek after righteousness. "When the earth experiences Thy judgments, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9) Many Christians fear the Judgment Day, but we do not. The Judgment Day is one-thousand years long — a time of learning. (2 Peter 3:8) Jesus and his Church will reign from heaven as teachers of the world of mankind. They will have representatives on earth who will teach from Jerusalem — Ancient Worthies like Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, Esther and Joshua. Then, when the world of mankind learns the contrast between living in a world ruled by Satan, and a world under the Messiah — *the Prince of Peace* — they will choose righteousness! This is when the whole world of mankind will begin to *rejoice always*.

JOY

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. Those with loving hearts are usually more joyful.

True False

2. Going through difficult trials can make us:

- a. stronger if we learn the lessons in them.
- b. see that these have no purpose.
- c. grumpy and hard to love.

3. Jesus never went out of his way to encourage and help others, because it took too much of his time.

True False

4. Learning compassion for others is one very good purpose for all of our good and bad experiences in life.

True False

5. If we have the *fruitage of joy* in our hearts, we will want to:

- a. keep to ourselves.
- b. tell people about our own troubles.
- c. help others to turn their tears of sorrow into tears of joy.

6. We should always turn away the help from others who love us, because it is none of their business.

True False

7. We learn how to be joyful in our hard trials:

- a. by complaining to others about how we don't deserve to suffer.
- b. by going to the Lord in prayer.
- c. by never sharing our trials with anyone.

8. Even though there are troubles in life, we can rejoice in the hope that some day all sickness and sorrow will be replaced by God's beautiful Kingdom.

True False

9. Jesus was able to endure his cross, because he kept the joy of the future Kingdom always in mind.

True False

10. Jesus gave his life as a ransom for:

- a. only the sick and lonely people.
- b. just the Church.
- c. the Church now and all mankind *in due time*.

11. One day in God's Kingdom:

- a. all will learn the truth that "God is love."
- b. only the rich will be punished because they didn't give more money to the Church.
- c. no one will have to learn righteousness.

12. The ransomed of the Lord will come to Zion and:

- a. regret that they couldn't sing better.
- b. they will rejoice and sing *songs of joy*.
- c. complain that they had to get sick and die.

13. The Bible promises that joy will come to ALL.

True False

14. The Judgment Day is a time for the people:

- a. of the world to learn righteousness.
- b. to suffer because they didn't love God now.
- c. to preach repentance on the street corners.

JOY

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

Find and circle these words in the puzzle below (see sample).

KINDNESS GENTLENESS
LOVE JOY
PATIENCE SELF-CONTROL
PEACE REJOICE ALWAYS
FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT MODERATION
HAPPINESS THOUGHTFULNESS
CHARACTER WILLPOWER
FAITHFULNESS GOODNESS

P Q A Z W S X E D C R F V W G B Y F N U J M I C L O
O I H A P P I N E S S D F I H J K A N M B O C H Z P
W S X Q A Z E D C R F V T L B Y H I U J M D K A H X
D T G V **G** J N O L O V E Z L F C T T B O K E Q R Z I
V F C X Z O D S A R E W N P U Y T H J Y G R N A V R
E M B V C X O L K J H G F O S A P F I S Y A R C W Q
F N K X C V B D M A S D F W H J K U Q W E T T T U N
B A I E L T C W N T O V K E T Y U L O P Z I C E B M
T Z N E X C T B I E M P Z R M W C N T G U O S R F D
G Q D Z W S X E D C S F V T G B Y E N U J N I K L O
Q I N Y T R P B Q A B **S** F G H J K S N M B V C X Z P
O S E Q A Z E F G E N T L E N E S S U J M I K L H X
D T S V U J A U L M Q S Z E F C T H B Y K N Q M Z I
A F S X Z F C S A F R U I T S O F T H E S P I R I T
E M B V C X E H K J H G F D S A P O I U Y T R E W Q
S N Z X C V B T M A S D F G H P A T I E N C E Y U N
B T H O U G H T F U L N E S S J K L Q W E R T V B M
T Z J E X C T B G U M S N F D S E L F C O N T R O L
D T G V U J N O I U M P Z U M W C N T Y K N Q M Z I
V F C R E J O I C E A L W A Y S T K J H G M N B V R

JOY in Action

*“Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound:
they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.” — Psalm 89:15*

We, of all people, should be the most joyful, for we know the true character of God and His merciful plan to bring life, health, peace and happiness to all people, in due time! Isaiah Chapter 35 summarizes very well this wonderful plan when all will begin to see the reality of God’s mercy.

THE RANSOMED OF THE LORD SHALL REJOICE! — Isaiah 35: 1-10

1: The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. 2: It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing... 3: “Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. 4: Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not...



5: Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6: Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. 7: And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water... 8: And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. 9: No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: 10: And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

More Christlike

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." — Matthew 5:9



How blessed, how glorious, how joyful to feel
The love everlasting, of sonship a seal,
The love that is perfect, the love that is pure,
That we may with patience all things well endure.

I want to be humble, more simple, more mild,
More like my blest Master and more like a child;
More trustful, more thankful, more lovely in mind,
More watchful, more prayerful, more loving and kind.

I want the pure wisdom that comes from above,
That warns those in danger with tenderest love;
I want the sweet spirit of Jesus, my Lord,
And perfect accordance with his blessed Word.

I want to touch lightly the things of this earth,
Esteeming them only of trifling worth;
From sin and its bondage I would be set free,
And live, my dear Savior, live only for thee.



Page 95 from "Hymns of Dawn" Hymnal



PEACE

Lesson Text: Matthew 5:9

When Jesus was born, the angels in heaven announced to the shepherds: *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”* (Luke 2:14) But, has there ever really been *Peace on Earth*? Ever since Adam and Eve were sent out of the *peaceful Garden of Eden*, there has been strife among their children. This is due to sin and selfishness. But, Jesus came to pay the penalty for sin (death) and to one day bring about lasting PEACE throughout the earth.

These words of *Peace on Earth* spoken by the angels in heaven were prophetic of a better day in the near future, when ALL people shall be blessed by the *good tidings of great joy*, when the hearts of ALL people shall be filled with *great joy*, and when there shall be *good will* among ALL people everywhere.



Even though this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, we know that God's promises are guaranteed, because what God says, He will do: *“So shall my Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please.... For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing....”* Isaiah 55:11, 12

Until that day when we see *Peace on Earth*, we can show to our friends and neighbors just what this *Fruit of Righteousness* is by being *peacemakers* ourselves. When others call a person bad names, we can do just the opposite and find something nice to say about that person. When others complain about the food, the weather or other small things, we can say how thankful we are that we have the good things that we do — there are so many in the world who have nothing! When others say something hurtful to us, we can say something nice to them that gives them a compliment and makes them feel good. And, if that doesn't work, we can do our best to just walk away from someone who is mean-spirited. This is what it is like to be a *peacemaker*. Jesus said: *"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."* Matthew 5:9

The wicked religious rulers always tried to pick a fight with Jesus to make him look bad in front of others. When this happened, Jesus would not get angry and say bad words back to them, but would give them a helpful lesson. A good example of this is found in Matthew 22:15-22. The Pharisees sent their students to Jesus to ask him a question, thinking that they would get Jesus in trouble with the Roman government. They asked Jesus if it was lawful for the Hebrews to pay taxes to Caesar. But Jesus could read that their hearts were wicked and that they were trying to trick him, so instead of answering the question directly, he just asked them a question right back. He asked the students, *"Whose image is on the tax money?"* The students of the Pharisees told Jesus that the emperor's image was on the coins. Jesus then said to them, *"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."* When they heard these words, they marveled at Jesus' wisdom and left him alone.

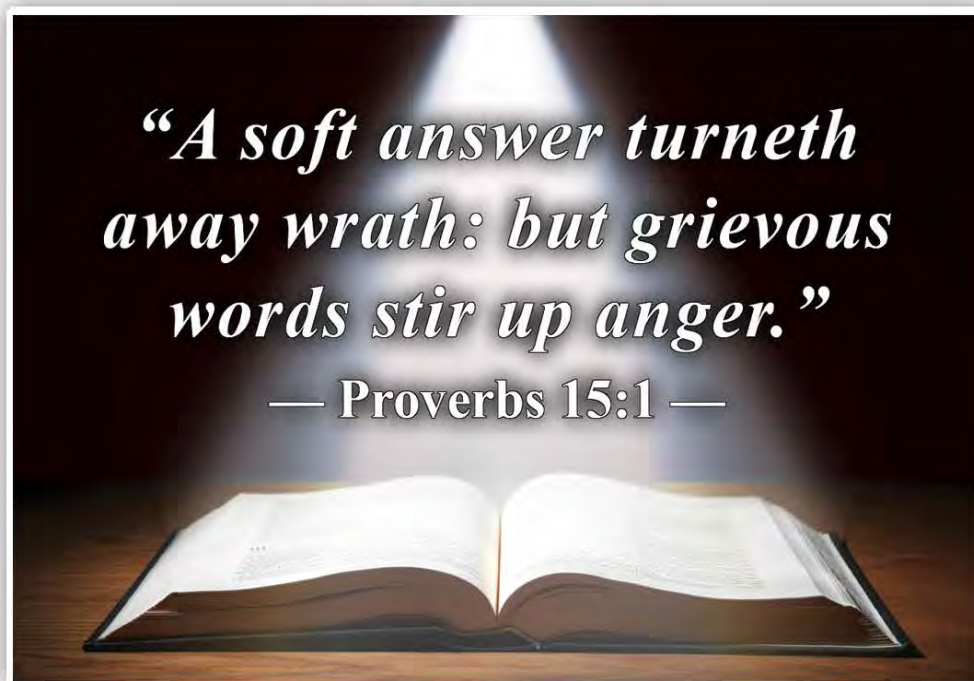
*"Render therefore unto
Caesar the things which are
Caesar's; and unto God the
things that are God's."*

— Matthew 22:21 —



By answering a question with a question, Jesus gave a good example of being a *peacemaker*. Rather than getting all upset and trying to “*render evil for evil*,” Jesus taught a valuable lesson. “*See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.*” 1 Thessalonians 5:15

There is a scripture that says, “*The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips. Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.*” (See all of Proverbs 16:20-24.) This means that we should think twice before speaking — examine what we are about to say — so that we can keep from making difficult matters even worse. Even if we have to correct someone’s behavior at times, we should do so lovingly, and that way our words will have a positive influence rather than turn someone away in anger.



There were times when Jesus needed to defend the truth on a matter of importance. We should all defend principles of truth and righteousness. But Jesus never defended himself — no, he defended his Heavenly Father’s character and merciful plan, and he did so carefully. We must also remember that Jesus could read the heart intentions of other people. We cannot, so we need to be *extra* careful with our words — only criticizing bad behavior and not another person’s motives and honor. For example, if you saw a student in school stealing lunch from another student’s locker, you might go to a teacher and explain the behavior, but you should not say that you think that person is evil. Perhaps that person comes from a very poor family and has no way to pay for food. We might even tell the teacher that this could be the reason why the student is taking food and not taking money. We should do our best to remember that “*Love thinketh no evil.*” (1 Corinthians 13:5) This can be very hard sometimes, but being a *peacemaker* means that we will look for ways to help and not hurt.

Jesus was always very careful not to harm anyone. He taught his disciples to be *peacemakers*, too. When Jesus and his Apostles were in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night before he died on the cross, he provided another valuable lesson. Judas betrayed Jesus and then brought men bearing weapons to take Jesus to the religious rulers. Jesus did not struggle, and, when Peter took his sword and cut off the ear of one of the chief priest's men, Jesus healed the man and told Peter to *put away his sword*. Jesus was like a *"sheep that was silent before his shearers."* (Isaiah 53:7) Jesus was arrested, and when he stood before Pilate Jesus said, *"My Kingdom is not of this world: if my Kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight..."* John 18:1-11, 36; Matthew 26:47-56



It is not always *easy*, but by being a *peacemaker*, we can have *peace* with others and be at *peace* in our own hearts knowing that we have done the very best that we could and that God will provide as He sees best. *"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."* (Romans 12:18) There is a *peaceful rest* which only comes by developing this *Fruit of Righteousness*. *"And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."* James 3:18

The world of mankind will soon recognize Jesus as the Messiah, the *"Prince of Peace,"* about whom the angels sang. (Isaiah 9:6) Meanwhile, we can do our best to be *peacemakers* now. As the song says, *"Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me..."* What a good witness we can be by being at *peace* and by being a *peacemaker*.

PEACE

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. There has been *peace on earth* ever since Jesus was born a babe in Bethlehem.

True False

2. *Good tidings of great joy* shall be to:

- a. me! I don't care about anyone else.
- b. just to Christians now.
- c. ALL people.

3. God's prophecies always have and always will come to pass. God keeps His promises.

True False

4. When we hear others complaining or when they get angry we should:

- a. join in and do the same.
- b. yell at them to stop it.
- c. set an example and say something that brings a *peaceful calm* to the situation.

5. Jesus said that the *peacemakers* are *blessed*.

True False

6. Jesus' Kingdom is not of this world:

- a. but if it was, his disciples would fight.
- b. and he sent his disciples out to fight with the Scribes and Pharisees.
- c. and so he took a job in the Temple.

7. All of the Pharisees loved Jesus and what he had to say. They told their students to learn the good things that Jesus taught his disciples.

True False

8. Instead of fighting against his enemies, Jesus:

- a. compromised with their errors.
- b. found a way to teach valuable lessons.
- c. turned them over to the Roman soldiers.

9. The Pharisees always looked for a way to make Jesus look bad by asking him difficult questions that they thought he would not be able to answer.

True False

10. The students of the Pharisees:

- a. marveled at how well Jesus answered their question about paying taxes.
- b. laughed at Jesus' answer to their question.
- c. kept asking more tricky questions.

11. A "*soft answer*" means that you don't get angry back, but speak calming and *peaceably*. Proverbs 15:1

True False

12. If we are a *peacemaker*, we will:

- a. find riches and fame.
- b. also be at *peace* in our hearts.
- c. stir up trouble.

13. The *fruit of peace* will give us rest at difficult times.

True False

14. The Messiah is:

- a. a pharaoh in Egyptian mythology.
- b. a prophet from the Old Testament.
- c. the *Prince of Peace* in God's Kingdom.

Be at PEACE & Be PEACEABLE

FILL IN THE WORD

CHOOSE FROM THE LIST OF WORDS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE

Ever since Adam was sent out of the *peaceful Garden*, there has been _____ among his children.

The angels sang of *peace* and _____ which shall be to ALL mankind.

Remember: "*Pleasant words are as an _____.*" — Proverbs 16:24

"A soft answer turneth away _____." — Proverbs 15:1

Think _____ before speaking to keep matters from getting worse.

Render unto _____ the things that are his and give to God the things that are His.

The _____ were always trying to trick Jesus and make him look bad in front of others.

Jesus was "*like a _____ before his shearers.*" — Isaiah 53:7

"*Blessed are the _____ for they shall be called the children of God.*" — Matthew 5:9

Jesus told the Apostle Peter to put away his _____.

1 Corinthians 13:5 says that "*_____ thinketh no evil.*"

Jesus is the Messiah and will be the "*_____ of Peace*" in the Kingdom of God. — Isaiah 9:6

TWICE	SWORD	HONEYCOMB
SHEEP	STRIFE	PRINCE
GOOD WILL	CAESAR	PEACEMAKERS
PHARISEES	WRATH	LOVE

PEACE in Action

“Purity of heart toward God manifests itself in peaceable desires and efforts to promote peace in others.” — Reprint 2588



ONCE UPON A GOSSIP

Loralynn was at it again. She had her little group of girlfriends huddled around her, all sharing another juicy bit of gossip about somebody. Tonya tried to stay out of it by keeping busy at her locker, but suddenly she heard her name in the whispers. As the girls broke out into laughter, Tonya began to quickly walk away — she had been teased by them before and was not about to have another confrontation. But now she could just feel that Loralynn was approaching her. *“Oh, Tonya,”* Loralynn said with a snicker, *“I heard that you were spotted at the thrift store buying your Homecoming dress.”*

Tonya had just asked her Mom the night before what she should do in these uncomfortable situations. They had a long discussion about how Christians should be *peacemakers*, but it is easier to talk about it than to actually live it in real life. Based on the conversation Tonya had with her Mom about the Scriptures, which way do you think Tonya decided to respond?

Tonya turned around with a snap and barked out, *“Now what?! Do you think that’s funny? Well, your Homecoming dress looks like your Mom made it out of a bunch of old rags!”*

Tonya ran away crying all the way to the principal’s office where she insisted that the principal make Loralynn apologize for being a big, fat gossip and a stupid liar!

Tonya turned around slowly with a smile and said, *“Hi Loralynn. I’m sorry, I didn’t quite understand what you said.”* And before Loralynn could open her mouth, Tonya continued, *“I didn’t get the chance to tell you, but I saw you at the mall when you were showing your Mom your dress, and it is beautiful! I’m so happy for you.”* Loralynn was so shocked that all she could answer was, *“Thank you, Tonya, I hope you find a nice dress, too.”*

Let Me Walk with Thee

“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.” — Luke 8:15



O Master, let me walk with Thee in lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret, help me bear the strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear, winning word of love;
Teach me the wayward feet to stay, and guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me Thy patience, still with Thee, in closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong, in trust that triumphs over wrong.

In hope that sends a shining ray far down the future's broadening way;
In peace that only Thou canst give, with Thee, O Master let me live.



Patience

— Hymn 312A from “Hymns of Dawn”



PATIENCE

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel Chapters 16-26

PATIENCE is a wonderful *Fruit of Righteousness*, but it is very difficult to be *patient* when you really want something right away. It is also difficult to be *patient* with other people, because they may not do something the way you want them to do it. When we are not *patient* we can become worriers, we can easily become angry, and we can start to find fault with others. None of these things will help us to be good Christian examples. Therefore, it is important to learn to be *patient* during our troubling experiences and when it is hard to work with difficult people.

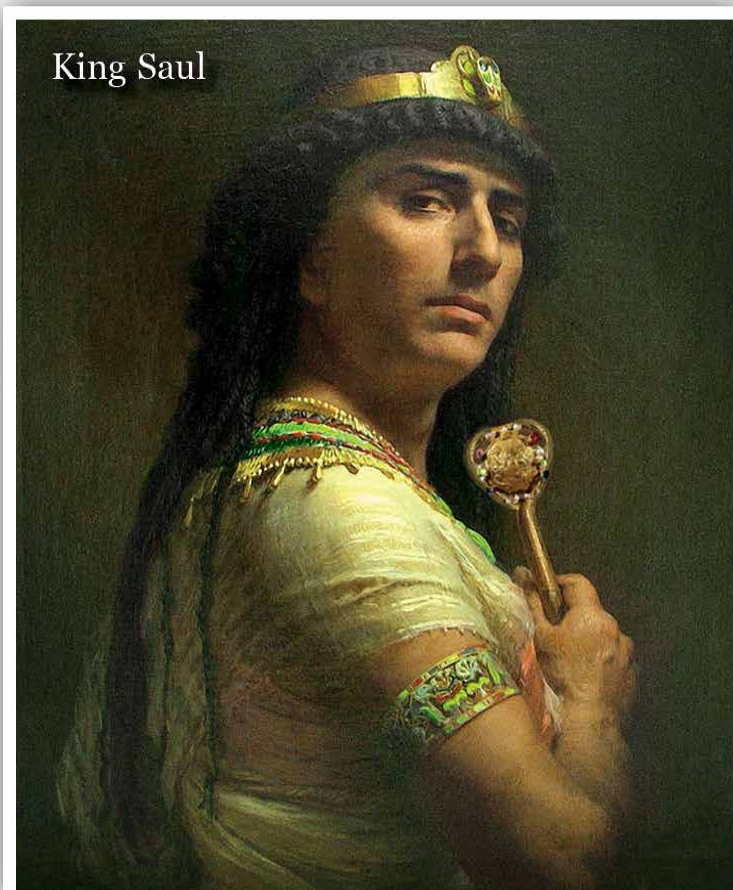
Who is the most *patient* of all? It is God! From the foundation of the world, He awaits to reveal His loving plan to ALL mankind. Sadly, many who do not understand His ways, blame God for all their unhappiness! The Bible says that God is *long-suffering*. This means that He is very *patient* with His creation, and He is preparing for the time when they will learn just how *patient* He has been.

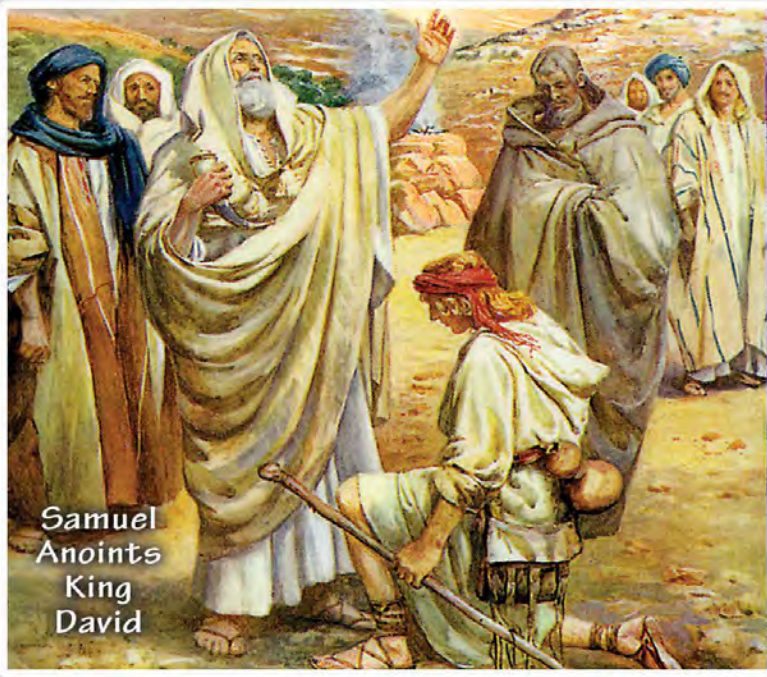
Ancient Israel's King David gave a very good example of being *patient* when his experiences were difficult and when people made his trials even more difficult. At the time when our lesson begins, Saul was King over Israel. But God was

displeased with Saul, for he had become a very *impatient*, jealous and angry man. Saul did not wait *patiently* for God to work out His plans for the Nation of Israel.

King Saul was not obedient to the Lord's commands to him. He manifested self-will. Even when given special directions through the Prophet Samuel, Saul thought that he knew better. God would then reprove Saul with the purpose of instructing him, but Saul did not learn the lessons, nor did he humble himself.

Therefore, God decided to select another King for His chosen people. So, while Saul was still King of Israel, God sent His servant Samuel to anoint





a young man, David, to one day become Israel's King. But, young David would have to wait *patiently* for several years to be accepted as King by the people. During this time, King Saul was unaware that David was God's special choice to replace him when the time was right.

You might remember the story when David killed the mighty giant Goliath. At that time, King Saul was very pleased with David, and soon he made David chief of his army. After David won many battles for King Saul, the women

of Israel sang: *"Saul has killed thousands, but David tens of thousands."* (1 Samuel 18:7) This made Saul very jealous, because David was given more honor than Saul by the people. More importantly, David was blessed by God, making Saul even more jealous.

King Saul liked to listen to music, because it calmed his nerves. David was a very good poet and harp player, and Saul enjoyed relaxing to his music. But one day Saul's jealousy caused him to take his spear and thrust it at David, saying: *"I will pin David to the wall!"* But David escaped from Saul's anger. Saul tried another time to kill David with the spear, but again, David escaped.

The anointing of David to be Israel's King was kept a secret, but Saul began to suspect that God's favor was with David and that the people of Israel loved David more, especially after David delivered Israel from Goliath and won a number of battles. King Saul selfishly desired that his own family should continue to sit upon the throne of Israel, and so he was determined to destroy David.

One day Saul told his son Jonathan that he planned to kill David. But Jonathan loved his friend David as a brother and tried to reason with his father. *"Please don't hurt David. He has never done anything to hurt you, but has always tried to help you — risking his very life to defend you and our people,*



the Nation of Israel.” Saul seemed to listen for a time, but when David was brought back to play the harp, Saul again threw his spear at David. After escaping a third time, David knew that he must run away and hide. For about seven years David ran from place to place from jealous King Saul and his army.

Over and over, David showed kindness to King Saul. David could have even killed Saul many times, but David said to himself and to his companions that they should not harm God’s anointed. (1 Chronicles 16:22) In fact, when King Saul was killed in battle, David mourned for him. David loved even the enemy who tried to kill him.

For many long years, David waited *patiently* for God’s timing. He trusted that God would fulfill His promise and one day make him King over Israel. He simply stood ready for the responsibilities and the power of the office as Israel’s King. What a wonderful example of *patience* that we are shown by King David’s character! How valuable it would be for all of us to learn this lesson of *patience* — waiting upon the Lord to direct us in His own time and in His own way.

In many ways, the life of King David is a picture of the life of Jesus. Like King David, Jesus always trusted God’s will for him: “*Not My will, but Thine be done.*” (Luke 22:42) When Jesus was just thirty years old, God



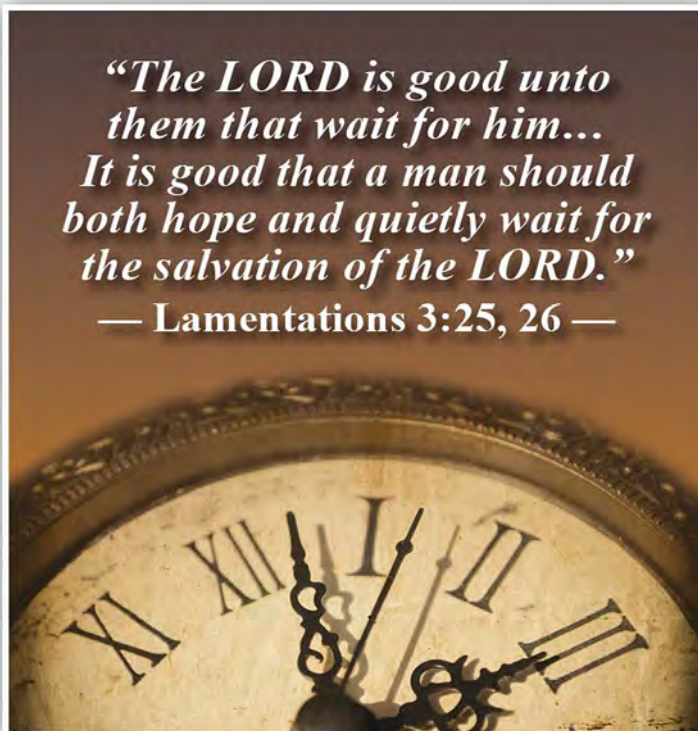
anointed Jesus to one day be the King over Israel and the entire world. Jesus has waited many long centuries to begin his Messianic reign of righteousness. He has been *patiently* waiting for God’s *Divine Plan of the Ages* to work out all of the details.

One of these details is to call out a people for God’s name — the true Church. Jesus called his followers a “*little flock.*” (Luke 12:32) It has taken almost two thousand years to complete this Church. This group is to be 144,000 brave and faithful Christians. There will be a much larger number who will also be faithful, and receive a heavenly reward, but these are not as brave as the “*little flock.*” This will be a “*great multitude*” who will serve *before, but not on* God’s throne. (Revelation 7:4, 9, 13-15) Once all of God’s faithful ones have finished their sacrifice on earth, they will live in heaven and will help Jesus in the work of “*blessing all the families of the earth*” in God’s Kingdom. Genesis 28:14

Acts 15:14-17 describes this time for which God, Jesus and his faithful Church have been *patiently* waiting. *“Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.... After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the rest of mankind might seek after the Lord....”*

The world of mankind does not know it yet, but they are waiting for the promise of the Kingdom, too. The Apostle Paul said that they are *“groaning in pain”* waiting for the fulfillment of God’s plans. (Romans 8:20-23) But, we can see by the trouble throughout the earth that they are not waiting *patiently*. They want to fix things themselves and establish their own kingdoms without God. But, God will bring His Kingdom to pass in due time and then *“the desire of all nations will come.”* Haggai 2:7

The Bible says, *“Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart...”* (Psalm 27:14) Time is an important element in all of God’s plans. We should never be disappointed when we do not receive the blessings we want right



away. We need to remember that God took a very long time to create the earth and to prepare it for mankind to live upon. It took a long time for God’s plans to work out just right until Jesus came to earth to be the world’s Redeemer. It is taking time to teach the world the *exceeding sinfulness of sin* during a time when God is *permitting evil*. (Romans 7:13) It is taking time to *“call out a people for God’s name.”* God has not forgotten our prayers when we pray for the right things. If God thinks that it would be good to give us something that we want, He will provide this *in due time*. But, if He says *Wait*, we need to learn to be *patient*. If He says *No*, then we need to be thankful too, because He always knows the best thing for us.

PATIENCE

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. It is so very easy to be *patient* with others, especially when they are doing the opposite of what we would want them to do.

True False

2. When we lose our *patience*:

- a. we become good examples.
- b. we are in danger of losing our temper.
- c. we are happy and at peace.

3. God is the most *patient* of all, because He is long-suffering and merciful.

True False

4. King Saul started out humble but became:

- a. interested in ancient sports.
- b. a kind and gentle shepherd.
- c. a jealous, hateful and angry ruler.

5. God anointed David to be king, and David took the throne of Saul away immediately.

True False

6. David loved and respected King Saul, and Saul:

- a. loved David even more.
- b. was jealous of David because of David's honor among God and men.
- c. built a statue for David in his honor.

7. Jonathan, King Saul's son, tried to protect David from Saul's jealousy and rage, but Saul continued to try to kill David.

True False

8. David pictured Jesus because:

- a. Jesus has waited for a very long time to begin his Messianic reign of righteousness.
- b. Jesus played the harp too, and sang with his Apostles on the streets of Jerusalem to make a little extra money to live on.
- c. Jesus was a mighty military man of war.

9. The Bible says that Jesus' brave and faithful followers would only be a *little flock* of 144,000.

True False

10. In heaven, there will also be:

- a. people who play the harp.
- b. a surprising number of bad people.
- c. a *great multitude* which no one can number who were faithful, but not as brave.

11. Once all of the faithful, including Christ, his *little flock* and the *great multitude* are in heaven, they will begin to bless all the families of the earth.

True False

12. The whole creation is:

- a. going to go to heaven after a great war.
- b. groaning together in pain and waiting for the completion of God's merciful plan.
- c. happy the way things are.

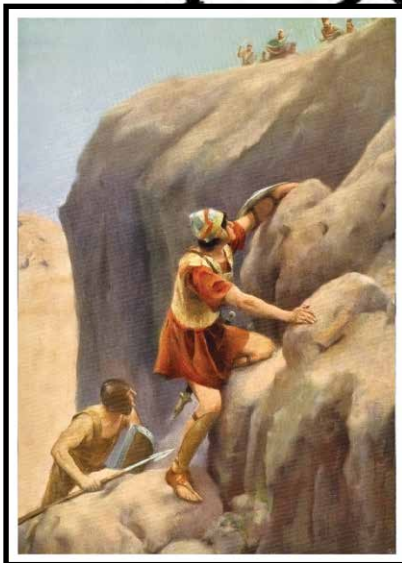
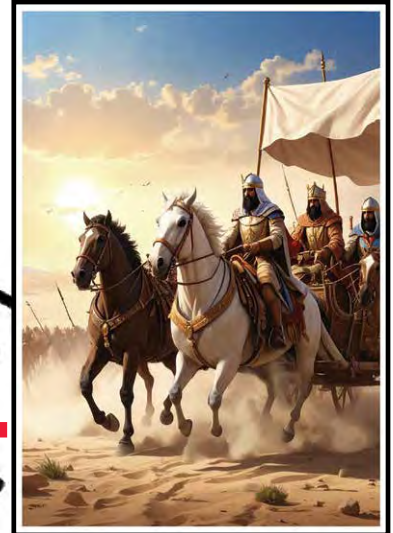
13. In all of God's plans, a very important element is:

- a. money.
- b. worry.
- c. time.

PATIENCE

“The Maze of Patience”

Help David find a place of safety
from King Saul and his army.
But be patient, this may take a while.



PATIENCE in Action

“But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” — Romans 8:25



THE LESSON OF THE BUTTERFLY

A story is told of a man who wished to add a Monarch Butterfly to his vast collection of insects. One autumn day, while on a hike, he came across a chrysalis hanging on a milkweed stem along the trail edge. He carefully clipped off the stem at the ground and brought the chrysalis home where he hung it up in his office.

The man inspected the chrysalis every day in great anticipation, and in just two weeks, he could see the it turning crystal clear with the gorgeous butterfly nestled inside. “At last,” he thought, “My collection will soon be complete!”

Watching anxiously, the man found the Monarch trying to emerge from its long sleep. The hole was very small, and the creature seemed to struggle hopelessly against the strong fiber of the chrysalis. The man could not wait any longer! He said to himself, “I have waited long enough, and this beautiful butterfly seems to be struggling endlessly. I will snip the hole larger so that he can escape his prison!”

The Monarch did free itself from the chrysalis with greater ease, but its wings never matured, and it was never able to fly. The man then decided to read up on metamorphosis and discovered that the struggles were necessary to force juices of the body into the insect’s great wings so that they might mature. The man’s *impatience* and intended act of kindness cut short the effort needed for the butterfly’s freedom.

There is an important moral to this story. The struggles that we all have in life actually help us to grow and mature in Christian character. If we bring forth the *fruitage* of our character with *patience*, then these struggles will bring us wonderful blessings.

“The trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” — James 1:3, 4

Try a Little Kindness

“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love...” — Romans 12:10



If you see your brother standin' by the road
With a heavy load from the seeds he's sowed.
And if you see your sister fallen by the way,
Just stop and say, *“You're goin' the wrong way.”*

You've got to try a little kindness, yes, show a little kindness,
Shine your light for everyone to see;
And if you try a little kindness, then you'll overlook the blindness
Of the narrow minded people on their narrow minded streets.

Don't walk around the down and out,
Lend a helping hand, instead of doubt;
And the kindness that you show every day
Will help someone along their way.

You've got to try a little kindness, yes, show a little kindness,
Shine your light for everyone to see;
And if you try a little kindness, then you'll overlook the blindness
Of the narrow minded people on their narrow minded streets.



— Page 104 from *“I Will Sing!”* Hymnal
(MUSIC 1969, PYG Austin/Sapaugh)



KINDNESS

Lesson Text: Matthew 26:6-13

Other words for being KIND might be NICE or THOUGHTFUL. Did you ever have someone do something for you that was very thoughtful and *kind*? How did it make you feel? It made you feel special and loved — like you were important to that person. Remember the scripture in our lesson on *peace*? — *“Kind words are like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.”* (Proverbs 16:24) Kindness is an outgrowth of LOVE which shines forth to others in what we say and do.

People who do *kind* things and say nice things usually do it because they truly like to help others, and it makes them feel good to be *kind*. It is very hard to be angry or sad and to be *kind* at the same time. So, if we are feeling angry or sad, what is the best way to get out of that feeling? — it is to do something thoughtful for someone else.



Have you ever heard the phrase, *“You can catch more bees with honey than you can with vinegar”*? Another way to put this is, *“If you want to make a friend, be a friend.”* All this means is, if you want to be treated *kindly*, you should first be *kind* yourself, even to those who might not be very nice people. Some people live very difficult lives and just need a little smile from another person to warm up their hearts. In Luke 6:33-36 Jesus said: *“If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same... But love ye your enemies, and do good... and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”*

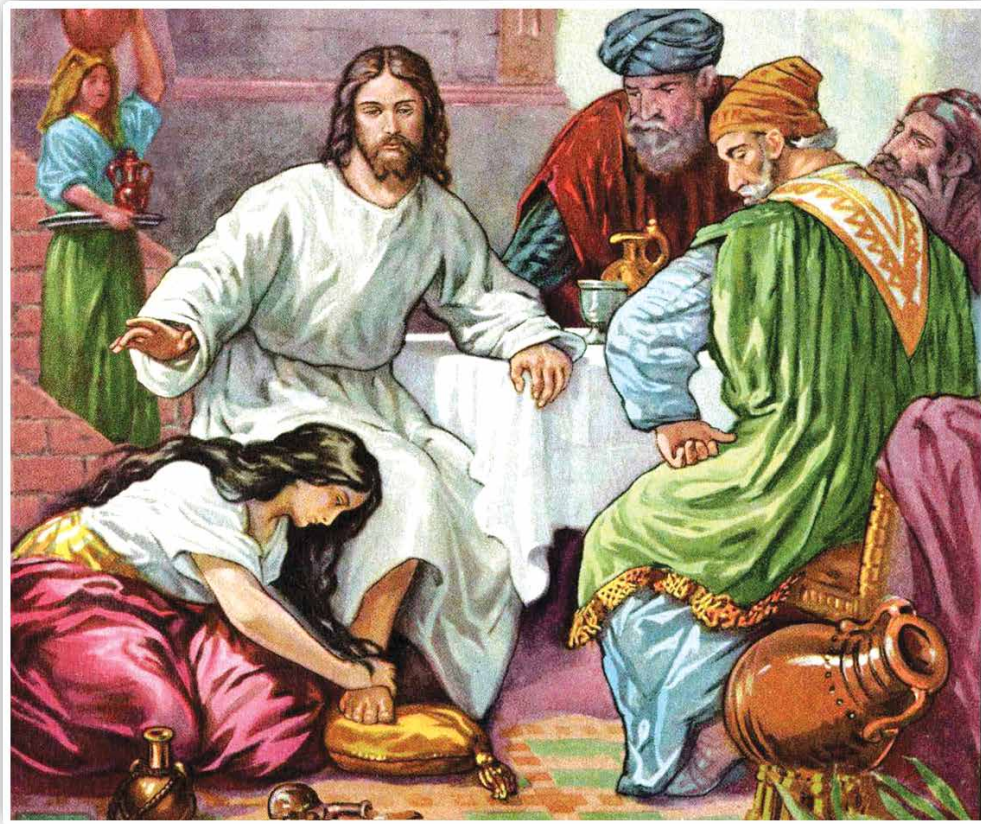
Have you ever known anyone who has a mean and grumpy attitude? Bullies are mean-spirited. They say and do things that hurt another person's feelings. They may even hurt another person physically. If you know someone like this, how does this person's behavior make you feel? It probably makes you feel uncomfortable and fearful. You probably don't want to be around that person, and you will avoid talking to the person. As Christians, we certainly do not want to be a mean and grumpy person. What *kind* of example would we be to others? Instead, we should be *kind* and a friend to as many people as possible, because then the Lord will be glorified by our *fruit of kindness*. "*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*" John 15:8

Jesus showed the *kind* act of service when he washed his Apostles' feet at the last supper. In Jesus' time, walking was the most common way to travel, and roads were very dusty or even muddy. It was not a pleasant task to wash another person's dirty feet, but it was very helpful and *kind* to do so. Jesus wanted his followers to know that *acts of kindness* are not always easy, and they may take our time, but these acts provide a way to be an instrument of God's blessing to others.



Another lesson of feet washing is found in John 12:1-8. It tells of a *kindness* given to Jesus just a few days before he was crucified. It also tells of a bully who was very critical of the person who was bestowing this *kindness*. At the time of this lesson, Jesus and his Apostles were invited to a supper at the house of

Lazarus, Mary and Martha. *“Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure spikenard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said, ‘Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?’ Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to steal what was put into it. Therefore Jesus said, ‘Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.’”* Matthew 26:13 adds this important comment of Jesus: *“Truly I say to you, wherever this Gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her.”* Even though Judas did not appreciate Mary’s act of loving kindness, Jesus blessed and defended her. Jesus wanted us to remember Mary’s loving kindness, and he was eternally grateful for it.



Who in this lesson would you like to have as your friend — Mary or Judas? Why? Is it because Judas acted like a bully in front of all those people by accusing Mary of being foolish for wasting so much money? *“To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.”* (Titus 1:15, 16) This scripture explains what God thinks of rude, unkind and mean-spirited behavior. If someone has an impure heart, then

they will look at the *kind* acts of others as foolish and a waste of time. They say things in an attempt to make themselves look more powerful and superior, but in reality, it only makes them look weak and heartless.

Even though Jesus corrected Judas for his thoughtless and *unkind* behavior, Jesus treated Judas with *kindness* right up to the very end. Jesus gave Judas every opportunity to repent, seek forgiveness and learn from his mistakes. When Judas came to betray Jesus into the hands of the chief priests and captains of the temple, Jesus said, “*Friend, wherefore art thou come?*” “*Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?*” (Matthew 26:50; Luke 22:48) Jesus did not fight back or say harsh words to Judas. No, Jesus was *kind*, and he gently rebuked him, still giving Judas an opportunity to repent.



Judas' behavior was the opposite of *kindness*. It was selfish and destructive. But Mary's action was a good example of *kindness*, because it was done purely out of love. She did not do her *kind* act because she wanted to receive praise. She would have acted *kindly*, even if no one saw her gift of love. All of the acts of *kindness* we do should be because we love to be *kind*. It makes us feel good, but it is also a good witness of how a Christian behaves. What act of *kindness* will you do today?

KINDNESS

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. An excellent way to stop feeling angry or sad is to do an act of *kindness* for someone. — Luke 6:35

True False

2. “You can catch more bees with honey than you can with vinegar.”

- a. means that you should catch bees to sting people you do not like.
- b. is a *word picture* that means you will make more friends if you treat people *kindly*.
- c. means that we should eat more honey.

3. God is *kind* to both the good people as well as to the unthankful and to the unfaithful. Luke 6:35

True False

4. Bullies are:

- a. usually grumpy and mean-spirited.
- b. happy and fun to be around.
- c. usually helpful and *kind* to others.

5. We can be a good example, and we can glorify God if we are *kind* to others.

True False

6. Mary was a disciple of Jesus and she wanted to:

- a. avoid being near Jesus because Jesus was going to get into trouble and die.
- b. sell her perfume for a lot of money.
- c. do a *kind* act for Jesus before he died.

7. Judas was an Apostle of Jesus who was very helpful to him, especially just before Jesus died.

True False

8. Jesus used the experience of Mary and her *kindness* to him:

- a. to teach a valuable lesson.
- b. to point out flaws in her character.
- c. to make his hair smell good.

9. Judas carried the money bag for Jesus and the Apostles — he also stole money secretly.

True False

10. Judas was critical of Mary because:

- a. he would have been even more loving.
- b. he was selfish, hurtful, and he wanted to look like he was more noble than Mary.
- c. Mary didn't understand finances.

11. Jesus was so comforted by Mary's generous and loving gift that he said that her *kindness* would be told to future generations as a *memorial* to her.

True False

12. Judas acted like a bully by being very critical.

True False

13. Judas' example over the generations:

- a. is a good way to encourage others.
- b. has shown us how NOT to behave.
- c. teaches people how to save money.

14. Mary's act of *kindness*:

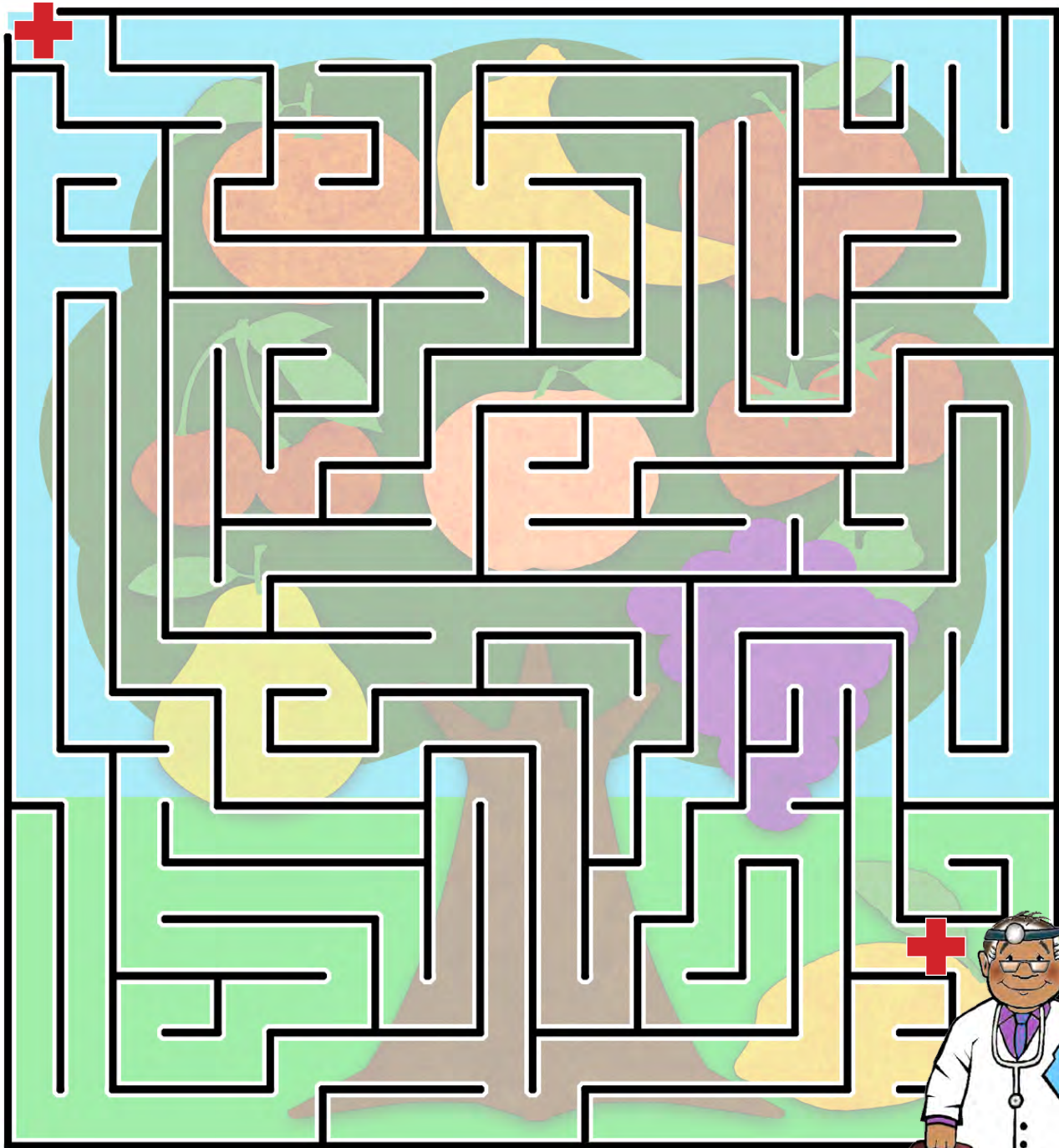
- a. was done simply out of love for Jesus.
- b. was a waste, because Jesus died anyway.
- c. was only for attention.

KINDNESS



Help Grandma Get to Her Doctor Appointment

It takes a little of our time to help others, but acts of kindness provide a benefit for them and for ourselves. Most importantly, they glorify God!



KINDNESS in Action

"...add to your faith... brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, love." — 2 Peter 1:5, 7

THE LION & THE MOUSE

A small Mouse crept up to a sleeping Lion. As he stood and admired the Lion's great mane, the Mouse thought, "Since he is sleeping — I think I'll do a little exploring." With that, the little Mouse jumped up onto the Lion's tail, ran across his back, up over his mane and down to his huge front paw.

Little did the Mouse know that the Lion was aware of this journey that the Mouse took. With lightning speed the Lion grabbed the Mouse between his sharp claws. "Please!" cried the helpless Mouse, "Please let me go, and I'll come back one day to help you."



"Oh, little Mouse," laughed the Lion, "You could never help me — you are too small and weak! Perhaps I should have you as a snack — at least your life would be good for something. Then again, you are so pitiful that I think I'll let you go this time — but never come back and bother me again!"

"Oh, thank you!" shouted the little Mouse, as he jumped out of the grasp of the Lion and on to freedom. He ran so fast and so far away that the Lion would never be able to find him.

The next day, while the Lion slept, two hunters came to the Lion's den and silently set up a trap to capture the mighty beast. Soon the Lion awoke, and when he ambled off, a rope snapped tightly around his paw. The Lion roared in pain as he struggled desperately to break free! But the struggle just tightened the rope even more around his aching paw.

From a distance, the little Mouse heard the Lion's pitiful roar echoing through the night. "It is the Lion! I recognize his roar! I should help him — but he warned me never to come back!" Still, the Mouse had compassion on the helpless Lion, and he ran off to see what he could do to help.

Fearlessly, the Mouse jumped up onto the very paw that had trapped him earlier. He began to nibble and chew until the rope broke apart. Finally free, the Lion stood up tall — towering over the tiny Mouse. Looking down upon the helpless Mouse he said, "Dear friend, I am ashamed that I made fun of your size. You are not weak at all! By your kindness and compassion, you saved me, your enemy, and I thank you."

From that moment on, the little Mouse and the mighty Lion remained friends, looking out for each other, and, together, they sought out ways to help others with their acts of kindness.

What is the moral of this story? Check as many as apply:

- It may be hard to help your enemies, but in the end, enemies might become friends if you show *kindness* and *compassion*.
- Never doubt that God can take even the weakest of his children to be an instrument of His blessing to others.
- Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
- Generosity, *kindness* and charity are never wasted.

Make Me a Blessing

“And let us not be weary in well doing... As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” — Galatians 6:9,10



Out in the highways and byways of life, many are weary and sad.
Carry the sunshine where darkness is rife, making the sorrowing glad.

Make me a blessing, make me a blessing, out of my life may Jesus shine.
Make me a blessing, O Savior, I pray, make me a blessing to someone today.

Tell the sweet glory of Christ and his love, tell of his pow'r to forgive;
Others will trust him if only you prove true, every moment you live.

Make me a blessing, make me a blessing, out of my life may Jesus shine.
Make me a blessing, O Savior, I pray, make me a blessing to someone today.

Give as 'twas given to you in your need, love as the Master loved you;
Be to the helpless a helper indeed, unto your mission be true.

Make me a blessing, make me a blessing, out of my life may Jesus shine.
Make me a blessing, O Savior, I pray, make me a blessing to someone today.



— Page 77 from the “I Will Sing!” Hymnal

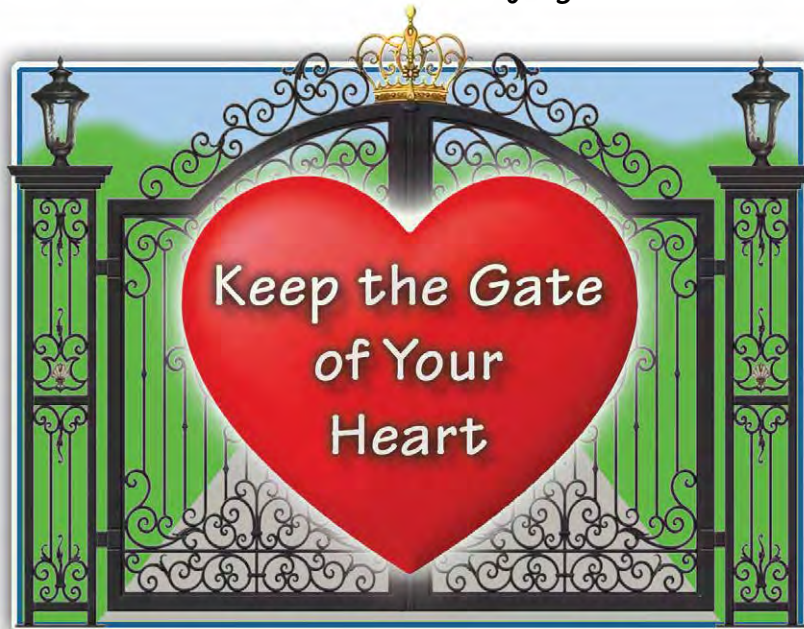


GOODNESS

Lesson Text: Galatians 6:10

There were only three people who ever lived who were ever perfectly GOOD — Adam and Eve before they sinned, and Jesus. Someone is purely *good* if they are unstained from sin. But, ever since Adam and Eve disobeyed God, all of their descendants “...have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) So, why are we told to develop this *Fruit and Grace of Character* if none of us are able to really be pure and *good*? We can be pure and *good* in heart intention. And, with the help of Jesus, we can become more pure in heart every day if we ask forgiveness through him when we make sinful mistakes.

King David prayed to God: “Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous [intentionally willful] sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright...” (Psalms 19:12, 13) This is the key to being *good* in our heart. We can never be perfectly *good*, but we can show God and His Son Jesus that we are trying our best with their help.



How do we show God that we want our hearts to be *good*? We do this by our thoughts, words and actions. About our *thoughts*, Proverbs 23:7 says, “As he thinketh in his heart, so is he.” About our *words*, Matthew 12:34 says, “The mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.” About our *actions*, 1 John 3:18 says, “Let us love not in word and speech only, but also in action and truth.” What we think, say and do comes from our heart, so we should keep a close watch over the gates of our hearts to prevent sin from entering in. Our heart represent our will, so “...guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” Proverbs 4:23

Our *thoughts* are always active, even when we sleep. Our brain is the busiest part of our body. It takes a lot of effort and experience to train our minds to think the right way. We cannot do this all by ourselves. So by praying throughout the day, we should ask God to help us. It is much easier to just let our minds drift into areas that are not mentally healthy for us. What we watch on TV, what music we listen to, what books we read, who we keep as our friends — all have a powerful influence on what we think. This is why it is important to be careful of what we put into our minds, because these thoughts will influence our hearts, which in turn influence what we say and do. The Apostle Paul said, “...*whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*” Philippians 4:8

One day, a farmer asked his son to go to the barn and fill a basket full of wood chips. So, the son went and filled the basket to overflowing with chips. Rather pleased with himself, he brought the heavy basket to his father. His father then



said, “Now go and add to the basket thirty apples.” The son replied, “But father, the basket is already full, how can I add even one more apple?” “Exactly!” said the farmer, “If you fill your mind with chips, you won’t have room to fill it with the more important things.” This is a good lesson for all of us. Are we filling our minds with *good things* or of things which will be of no value?

It is not only important to guard our *thoughts*, but It is also very important to guard the *words* we are about to say. There is a wise proverb which

says that our words should have three gatekeepers. Is what we say *Kind*? Is what we say *Honest*? Is what we say *Necessary*? If we keep these three things in mind, then *goodness* will be a *Fruit of Character* which will grow in our hearts.

Oh how happy the world would be if everyone was careful of what they said to one another. But, sadly, many people do not guard their words. James 3:5 says, “...*the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!*” Careless words can cause misunderstandings. Many wars have even been started because of words spoken in anger, selfishness and jealousy.

Have you ever heard gossip about another person? The Bible tells us not to evil speak. *“For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile [lies].”* (1 Peter 3:10) We would not want anyone to speak evil about us, and we should not speak evil about others. *Evil speaking* is one thing, but we should also avoid *hearing evil*. If we hear something evil about another person, we should not spread it around like the little fire which grew and burned down an entire forest. It is far better to throw a bucket of cool water on the flame, to keep the fire of gossip from spreading.

The farmer from our previous story told his son to take an old feather pillow up to the barn loft window, cut open the pillow and then toss the feathers out into the wind. After doing so, the boy said, *“Father, that was fun!”* The father said, *“Now, son, I want you to take the pillowcase out to the field and gather up all the feathers.”* The boy said, *“But, father, the feathers have spread all over the countryside. How will I ever find them again?”* The farmer said, *“Exactly! Son, that is just like gossip. Once the gossip spreads, there is no way to gather back all the words once they have spread.”*



What an important lesson! It is best not to say anything bad about another person, because the information may be wrong, or the person may change for the better and the gossip may ruin their reputation forever. How much more loving it is to say something *good* about another person. *“A soothing tongue is a tree of life...”* Proverbs 15:4

The third part of a *good heart* is what we do — our *actions*. For example, whenever possible, what we wear should be modest and respectful — no different than if we were to meet faithful men and women of the Bible, such as Noah and Rebekah. Fashions today can sometimes be sloppy and even sensual, but is this how we would dress to meet someone we respect? Christians should live under Kingdom principles. This does not mean that we should wear only expensive, dress-up clothing, but it should be clean and wholesome. *“Let all things be done decently and in order.”* *“...whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”* 1 Corinthians 14:40; 10:31

Have you ever heard the phrase *“Actions speak louder than words”*? We never know how much our little efforts to do *good* will mean to someone. *“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”* (Galatians 6:10) This means that we will do *good* things for our

Christian friends and family, but also for those we may not know very well — such as others in our school or neighborhood who may need some help. It will definitely be a *good* witness to them of the *Fruits and Graces of Character*. But, it is not in just doing nice things for others, it is also doing these things without complaining. Doing *good* joyfully makes every task lighter and is truly helpful to others.

When the Apostle Paul said that we should do *good* unto *ALL*, does this mean that we have to do *good* even to those who don't like us or those who hurt us? The Apostle



quoted this Proverb: “*If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.... overcome evil with good.*” (Proverbs 25:21, 22 and Romans 12:20, 21) This is a strange statement. Wouldn't it hurt to put hot coals on someone's head?

Far back in Old Testament times people would heat their homes and cook their food with hot coals, but at times the fire would go out. Then a

family member would take the coal pan to a neighbor and ask for live coals of fire to be placed in the pan. People would often carry these coal pans on their head as they walked. They would bring these hot coals home to get their fire started again. Thus, it was a *good* thing to share coals of fire.

Jesus encouraged his disciples to “*Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you.*” (Luke 6:27) Why would Jesus want us to do *good* to those who are our enemies? Isn't that just giving them a reward for being bad? No, it may be that their attitude would change by seeing your *goodness*. By showing love to our enemies, then, it is hoped that they will come to understand that what they have done was wrong. Maybe they will respond by seeking your forgiveness and then returning the *goodness* you offered to them.

Let us continue to have *good* thoughts, speak *good* words and do *good* works, all to the glory of God. This will not only prepare us for the Kingdom, but it will help others to be ready to learn righteousness by our example. No one is perfect, but we should do our best to be *good* representatives of the household of faith and of the Kingdom. The words we say, and the things we do should show that we love God.

By living *good*, honest and respectable lives the *goodness* of Jesus our Master and example will shine through us. “*Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*” 1 Timothy 4:12

GOODNESS

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. Adam and Eve (before they sinned) and Jesus were the only three people who ever lived on earth who were *pure, perfect and good*.

True False

2. True *goodness* and purity:

- a. means being unstained from sin.
- b. is always going to be impossible.
- c. applies to animals only.

3. King David asked God to help him clean his heart from secret sins that he didn't know were there.

True False

4. We show God that we desire to be *good*:

- a. by being better than everyone else and only getting perfect grades in school.
- b. by being absolutely perfect.
- c. by doing our best to control our thoughts words and actions — with prayers for help.

5. It takes very little effort to be *good*.

True False

6. We should be careful to always:

- a. watch more movies so that we can't think of anything else.
- b. guard our thoughts, words and actions.
- c. listen to loud music, so that we can distract ourselves from our evil thoughts.

7. Our friends influence our thoughts, words and actions, so we should be careful of the friends we keep.

True False

8. The farmer asked his son to fill a basket full of wood chips so that he could:

- a. start a fire.
- b. teach his son a lesson in how to carry a basket properly so as not to spill and waste.
- c. teach his son the lesson that his mind can only hold a certain amount, and he should be careful what he puts into it.

9. The three gate keepers of what we say are:

1) is it *Kind*; 2) is it *True*; and 3) is it *Necessary*.

True False

10. Gossip and evil speaking are:

- a. compared to a little fire that grows until it covers an entire forest.
- b. not harmful if we only tell a few people.
- c. okay, as long as it isn't about our friends.

11. The lesson about the feathers was to teach the farmer's son that once gossip spreads, there is no way to take the gossip back.

True False

12. Being an example of one with a *good* Christian character means:

- a. we will listen to the gossip, because listening doesn't hurt anybody.
- b. we will spread gossip so we can be popular.
- c. we will show our faith by our *good* works.

13. We are to do *good* to our family, friends and:

- a. even to our enemies.
- b. to ourselves first.
- c. to no one else.

GOODNESS Crossword Puzzle

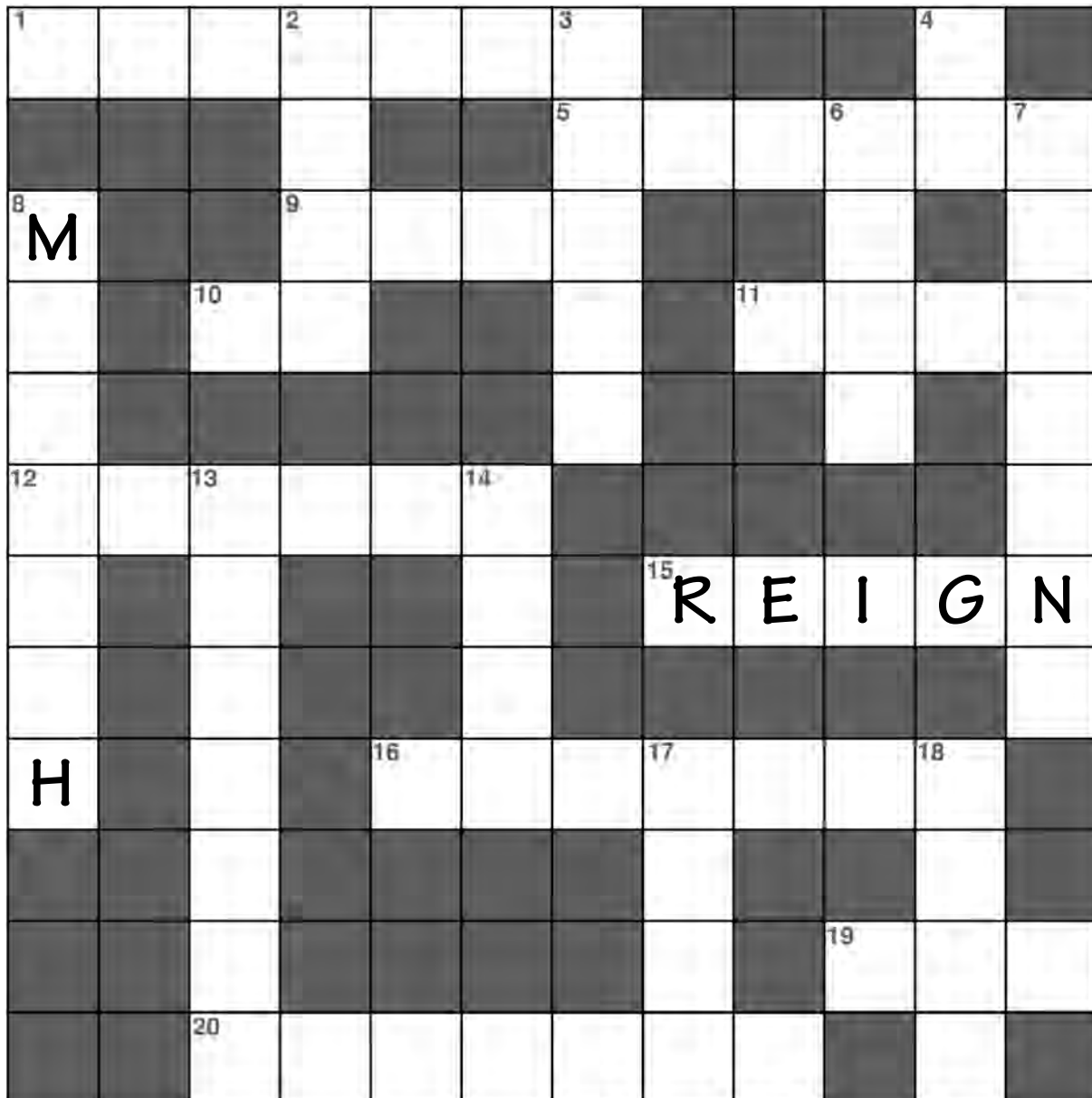
“Think on these things...” Fill in the words to these statements (see samples).

ACROSS

1. The opposite of SELFLESS is _____.
5. Rejoice in the Lord _____. Philippians 4:4
9. We _____ what we sow. Galatians 6:7
10. “_____ ye holy in all manner of conversation.”
1 Peter 1:15
11. “_____ not: I bring you good tidings.” Luke 2:10
12. “_____ and sighing shall flee away.” Isaiah 35:10
15. Jesus will _____ in righteousness. Romans 5:21
16. Jesus has the words of _____ life. John 6:68
19. God placed Adam and _____ in the Garden.
20. We are to do good even to our _____. Matthew 5:44

DOWN

2. Heap coals of _____ on your enemy’s head.
Romans 12:20 KJV
3. The opposite of SAD is _____.
4. Show your faith _____ your works. James 2:18
6. The “Divine Plan of the _____.”
7. Satan appeared to Eve as a _____.
8. The world is waiting for _____ to reign.
13. _____ and be glad in the Lord’s day. Psalm 118:24
14. To _____ is to be patient. Psalm 27:14
17. The whole human _____ will learn righteousness.
18. God is _____. 1 John 4:8



GOODNESS in Action

“...walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous. For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.” — Proverbs 2:20, 21



THE CANARY & THE SPARROWS

A story is told of a gentleman who had a beautiful singing canary. His friend wanted to see if he could teach his sparrows to sing by keeping the canary near them. He borrowed the canary, and placed her cage right next to his sparrows. However, instead of teaching the sparrows to sing her beautiful song, the poor canary got so confused among the chattering and chirping birds that she stopped singing altogether; she did nothing but chirp like the sparrows.

Quite distressed, the owner then took his canary back, but still she would not sing. It then occurred to him to put her beside another canary, which sang beautifully. This had the desired effect, and, regaining the former notes, his canary sang as lovely as ever.

Many Christians go, like the canary, into the company and atmosphere of those who are not righteous. As a result, they not only do not teach the world to sing their happy, glorious notes of praise, but they cannot sing the beautiful songs of praise among the worldly, and soon they learn the bitter, sour notes of the world. The best thing for such is to go back again into the company of happy, rejoicing Christians, who know the joyful sound. They will soon learn to sing the glorious notes of praise again, making melody in their hearts with the beautiful truth of God's love and mercy.

What is the moral of this story? Check as many as apply:

- It is easy to pick up bad habits from those of the world.
- “Bad company corrupts good character” so we should be careful of the company we keep. 1 Corinthians 15:33
- If we can't sing well, then we shouldn't sing at all.
- We know the loving plan of God, and should set the example of His *goodness* and mercy.

Lord of Reality

*“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works?
...Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works,
and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” — James 2:14, 18*



Lord of reality make me real. Show me Thy mighty works, great pow'r to feel.
Impart your love to me that I may be a person of reality.

Lord God Almighty take my hand, guide me on, let me stand —
Strong and mighty against the foe; Thy love in command.

Teach me Thy will, O Lord, teach me Thy ways. Teach me to know Thy word, teach me to pray.
Help me to understand, through you I see the beauty of reality.

Lord God Almighty take my hand, guide me on, let me stand —
Strong and mighty against the foe; Thy love in command.

Lord of reality, help me to know when others need of me, your love to show;
When life is not my own, then I can be a person of reality.

Lord God Almighty take my hand, guide me on, let me stand —
Strong and mighty against the foe; Thy love in command.



— Page 76 from “I Will Sing!” Hymnal



FAITHFULNESS

Lesson Text: Hebrews 11:1

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” This means that if we have FAITH in something, then we have absolute TRUST in it, even if we have never seen it with our eyes. For example, we have *faith* and TRUST that God exists, even though we have never actually seen Him. God has given us many prophecies that have come true, and this gives us confidence that He exists and that everything He has promised He will do.

To be FAITHFUL is to be full of faith in God and His promises. We can trust God, because the more we study the Bible, the more we can appreciate His *Divine Plan of the Ages*. (Ephesians 3:9-11) God said: *“...so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”* Isaiah 55:11

One prophecy that has come true and that adds to our faith in God is the return of the Jewish people to their homeland in Israel. God promised the Jews that He would gather them to Israel from all over the world. *“And I will bring again the captivity*



of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God.” Amos 9:14, 15

After two thousand years of the Jewish people being scattered all over the world, many have returned to the Land of their fathers, and they are now a Nation once again! Because of this prophetic fulfillment, we have *faith* that God will keep

His other promises about the Nation of Israel. He promised that Israel would one day help Him, His Son and His Heavenly family to “*bless all the families of the earth.*” (Genesis 22:18) From the prophecies and promises of God, we can be full of faith, because He is faithful and trustworthy.

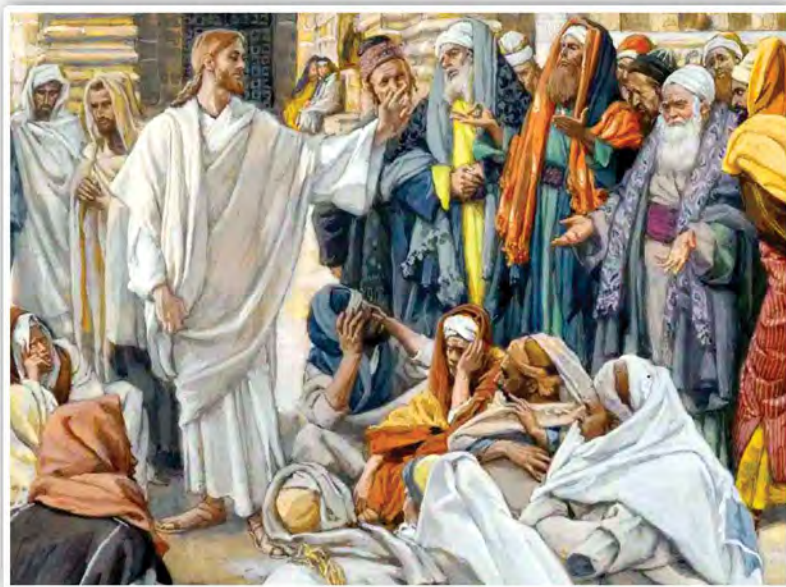
Having faith and trust in God is one thing, but there is another part of the word *faithfulness* that applies to our own lives. Can others have faith and trust in us? Can people depend on us to do what we say we will do and to believe what we have promised? Are we trustworthy?

Jesus gave us a parable which is a very good example of being trustworthy and reliable. “A vineyard owner had two sons. He came to the first and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ The son answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he repented saying this and went to work. Then he came to the second son and said likewise. And the son answered, ‘I will go, sir,’ but he did not go.” (Matthew 21:28-31) Which son was faithful to the will of his father?



We can learn a lesson of *faithfulness* from both sons. The first said No, but realized that this was selfish and he repented. If we do or say something wrong and repent from it, God is loving and forgiving. He desires obedience, but when we fail, He is pleased to provide forgiveness through Jesus, if we are sorry and want to do better. The second son said Yes, but did not follow through with his actions. He was not faithful to his

word. He could not be trusted to do the will of his father.



An even greater lesson from this parable is about the Nation of Israel at the time when Jesus came to them as their Messiah. Some of the Jews repented and gave their hearts to God to do His will and follow Jesus. But others — their religious rulers — often made a show of *faithfulness*, but were really only seeking their own selfish aims and honor. They did not do God’s will.

Another example of *faithfulness* is the story of a young boy who promised his parents that, if they bought him a puppy, he would feed it and take good care of it every day. The parents trusted that he would do just what he said he would do.

The first few weeks, the young boy was *faithful* to his word. He fed the puppy and walked him three times a day. But, the next week, he wanted to spend more time playing with his friends, and he asked his mother to take care of the puppy for half of the time. Before long, his mother was taking care of the puppy all of the time. Was this young boy *faithful* to his word? Could his parents trust him that he would be *faithful* in the future for other important responsibilities? Could the puppy depend on him?

The lesson here for us is, if we make a promise, we should be *faithful* to keep it. If we say that we have *faith*, we should live our *faith*. God is *faithful* to His promises, and we should also be *faithful* to Him and to others. “Let us hold fast the profession of our *faith* without wavering; for he is *faithful* that promised.” Hebrews 10:23

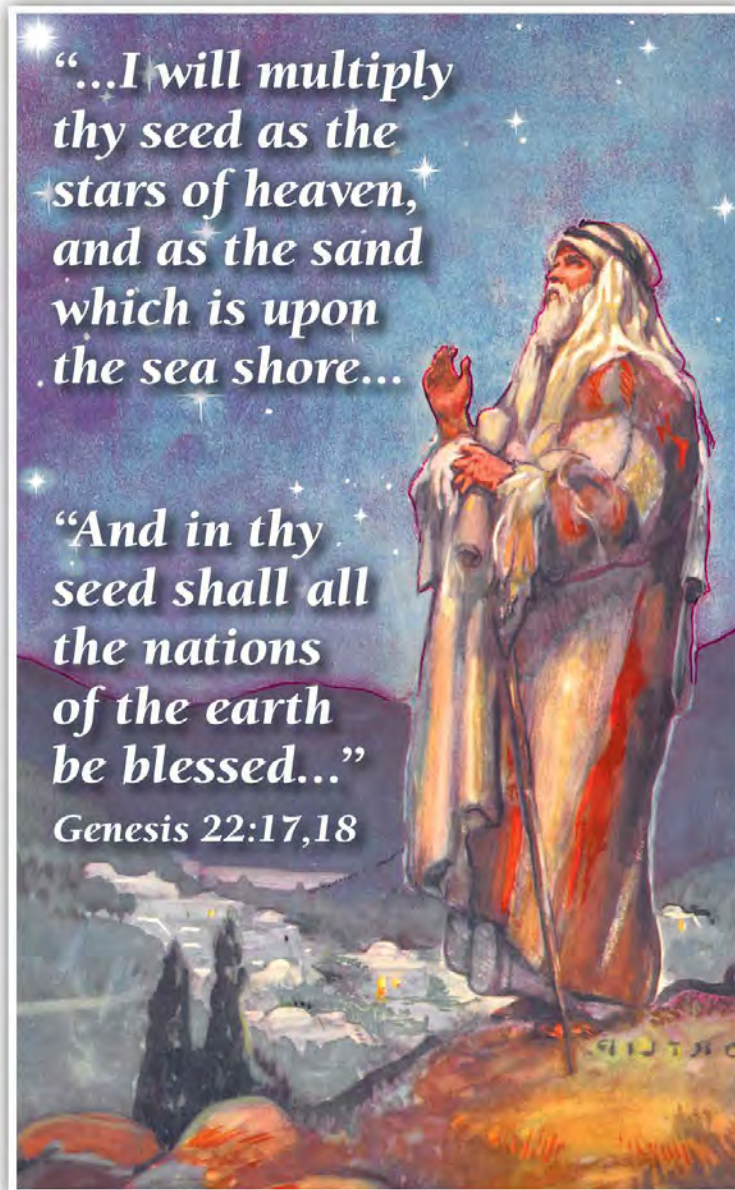
Hebrews Chapter 11 lists many of the Ancient Worthies who were extraordinary examples of *faithfulness*. Abraham was among these. God asked Abraham to leave his home and travel many miles to a land



he did not know. Abraham trusted in God, and so he did as God had told him. God also told Abraham to offer his son Isaac upon an altar. Again, he trusted in God, and so he did as God had told him, even though it would be the hardest thing he would ever have to do. God was testing Abraham's *faith*. God could see that Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son, and so God provided a ram for him to offer as a sacrifice instead of Isaac.

Because Abraham was *faithful*, God made a promise to Abraham that He would bless him and his family forever. But, not only this, God also promised that *all the families of the earth* would

be blessed because of Abraham's *faithfulness*. We can have *faith* that God is keeping His promise to Abraham, because the children of Abraham — the Jewish people — are returning to their national homeland in Israel. Genesis 12:1-9; 22:1-18



Who was the most *faithful* man in all history? It was Jesus! When God asked Jesus to be a *ransom for ALL* by laying down his life in sacrifice, Jesus did not hesitate, but he said that he would do God's will. Was Jesus true to his word? Yes he was! Because of this, we can have *faith* that *ALL* the families of the earth will be blessed in *due time*. 1 Timothy 2:3-6

How do we develop greater *faith*? The word *faith* in the original Greek of the Bible actually means “a system of Gospel truth.” So, by studying God's truth in the Bible, and learning the true meaning of lessons like these, we develop greater *faith*. This, in turn, helps us to be more *faithful* in our characters. In addition, this makes us true to our word — more *trustworthy*, just like Abraham, Jesus and God.

FAITHFULNESS

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. Another word for *FAITHFUL* is *TRUSTWORTHY*.

True False

2. God has given us many _____ in His Word so that we can have greater *faith*.

- a. erroneous claims
- b. false hopes
- c. prophecies

3. The Nation of Israel is being prepared to fulfill its role in the Kingdom to bless ALL people of the earth.

True False

4. The Ancient Worthies are examples of:

- a. extraordinary physical abilities.
- b. extraordinary *faithfulness*.
- c. extraordinary popularity.

5. God told Abraham to offer up his son Isaac upon an altar. This was a picture of how God would one day offer up His Son Jesus in sacrifice.

True False

6. Because Abraham did as God commanded, God promised that Abraham's seed would:

- a. receive more flocks of sheep than any other people of the earth.
- b. be great and mighty warlords.
- c. bless all the families of the earth.

7. Jesus' parable about the father and his two sons is an example of how we should keep our word.

True False

8. The Nation of Israel is also pictured in this parable of the two sons because:

- a. the Pharisees claimed to be *faithful*, but were just serving themselves. They did not do God's will, as they had promised.
- b. their religious rulers were good examples of *faithfulness*.
- c. they all repented and became Christians.

9. If we do something wrong, then sincerely repent and ask God for forgiveness. God is merciful and loving and will forgive us through His Son Jesus.

True False

10. In the example of the little boy who asked for a puppy, he kept his promise and was *trustworthy*:

True False

11. When we make a promise:

- a. we should keep it.
- b. we should have others do our work for us, because our time is more important.
- c. we don't have to keep a promise if we find something better to do.

12. We can completely trust in the prophecies and promises of God, because we can see prophecies being fulfilled in Israel.

True False

13. Being *faithful*:

- a. will not be necessary in God's Kingdom.
- b. is only for the Apostles and Jesus.
- c. means we are true to our word.

FAITH of the FAITHFUL

Follow the Thread of Prophecy which has provided a firm faith foundation for all of God's faithful children. Provide the verses which complete the Scripture references. Four samples are given.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| <u>Gen. 1:26-31</u> | 1. Adam and Eve were created perfect. | <u>1 Sam. 8:</u> | 14. Israel demanded a King instead of Judges. |
| <u>Gen. 3:</u> | 2. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and the penalty of death began. | <u>1 Sam. 9:</u> | 15. Saul became the first King of Israel. |
| <u>Gen. 3:</u> | 3. God Promised Eve that her Seed would one day put an end to that old deceiver, Satan, and the Thread of God's Faithful Promise begins! | <u>1 Sam. 16:</u> | 16. Saul lost faith, and David became King over Israel in Saul's place. |
| <u>Gen. 6:</u> | 4. The flood came upon all but faithful Noah and his family who carry on the Promise. | <u>1 Chron. 29:</u> | 17. David was from the tribe of Judah and the Seed of Promise passed through his Son. |
| <u>Gen. 22:</u> | 5. Abraham was tested, proving that he loved God supremely. He was given an oath (Promise) by God that his Seed will bless all the families of the earth. | <u>2 Chron. 3:</u> | 18. David's Son, King Solomon, built the Temple which replaced Israel's Tabernacle. |
| <u>Gen. 26:</u> | 6. Isaac was a faithful son who inherited the Promise given to Abraham. | <u>Deut. 28:1-68</u> | 19. Israel was given many prophecies through prophets such as Isaiah and Jeremiah, and the minor prophets such as Hosea and Zephaniah. They warned Israel to be faithful or they would lose the right to the Promise. |
| <u>Gen. 28:</u> | 7. Jacob was a faithful son who next inherited the Promise given to Isaac. | <u>John 1:</u> | 20. John the Baptist declared Jesus "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." |
| <u>Gen. 49:</u> | 8. Jacob was told that the Seed of Promise would come through the tribe of Judah. | <u>Col. 1:</u> | 21. Jesus fulfilled the Law, was faithful even unto the death of the cross, and he became the Head of the Church. |
| <u>Gen. 49:</u> | 9. Jacob died and his twelve sons inherited the Promise given to him. | <u>Gal. 3:</u> | 22. Jesus is the Seed Promised to Abraham. |
| <u>Deut. 4:35-40</u> | 10. Israel was given the Law to protect the Promise and this guaranteed that the Seed would be fulfilled through Judah. | <u>Gal. 3</u> | 23. The Little Flock, the Church, the Body of Christ is prepared throughout the Gospel Age, is faithful and becomes part of the Promised Seed. |
| <u>Exo. 24:</u> | 11. Moses became the mediator of this Law Covenant—Promise. | <u>Rom. 11:</u> | 24. Israel is being regathered and being prepared as part of the Promised Earthly Seed — a light to the Gentile nations. |
| <u>Exo. 25:</u> | 12. The Tabernacle was provided with its characters, structure and ceremonies for a schoolmaster to lead Israel to the Seed Promised to Abraham. | <u>Romans 4:16</u> | 25. When all the members of the Church prove faithful unto death and are raised to glory with Jesus, then ALL the Seed — Heavenly and Earthly — will bring blessings to ALL the families of the earth! |
| <u>Judges 2:</u> | 13. Judges were given to Israel to help them to be faithful—another protection to bring forth the Promised Seed. | | |

FAITHFULNESS in Action

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” — Hebrews 11:1

The entire 11th Chapter of Hebrews recounts the experiences of many Ancient Worthies who lived before the time of Jesus. These were men and women of amazing *faith* — often in the face of very difficult trials. It is easy to have *faith* when things are going our way, but when we are confronted with extremely hard trials, that is when *faith* is put to the test.

One of the best lessons of great *faith* is found in the experience of the prophet Elisha and his young servant Gehazi. (2 Kings 6:1-17) The King of Syria knew that his army was being troubled by Elisha who, by God’s guidance, was helping the army of Israel to win battles. Intent upon his conquest of Israel, the prideful King sought to capture Elisha, thereby silencing his counsel to the army of Israel. The Syrian King sent his massive army to surround the city where Elisha and his servant were staying. He was determined to make it impossible for Elisha to escape.



The Syrian King sent his massive army to surround the city where Elisha and his servant were staying. He was determined to make it impossible for Elisha to escape.

In the morning, Gehazi, Elisha’s servant, looked out over the city and beheld the army of the enemy on every side, barring every way of escape. Terrified, Gehazi said, *“Alas, my master! what shall we do?”* Full of *faith*, Elisha answered, *“Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”* Gehazi could not fully understand the unseen powers helping his *faithful* master. Then Elisha prayed that the eyes of the young man might be opened; and Gehazi beheld angelic hosts, horses and chariots of fire surrounding them. This was sufficient to give the young man the needed *faith* and courage — assuring him of God’s great power and presence with them.

Imagine seeing such an amazing sight! And it is true! There are angelic beings completely invisible to the eyes of humans. Our Heavenly Father, His only begotten Son Jesus, and all of the holy angels are unseen to us, and it takes *faith* to believe that they are in complete control of every situation. There are also fallen angels who are battling against them, and we can see their influence upon evil people and evil institutions throughout the world. But, we can have *faith* that God is working all things together for the good of the followers of Jesus, and for the world of mankind *in due time*. (Romans 8:28) Soon all of the enemies of righteousness will be silenced, and righteousness will win the hearts of everyone! Seeing all of these examples of *faith* helps us to be *faith-FULL*. Hebrews 12:1-2

Check which Scriptures apply to this experience of Elisha and Gehazi:

- “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.”* — Psalm 34:7
- “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them...”* — Psalm 68:17
- “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.”* — Psalm 91:11

Gentle Jesus

“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” —Matthew 11:29, 30



Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, look upon a little child;
Pity my simplicity, suffer me to come to Thee.

Lamb of God, I look to Thee; Thou shalt my example be:
Thou art gentle, meek and mild; Thou wast once a little child.

Fain I would be as Thou art; give me Thine obedient heart:
Thou art pitiful and kind; let me have Thy loving mind.

Loving Jesus, gentle Lamb, in Thy gracious hands I am;
Make me, Saviour, what Thou art, live Thyself within my heart.



Gentleness

— Written by Charles Wesley in A.D. 1729



GENTLENESS

Lesson Text: Genesis 4:1-16

What does it mean to be GENTLE? Someone who is GENTLE is HUMBLE, TENDERHEARTED, SYMPATHETIC, SWEET-TEMPERED and MEEK. The opposite of *gentleness* is to be rough, cold-hearted, harsh and rude. Jesus was a *gentle* man and sympathetic to all. He had such a *gentle* character that little children would come to him and not be afraid. Jesus encouraged this: *“Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”* (Luke 18:16, 17) What Jesus meant was that in God’s Kingdom people will be teachable and child-like. They will learn to be innocent from sin and will learn to become as *gentle* as Jesus.



Our Heavenly Father and His Son are both *gentle* and *merciful*. *“The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.”* (Psalm 145:8) But, so often, many people think of God as being cold-hearted and harsh. They do not realize that God must discipline those who sin, because He loves them. *“For the Lord disciplines the ones He loves.”* (Hebrews 12:6) God only disciplines people so that He can teach and correct their bad behavior. God is just like a surgeon who needs to cut out a harmful tumor — He only wounds to heal. Isaiah 19:22; Hebrews 12:10

What happens to a child who behaves badly and is never corrected? This child learns to become selfish and sometime, later in life, this child could grow up to commit terrible crimes. If this child’s parents would have gently corrected the bad behavior when the child was young, this may have prevented the child from going to jail.

Some children are rebellious and refuse to learn, even if they have good parents who discipline them. An example of this important lesson is found in Genesis 4:1-16. Even though Adam and Eve had previously sinned, they may have learned from their mistake, and their experience likely helped them to become better parents. They taught their children about God and how important it was to learn righteousness.

Cain and Abel were two of Adam and Eve's first children. Cain was a farmer who grew crops, and his brother Abel was a shepherd who tended sheep. Both brothers wished to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God. Cain brought the *fruit of the ground*, and Abel brought a *lamb* as his sacrifice. Which offering was more valuable — a small amount of grain or a precious lamb? Which do you think God appreciated more? A living creature is more valuable than grain, and so God appreciated and accepted the offering of Abel. But God told Cain that he could have given a more valuable sacrifice, as well. Cain became so angry and jealous of his brother that Cain killed Abel! Cain did not have a *gentle* spirit, but a harsh, cold-hearted and selfish spirit. He was not willing to learn a lesson from God's discipline, but instead, he became more rebellious. Abel must have had a *gentle* spirit, for the Scriptures do not say that he fought back when Cain went to slay him. Plus, Abel must have listened well to his parents when they told him about God's plans, because Abel's sacrifice to God was a picture of the sacrifice of Jesus — *the Lamb of God*.



Because of Cain's rebellious behavior, God disciplined him by sending him out of his family's home and into a strange and harsh land. From then on, it would be very hard for Cain to be a farmer and to provide for his family. He would not have the protection of a more comfortable home. This punishment was necessary so that Cain would learn the valuable lesson that jealousy, anger and murder are sins, and that separation from God and righteous people is not worth being selfish and hard-hearted.

This lesson is also a picture of what happened when Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden. They, and all of their children throughout history, are learning the hard lesson that sin and selfishness are not to be compared to the peace, safety and comfort of being obedient children. The harsh environment of this present evil world has made the hearts of mankind hardened, jealous, suspicious of others and



selfish. Soon God's Kingdom upon the earth will change men's hearts — Satan will be bound and evil will not be permitted. During that Kingdom, the world will learn righteousness and mankind will develop a *gentleness* of spirit as they see *gentleness* and love in others. They will no longer be afraid that someone else will hurt them, for nothing will be allowed to “...hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” Isaiah 11:9

When we were very small, our parents taught us to be *gentle* with our toys so that they would last and so we would not break them. They also taught us to be *gentle* with our pets so that we would not hurt them. Our parents probably also taught us to be *gentle* with our words so that we would not hurt people's feelings and break their hearts. A *gentle* person will find a way to be as “*harmless as a dove*” even at times when it is necessary to be as “*wise as a serpent.*” Matthew 10:16

For example — say that you are trying very hard to do a good deed by helping your elderly neighbor weed her garden. But, oops! you accidentally pulled out one of her flowers by mistake. This lady could scold you, grab you by the collar and drag you home to your parents to complain about what a sloppy worker you are. Would this be wise and an example of *gentleness*? What good would this do? It would only cause everyone to have hurt feelings for a very long time. The *gentle* way to handle the situation would be for your neighbor to talk to you about being more careful next

time, and then work together to replant the flower which had been pulled out. This way of handling a problem will maintain friendships that will grow. *“A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness [evilness] in it breaks the spirit.”* Proverbs 15:4

It is always best to handle situations with *gentle, sweet-tempered* words. *Gentleness* shows a much stronger character than being harsh and rude. Proverbs 16:32 states: *“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.”* It is easy to quickly become angry and say things that we regret later. It is harder, but it shows a much stronger character to speak *gentle, sympathetic and soothing* words. In this way, we are good examples of Jesus’ character. He was holy, harmless and separate from sinners.

The fact that Jesus was *gentle* and harmless, does not mean that he did not speak out when it was necessary to correct a wrong behavior. For example, at the last supper, Jesus told his Apostles that he was going to wash their feet. The Apostle Peter said, *“You shall not wash my feet!”* Jesus *gently* said, *“If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.”* Peter then said, *“Not my feet only, but also*



my hands and my head.” (John 13:8-9) Peter happily accepted the instructions of the Lord, and this lesson was included in the Scriptures so that we can all learn that it is important for Jesus to wash our feet from the defilements of the earth — not real feet and not real dirt, but the bad words, actions and lack of a *gentle* spirit that we pick up from being in contact with the world and its sinful ways.

The manner by which Jesus instructs us is by giving us lessons such as these from the Bible. He can also instruct us when our parents and teachers correct our behavior. It is all working out for good, if we receive the *gentle* correction from those who love us. We should take these corrections as from the Lord.

GENTLENESS

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. The opposite of *gentleness* is to be rough, cold-hearted, harsh and rude.

True False

2. In God's Kingdom, people will learn to be:

- a. great fishermen and mighty hunters.
- b. more childlike — innocent, *gentle* and eager to learn from Jesus.
- c. in a hurry to build elaborate altars to God.

3. If God loves someone, He is going to be careful to discipline them so that they become better characters, like His Son Jesus.

True False

4. A child who is never disciplined can often:

- a. be the best at sports in school.
- b. become a model citizen.
- c. become selfish and hurtful to others.

5. Adam and Eve, having learned the importance of obedience, taught their children about God.

True False

6. Cain and Abel were two brothers who:

- a. brought a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God.
- b. were excellent at archery and were very competitive with each other.
- c. were both sheep herders.

7. Cain brought grain as his thank-offering, and Abel brought a lamb from his flock.

True False

8. Cain became jealous of Abel, because:

- a. God accepted Abel's sacrifice.
- b. Abel stole Cain's grain offering.
- c. Abel was always showing off.

9. God disciplined Cain for killing his brother by sending Cain to a far country away from his family, his friends, his home and his possessions.

True False

10. Cain learned the lesson that:

- a. his punishment was harsher than deserved.
- b. sin is harmful to the sinner and that being *gentle* makes for a happier life.
- c. his punishment was worth getting revenge on his show-off brother, Abel.

11. It takes a strong character to be *gentle* like Jesus.

True False

12. The example given when Jesus washed the feet of his Apostles is that:

- a. we should take our shoes off when we eat.
- b. everyone has dirty feet and can't help it.
- c. we pick up bad habits from the world and sometimes those we love need to correct us, because they love us.

13. If we accept the correction of those who love us:

- a. it will develop in us better characters.
- b. we will get out of doing homework.
- c. we will gain praise and riches in the Kingdom.

GENTLENESS

FILL IN THE WORD

Choose from the list of words at the bottom of the page. Some words are used more than once.

_____ and _____ were the first two children of Adam and Eve listed in the Bible.

_____ sacrificed a lamb to God, and Cain offered _____.

Cain became very _____ and slew his brother _____.

“A _____ answer turneth away wrath.” — Proverbs 15:1

God is “slow to _____ and plenteous in _____.” — Psalm 145:8

Tenderhearted and sweet tempered people are _____ people.

God only disciplines so that He might teach valuable _____.

Jesus is *gentle* as a _____, but he is also the “_____ of the tribe of Judah.” — Revelation 5:5

Jesus said, “*permit the _____ to come unto me,*” because people in the Kingdom are going to be _____ & childlike. — Luke 18:16

Gentleness is NOT a sign of _____, because being *gentle* takes strength of character.

“A *gentle tongue* is a _____ of life...” — Proverbs 15:4

ANGER

TREE

CHILDREN

LION

ABEL

GENTLE

LESSONS

JEALOUS

SOFT

MERCY

WEAKNESS

CAIN

TEACHABLE

LAMB

GRAIN

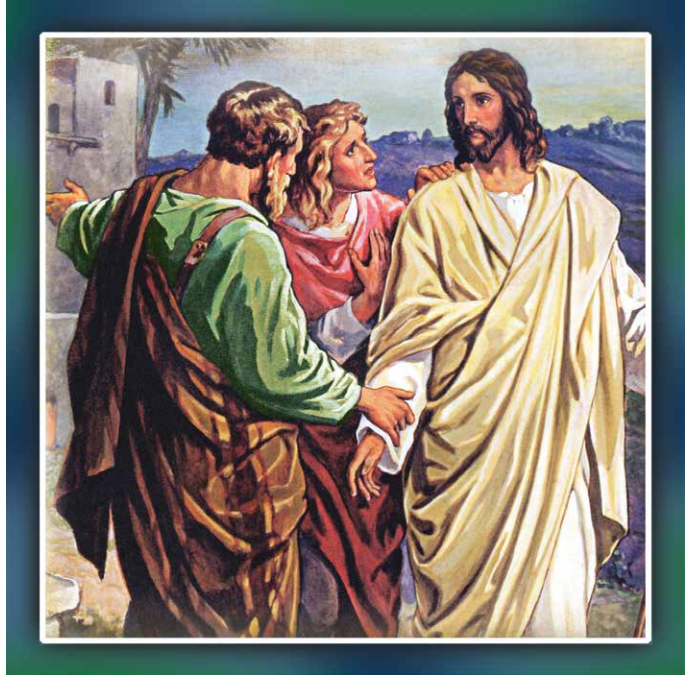
GENTLENESS in Action

A SAMARITAN VILLAGE REJECTS JESUS

— Luke 9:51-56 —

One day, when the time was near that Jesus would be delivered unto death, he decided to travel with his disciples to Jerusalem. He sent two of his disciples ahead to provide for the needs of their journey.

The two (probably the Apostles James and John) went into a town in Samaria to find provisions for Jesus and the others as they traveled. But the people of Samaria would not welcome Jesus, because he was going toward Jerusalem. Samaritans were a mixture of Jewish and Gentile blood, and the Jews treated



the Samaritans as if they were Gentile heathens. And so, there was always a lack of respect between the Jews and the Samaritans. John 4:9

When the Apostles James and John heard the reaction from the Samaritans toward their Master's visit, they became very angry. They said to Jesus, "Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven and destroy those people?!" Jesus turned to James and John and rebuked them saying, "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Jesus called these two Apostles "sons of thunder," because they were bold and courageous, but they sometimes let their tempers get out of control. (Mark 3:17) In this case, they were not being examples of their *gentle* Master.

Jesus did not stay to teach a lesson to the Samaritans at that time, because he knew that their time to learn the truth would be in his Father's Kingdom. There was no need to be angry and harsh, and, so, after teaching this lesson to his disciples, they all went on their way to another village to provide for their journey.

Talk about these important lessons for all of Jesus' followers:

- Jesus had a more *gentle* approach than the two Apostles. They were quick to judge.
- Jesus did not criticize the Samaritans because of their bitterness, nor did he take the time to preach to them about the future Kingdom for all. They were not ready to hear.
- "Fire from heaven" would have been very painful. Jesus' *gentle* rebuke of the Apostles and the fact that he did not choose to punish the Samaritans showed that his heavenly Father's discipline is for education and correction — for their eternal good.
- Rendering evil for evil never helps Jesus' followers to win friends and influence people to live more Godlike lives. 1 Thessalonians 5:15

Trust and Obey

“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.” — Psalm 19:14



When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word, what a glory he sheds on own way!
While we do his good will, he abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies, but his smile quickly drives it away;
Not a doubt nor a fear, not a sigh nor a tear, can abide while we trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share, but our toil he doth richly repay;
Not a grief nor a loss, not a frown nor a cross, but is blest if we trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

But we never can prove the delights of his love until all on the altar we lay;
For the favor he shows, and the joy he bestows, are for them who will trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at his feet, or we'll walk by his side in the way;
What he says we will do, where he sends we will go, never fear, only trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.



— Hymn 275A from “Hymns of Dawn”
& Page 103 from “I Will Sing!”



SELF-CONTROL

Lesson Text: Daniel 1:1-21

Of the many *Fruits and Graces* of Character, one of the most difficult to achieve is SELF-CONTROL, and yet, this character trait is the most helpful in achieving all of the other *fruits and graces*. If we can develop *self-control*, then the Bible says that it will be like capturing an entire city. (Proverbs 16:32) Of course, we are not interested in capturing cities, but we are interested in capturing ourselves and bringing all of our thoughts, words and deeds under the *control* of a good and honest heart. Luke 8:15

Consider the wonderful example of *self-control* in the experiences of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. These were four young Hebrew men who lived in Israel hundreds of years before Jesus' time. Daniel 1:3-20



Back then, the people of Israel disobeyed God's commands to live more righteous lives than the pagan nations. But, other than a handful of faithful Jews, many of the kings, religious rulers and people of Israel compromised with the heathen nations. They went astray and worshiped pagan idols. Therefore, God allowed the Nation of Israel to be taken captive by the most powerful of the heathen nations — Babylon.

One day, the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, told his servant, "Choose from among the Jewish captives a few of the smartest and best young men. I will send them to school so that they can learn how to help me rule the people."

So, the King's servant chose Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He brought them into the King's palace to live and to be trained there. He also gave them nice clothes and rich, delicious food from the King's table, which may have been forbidden under the Laws of the Hebrews. This food was tempting and tasty, but it was not healthy, and it would violate the righteous principles of the four young men. And so, Daniel asked the King's servant if he would allow them to eat their own choice of food — that which was healthy and permitted under the Law of the Hebrews.

Daniel, who came forth as a leader among the Hebrew youth, knew in his heart that if they appeared healthy from the King's food, the people would give credit to the pagan gods of Babylon. And so, even though the King's food might be more tasty, Daniel knew that it was important to show the King and his servants that the God of the Hebrews would provide strength and wisdom to His people if they exercised *self-control* — only eating what was good for them and permitted under the Law.



The King's servant was fearful that the Hebrews would become sickly if they didn't eat a hearty meal. He didn't want the King to be angry with him. So, since Daniel liked the servant and wanted to keep him from getting into trouble, Daniel said, *"For just ten days, give my friends and me vegetables to eat and water to drink. After ten days, compare us to the others who eat of the King's food. If we do not look as healthy as the others, then do whatever seems best to you."* The servant saw the wisdom in Daniel's suggestion, and provided healthy nuts, fruits, vegetables and water for the Hebrews. After ten days, he looked at their faces and compared them to the faces of the people who ate the King's food. The Hebrews were much healthier looking than the others.

When the servant saw how God had blessed these young men, he said, *"You will no longer be asked to eat the King's food, for you have proven that your God has*

blessed you in what you have chosen to eat.” In fact, God was so pleased with the four Hebrews that He helped them to become wiser and more honored than all the other young men in the King’s school.

Because the four young men practiced self-control in the food they ate, they developed strength of character. That way, when they were confronted with more difficult experiences, they were able to be strong in faith and to do the right thing. In the case of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, they refused to worship the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar, and they were punished by being put into a fiery furnace. Because of how God took care of them in the past, they trusted that God would save them if it was His will. And they were right! The fire did not even make their clothes smell of smoke! See Daniel Chapter Three.



The Apostle Paul gave very good advice about exercising self-control. He compared the quality of self-control to athletes who prepare for the Olympics. He said, “Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.” 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

How does someone who competes in the Olympic Games exercise self-control in all things? They control what they eat to be sure that it is healthy for them. They exercise their bodies to make them stronger. They are careful to pick friends who are supportive and who encourage them in things that will help them to win.

They do not get involved with alcohol and other drugs. They remember that they should be honorable representatives of their countries. They study their sport to be sure that they are competing by the rules of the game. They set limits on the time they spend on other activities so that they make the most of their days.

These are just a few of the things that athletes do to prepare themselves for the Olympics. But was the Apostle Paul telling Christians to become Olympians? No, he was just using this example to show Christians that, if they want to grow in spiritual things, they need to *control* their thoughts, words and actions to be more Christ-like. *Controlling self* is a lot of work, but this is the best way to develop the *Fruits and Graces of Character*.



Sometimes *self-control* is called *will-power*, *temperance*, *self-discipline*, *self-restraint*, or *moderation*. The Apostle Paul said, “*Let your moderation be known unto all men.*” (Philippians 4:5) It is very hard to turn away from the ways of the world, because worldly people find it easier to do whatever their hearts desire. But we glorify God if we exercise the *fruit and grace of self-control*. Recall what Jesus said, “*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*” (John 15:8) *Self-control* is not only good for our bodies and minds, but it is also good for others to see that we love God more than we love self.

SELF-CONTROL

What Have We Learned?

Check the box which best corresponds to the following statements.

1. It's very easy for everyone to exercise *self-control*.

True False

2. If we develop the character trait of *self-control*, then the Bible compares this to:

- a. being better at controlling a horse.
- b. becoming a popular religious teacher.
- c. capturing a city.

3. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were four military leaders of four mighty countries.

True False

4. Nebuchadnezzar was:

- a. the King of Babylon.
- b. a Hebrew slave.
- c. a city in Israel.

5. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were chosen to go to school to learn to serve the King and the people in His realm.

True False

6. The King told his servant to give the four young Hebrew men:

- a. jobs in the King's kitchen.
- b. rich and delicious food from the King's table, forbidden under the Hebrew Law.
- c. gold, silver and precious jewels.

7. The Hebrew young men asked if they could eat healthy meals, permitted under the Hebrew Law.

True False

8. The Hebrews were permitted to eat as they chose:

- a. and they became stronger and blessed.
- b. and they became weaker and died.
- c. and they got food poisoning.

9. Because the four young Hebrews exercised *self-control*, they were blessed when it came time for them to confront more difficult experiences.

True False

10. *Self-control* is also called:

- a. an annoying habit.
- b. foolishness and a waste of time.
- c. will-power and moderation.

11. Today, it is easier to have *self-control*, because people are more perfect than those of ancient times.

True False

12. If we develop the *Fruits of Righteousness*, God:

- a. does not really care, because He is far superior than human beings.
- b. is glorified by our *fruitage*.
- c. gives us everything we ask for.

13. If we exercise *self-control*, then it shows that we love God more than we love ourselves.

True False

14. *Self-control* means that:

- a. we are careful in everything we do.
- b. we let others do our thinking for us.
- c. we are careful to follow the crowd.

SELF-CONTROL WORD MATCH

If we practice *self-control* in our daily lives, we will find it much easier to develop all of these Fruits & Graces of Character!

Draw a line between the words that best match each other (see sample).

KINDNESS	WAITING
FAITHFULNESS	SAVIOR
HOSPITABLE	HAPPINESS
PEACE	CHARACTER ATTRIBUTES
GOODNESS	TRUSTWORTHINESS
THANKFUL	JUST
FRUITS & GRACES	HONEST
LOVE	SELF-DISCIPLINE
GENTLENESS	TENDERNESS
SELF-CONTROL	REST
PATIENCE	GRATEFUL
JOY	THOUGHTFULNESS
TRUTHFUL	PROMISE
JESUS	CHARITY
COVENANT	HONORABLE
RESPECTABLE	HELPFULNESS
RIGHTEOUS	NEIGHBORLY



SELF-CONTROL in Action

“...practice self-control, and keep your minds clear...” 1 Peter 4:7

A wealthy man needed to hire a carriage driver to drive his expensive carriage and his team of beautiful horses. He narrowed his candidates down to three drivers. To each driver he posed this question:

“The journey which leads to my estate has one stretch of road where there is a high, steep mountain on one side and a sharp drop-off into a canyon on the other side. If you were to be selected to drive my carriage, just how close to that cliff do you think you could get the carriage without going over the edge?”

The first driver said firmly, *“My lord, I am a very good driver! I could get your carriage to within two feet from the edge!”*

The second driver said boldly with a bit of a smile, *“None can surpass me in excellence! I am sure I could get the carriage one foot from the edge of the road without going over!”*

The third driver said thoughtfully, *“Sir, if you would give me the honor and privilege of driving your carriage, I would stay as far away from the edge as possible!”*

Check which of these three carriage drivers was hired by the carriage owner:

- Driver One: two feet away from the edge.
- Driver Two: one foot away from the edge.
- Driver Three: As far away from the edge as possible.



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