



Fruits of the Spirit

## A Note to Parents and Teachers:

Although we know that the *Fruits 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.

The primary emphasis of this book is to not only provide a definition of each *fruit of the spirit*, but also to point out a variety of illustrations from Bible stories and other character lessons appropriate to the growth of a Christian. A lesson quiz and an activity follow each *fruit of the spirit* to help reinforce what was learned.

We have chosen to use the *New American Standard Version* of Galatians 5:22, 23 as the theme of the 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.

The Scripture citations are critical to gaining an understanding of the lessons. We would encourage parents and teachers to either read the citations and lessons to the children — or select children who can read with ease. This will help the train of thought in getting across difficult concepts.

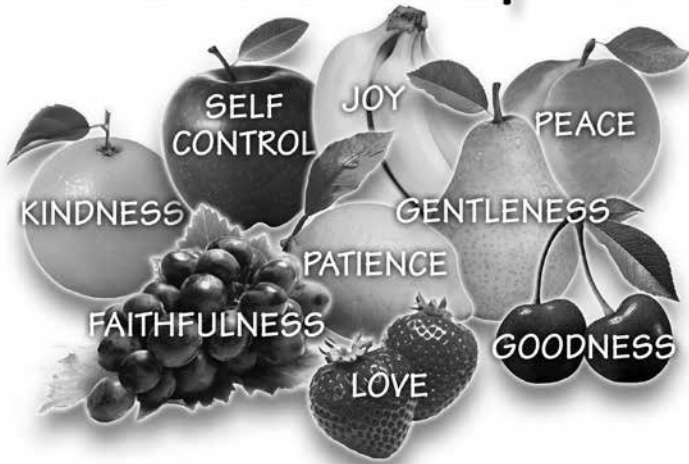
The lessons can be challenging for children under the age of 11. However, with adult supervision, they can be adapted for younger children. Although some words and concepts are a little advanced, we have found the lessons understandable with constant interaction and monitoring from the parent or teacher.

We would like to suggest that even if the lessons are covered in Bible class, parents should also go through these with their children. This way the process of learning and respect will revert to the parent.

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 His truth to them, and He has provided the increase!

With Sincere Christian Love, Your Brethren in Christ,  
The Associated Bible Students of Central Ohio  
February 15, 2017

# Fruits of the Spirit

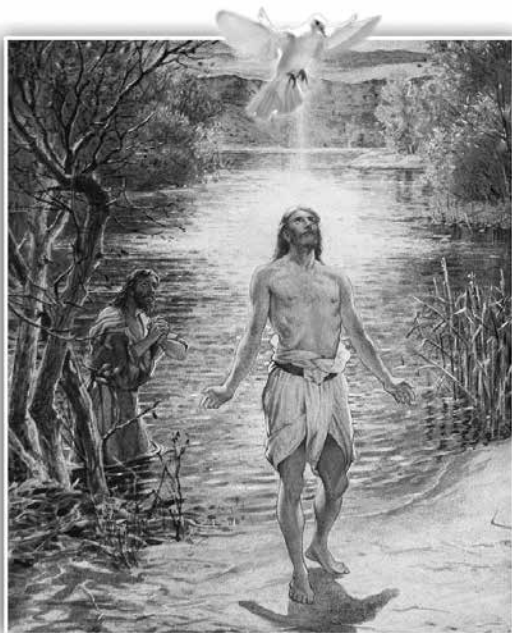


*“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” — Galatians 5:22, 23*

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 *types and anti-types*. Sometimes these are called *parables*. 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. Here are a few other examples of how God uses pictures to illustrate important truths . . .

To explain His *HOLY SPIRIT*, 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. One is a picture of a *LION*. God called His Son “*the Lion from the tribe of Judah.*” (Revelation 5:5) This illustrates how Jesus is sometimes as strong and mighty as a lion.



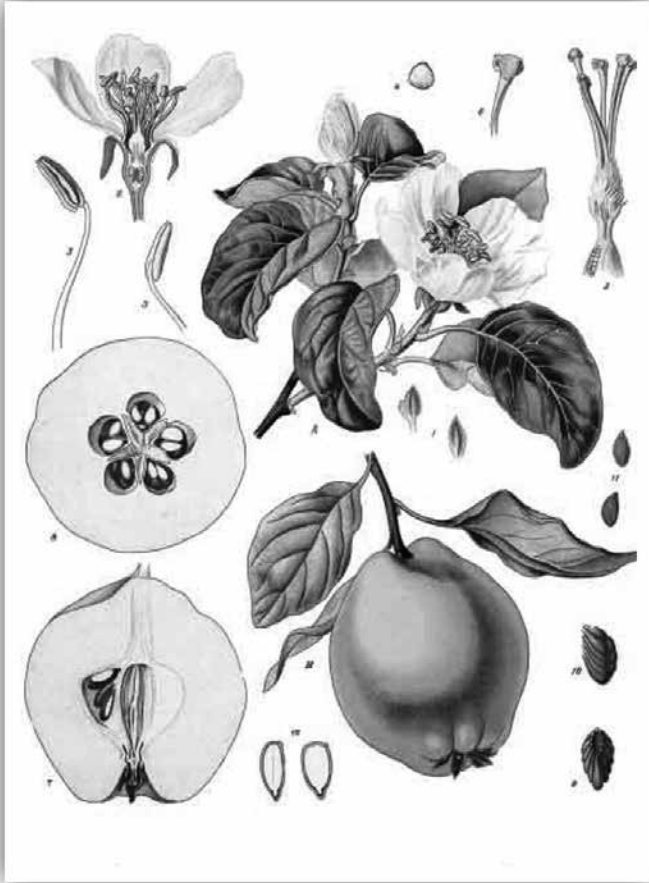
But God also used the picture of a gentle *LAMB* to describe His Son. He said that Jesus was His beloved “*Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” Revelation 13:8

To explain *WAR*, God used the word picture of a destructive *WIND*, which topples tall trees and breaks apart houses.



So, when we see words in the Bible like *WATER*, *FIRE*, *CLOUDS*, and *TRUMPETS*, we should look to see if these are a picture of something similar. *WATER* is cleansing and refreshing. *FIRE* can purify things, and it can also destroy things that need to be removed. *CLOUDS* bring trouble, but they can also bring cool shelter. And *TRUMPETS* alert people to important announcements and truths.

The word pictures we are going to study in this book are the many *FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT*. Fruit is something that grows from a vine or tree that is sweet and is good for food. Every fruit starts out as a flower, and then, with water, sunshine and time, the flower 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.

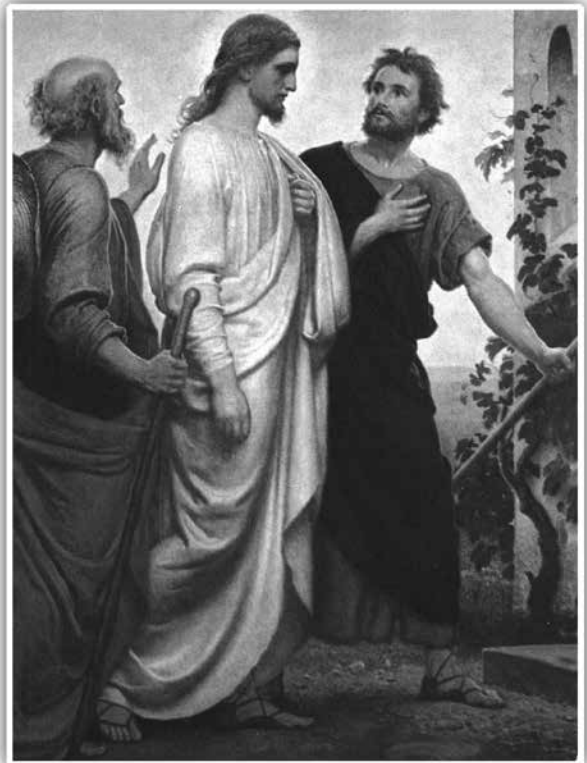


From the word picture of *FRUIT*, God is showing us that thoughts, words and deeds should develop like the fruit on a tree. These start out as a flower, very delicate and beautiful, but not yet fruit. When the tree is watered with the truth of the Bible and the sunshine of God's love, tiny *fruits of 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 of the spirit* will help us to see how we might develop in the *character-likeness* of Jesus. As you go through these lessons, see if you can come up with other Bible stories which describe each *fruit of the spirit*.

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 of the spirit*. 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 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 control of all his thoughts words and deeds. These are the



*fruits of the spirit* which we want to develop in our own characters, so that 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 that will please our Heavenly Father.

# The Fruits of the Spirit

## What Have We Learned?

Check the correct box to answer the questions.

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 purifying and of destroying impurities.
- c. Clouds are a picture of sunshine.

3. The symbols that we see in the *Fruits of the Spirit* show:

- a. how to get more vitamin C.
- 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 flowers, which make a tiny green fruit, which ripens into a sweet, ripe fruit.

True  False

5. Jesus was a perfect Man — 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 the *fruits of the spirit*.

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 fruits of the spirit 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 of the spirit*.

# FRUIT MIX-UP

## UNSCRAMBLE THESE SCRIPTURE PHRASES

Look for the clues in the box on the left. The first letter is always correct. There may not be room for a space between words. Note the stars KJV\* & NAS.\*\*

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# LOVE

Lesson Text: Luke 10:25-37

First on the list of the *fruits of the spirit* is LOVE. Some Bible translations call love CHARITY. There are no other *fruits of the spirit* 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.

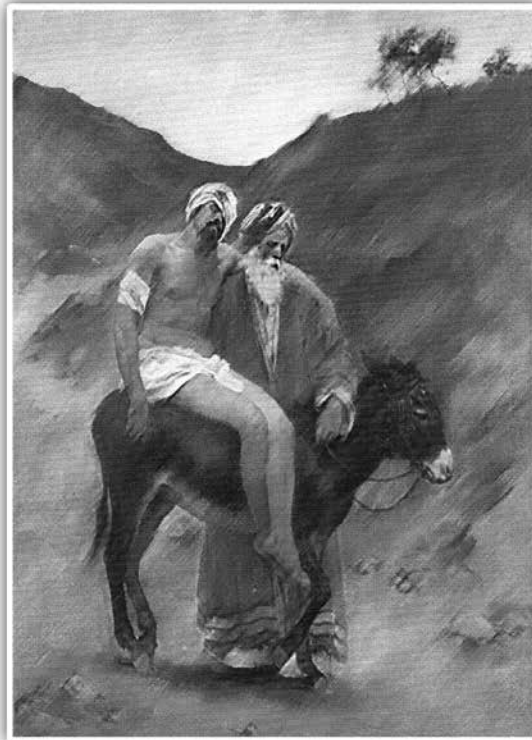
Consider the parable Jesus gave about the *Good Samaritan*. There was a religious lawyer who asked Jesus, “*What shall I do to receive eternal life?*” Jesus said, “*What is written in the law?*” The lawyer answered, “*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with 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 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 Samaritan man 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, he put him up on his donkey. The Samaritan 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 evil 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 and all who follow his evil ways. Satan 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 to hate the painful results of sin, and thus, to learn to love Him 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 a God of love could never cause such a horrible place as “*hell*” to exist. God said, “*Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts [traditions and doctrines] of men....*” Isaiah 29:13

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. The Apostle John states that *"God is love... perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment."* (1 John 4:16-18) This scripture shows that the idea of torture is not from our God of love.

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. The picture below shows the horrible practice of pagan worship. They built sacrificial altars to their false god, Baal, where they burned their children alive in the fire. 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 or just for God to send sinners to eternal flames, when the penalty

was death? Certainly not! (Genesis 2:17) Remember that the Apostle John said *"God IS love,"* and, 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) 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 REAL 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 this list of the fruits of the spirit, and this is why it is important for us to learn to love the way God loves — not selfishly but self-LESS-ly. REAL LOVE is treating others the same way you want to be treated by them. This is called the *Golden Rule.* (Matthew 7:12) When God's Kingdom is *"in earth as it is in heaven,"* the world of mankind will learn to love as God loves. (Matthew 6:10) All of the fruits of the spirit start with LOVE. We can start to develop that kind of God-like love now.



# LOVE

## What Have We Learned?

Check the correct box to answer the questions.

1. Love is nice, but not very important.

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 a Valentine.
- 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 Hebrew 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 Pharisees.

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 Christ

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 Christ. 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.

Patient — Isaiah 53:7; Righteous and Separate from Sinners — Hebrews 7:26; Holy, Pure and Perfect — Hebrews 7:26  
Harmless and Did Not Hurt Anyone — John 18:10, 11; Wise (Intelligent) — Matthew 22:21; Kind — Matthew 20:13-17; Zealous — John 4:34; 18:37  
Honest and Truthful — John 8:13, 14; Just — Luke 6:41, 42; Selfless — Matthew 12:15; Sympathetic — John 11:35; Peaceful — John 14:27  
Merciful — Hebrews 2:17; Charitable — Matthew 11:28; Generous — John 6:51; 8:4-7; Tenderhearted & Sensitive — Hebrews 4:15  
Faithful — Isaiah 53:10-12; Sacrificing — Isaiah 53:4, 5; Obedient — Hebrews 5:8; Loyal — Matthew 26:39; Joyful — Hebrews 12:2  
Long-suffering — John 21:15-18; Compassionate — Matthew 9:36; Excellent Teacher and Shepherd — John 10:11; Gracious — Luke 4:22



# JOY

Lesson Text: Philippians 4:4

Another word for the fruit of the spirit called JOY is HAPPINESS. It is so much nicer to feel JOY than to feel sadness. It would certainly be wonderful to always be happy and never have worries. It is no surprise that JOY follows LOVE in the list of the fruits of the spirit. Those who have loving hearts are more joyful.

Philippians 4:4 says to “Rejoice in the Lord always...” But, how can we always rejoice and be happy, 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 trials in life, they are not joyous, but they are difficult and often make us sad. But, he continues to say that, if we can learn lessons from these, then we can be joyous after the trial, because it has made us stronger. We might even be able to help someone else by the lessons we’ve learned in how to make it through a difficult time. 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 — bringing comfort to those who needed encouragement. He had great compassion, and he took the time to bring hope and joy to others who were experiencing difficulties in their lives.

Learning compassion for others is one very good purpose for all of our good and bad experiences in life. We learn sympathy for one another and can help others by being joyful when they are joyful and comforting others when they are sad, because we know what it is like to be sad.

If we have the fruitage of joy in our hearts, we will want to help others to turn their tears of sorrow into tears of joy. Isaiah 61:3 says that it is like giving those who are sad a garland of flowers instead of ashes, and the soothing oil of joy instead of sorrow.

“...give unto them a garland for ashes,  
the oil of joy for mourning, the garment  
of praise for the spirit of heaviness...”



— Isaiah 61:3



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 let 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 gave this 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 of the spirit.*

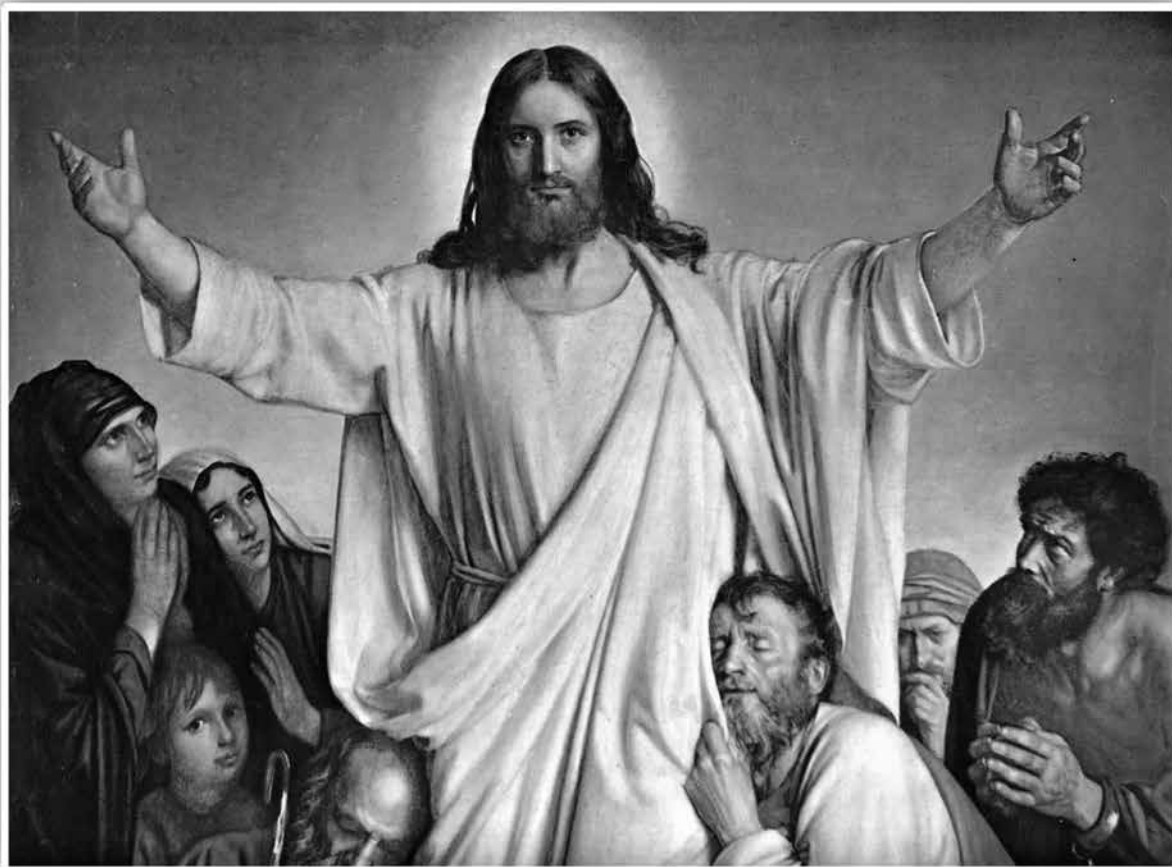
What does it mean to “rejoice in hope”? We have faith and hope that someday all sickness and sorrow will be replaced by God’s beautiful coming Kingdom. We look forward with hope, just the way Jesus did: *“...who for the joy set before him, endured the cross...”* Hebrews 12:2

We have a hope that other religions of the world do not have. Our joy is the hope of 1 Timothy 2:3-6: *“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.”* 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.” This is something which should cause 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, someday, when they come back from their graves, they will learn about God’s Divine Plan. *“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) It is hard to imagine that there will be a time when absolutely everyone in the world will be happy forever! But, this is what the Bible promises. *“Joy cometh in the morning”* — the morning of God’s Kingdom! Psalm 30:5

When God puts an end to all the pain, sorrow, wars and death, His Kingdom on earth will begin to teach the world of mankind righteousness. Isaiah 26:9 says, *“When the earth experiences Thy judgments, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”* Then, when the world mankind sees 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 “rejoice always.”



# JOY

## What Have We Learned?

Check the correct box to answer the questions.

1. Those with loving hearts are more joyful.

True  False

2. Going through difficult trials makes 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 love of others who want to help 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 trial with anyone.

8. Even though there are troubles in life, we can rejoice in the hope that someday 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 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. 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



# PEACE

Lesson Text: Matthew 5:9

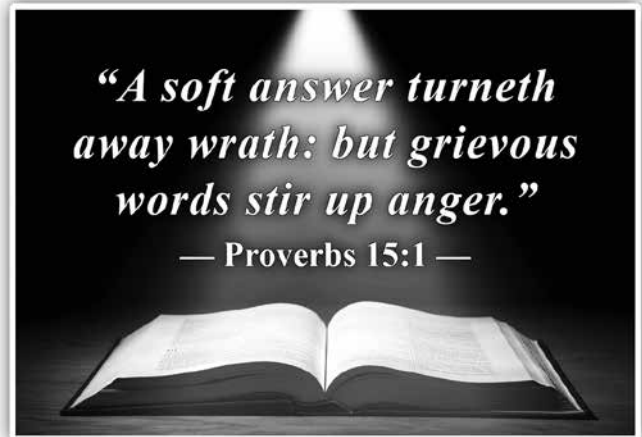
When Jesus was born, the angels in heaven said to the shepherds: *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”* (Luke 2:14) But, has there ever really been *peace on earth*? Ever since Adam and Eve were sent out of the peaceful Garden of Eden, there has been strife among their children. This is due to sin and selfishness. But, Jesus came to pay the penalty for sin 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 will be blessed by the *good tidings*, when the hearts of ALL people will be filled with *great joy*, and when there shall be *good will* among ALL people everywhere.

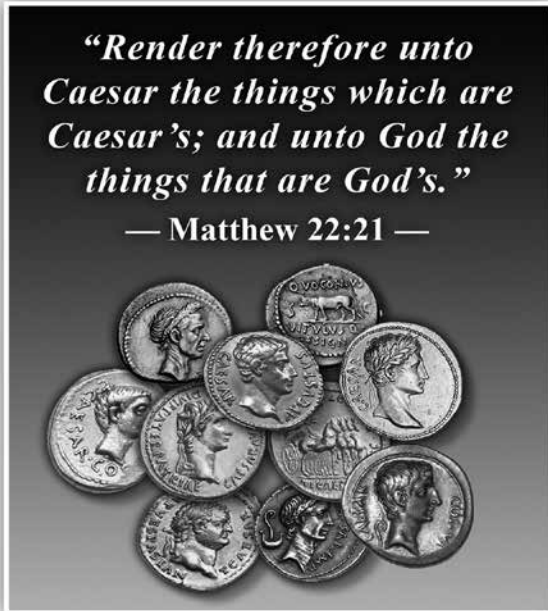
Even though this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, we know that God's promises are guaranteed, because what He says, He will do: *“So shall my Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please. For ye shall go out with joy and be 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 the spirit* is like by being *peacemakers* ourselves. When others call people names, we can do just the opposite and find something nice to say about those people. 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 asked them a question 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.



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 lesson. 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 Proverbs 16:20-24) This means that we should think twice before speaking, so that we can keep from making difficult matters even worse.

There were times when Jesus needed to defend the truth on a matter of importance. But Jesus never defended himself — no, he defended his Heavenly Father's character and Plan. And, Jesus 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 so that we only criticize bad behavior and not another person's 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 principal that this could be the reason why the student is taking food and not 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 the spirit. "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 correct box to answer the questions.

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. some people.
- b. just to Christians.
- 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 wouldn't 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 questions.

11. A "soft answer" means that you don't get angry back, but speak calming, peaceful words. 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. the king of Egypt.
- b. a prophet from the Old Testament.
- c. the Prince of Peace.

---

# 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 \_\_\_\_\_ were always trying to trick Jesus and make him look bad in front of others.

The angels sang of peace and \_\_\_\_\_ which shall be to ALL mankind.

Jesus was "like a \_\_\_\_\_ before his shearers." Isaiah 53:7

Remember: "Pleasant words are as an \_\_\_\_\_ . . ." Proverbs 16:24

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

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

Jesus told the Apostle Peter to put away his \_\_\_\_\_.

Think \_\_\_\_\_ before speaking to keep matters from getting worse.

1 Corinthians 13:5 says that "\_\_\_\_\_ thinketh no evil."

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

Jesus is the Messiah and the "\_\_\_\_\_ of Peace." — Isaiah 9:6

---

TWICE

SWORD

HONEYCOMB

SHEEP

STRIFE

PRINCE

GOOD WILL

CAESAR

PEACEMAKERS

PHARISEES

WRATH

LOVE



# PATIENCE

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel Chapters 16 - 26

PATIENCE is a wonderful “fruit of the spirit,” 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 make us very 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. He has been patiently waiting for thousands of years to work out His Plan. And, what is sad is that the very people He created often blame Him for everything that goes wrong in their lives! The Bible says that God is *longsuffering*. This means that He is very patient with His creation.

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 Saul became an impatient and angry man. He did not wait patiently for God to work out His plans for the Nation of Israel. So, God decided to chose another King over His chosen people.

While Saul was still King of Israel, God sent His servant Samuel to anoint a young man, David, to one day be Israel’s King. But David would have to wait patiently for a very long time to be accepted

as King by the people. During this time, 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 a song: “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. Saul was also beginning to see that David was God’s favorite. This made Saul even more jealous.

King Saul liked to hear music, because it calmed his nerves. David was a very good 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, but again, David escaped.



Then one day Saul told his son Jonathan that he planned to kill David. But Jonathan loved 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 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. David escaped a third time, and this time he knew that he must run away and hide. For about seven years David ran from place to place from the jealous King Saul and his army.

Time after time, David showed kindness to King Saul. David could have even killed Saul many times, but David said to himself and to his faithful companions,

*“Touch not the LORD’s anointed.”* (1 Chronicles 16:22)  
In fact, when King Saul was killed, 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 one day deliver the people of Israel into his hands, and then he would be their King. 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 have in King David!



King David’s life is a picture of the life of Jesus. God anointed Jesus to one day be the King over the entire world. Jesus has waited many long centuries for his Messianic reign of righteousness. He has been patiently waiting for God’s Plan to work out all of the details.

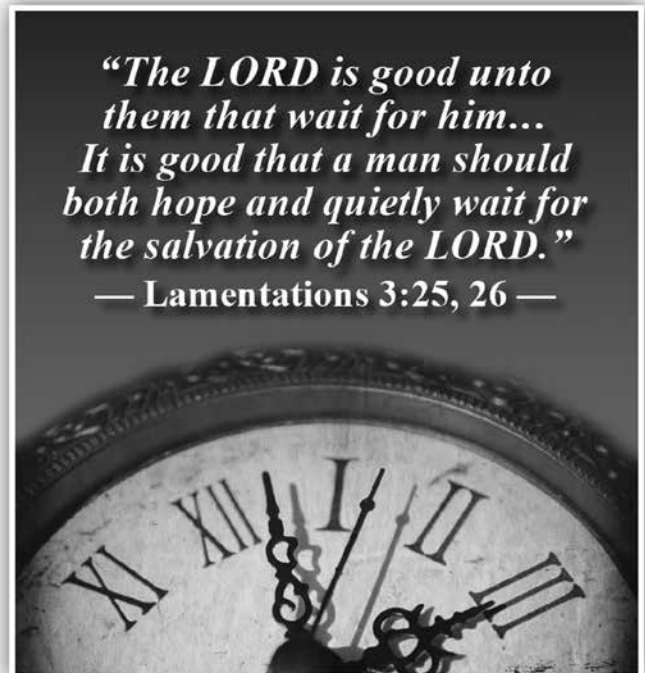
One of the details is to call out a people for God’s name — the true Church. Jesus called his followers a “little flock.” (Luke 12:32) It has been taking over 2,000 years to complete this Church. This group is to be 144,000 brave and faithful Christians. There will also be a much larger number who will also be faithful, but these are not as brave as the “little flock.” This will be a “great multitude” who will serve before 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 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 residue of men might seek after the Lord...”

The world of mankind doesn’t 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. (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 have 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.



*“The LORD is good unto them that wait for him... It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.”*

— Lamentations 3:25, 26 —

# PATIENCE

## What Have We Learned?

Check the correct box to answer the questions.

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

True  False

2. This can happen when we lose our patience:

- a. we can become good examples.
- b. we can lose our temper.
- c. we can be 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 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 skill as a mighty warrior.
- 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 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 families of the earth.

True  False

12. The whole creation is:

- a. going to go to heaven after a 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:

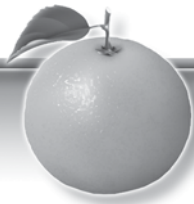
- a. money.
- b. worry.
- c. time.

# 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.





# KINDNESS

Lesson Text: Matthew 26:6-13

Other words for being *KIND* could 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.

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

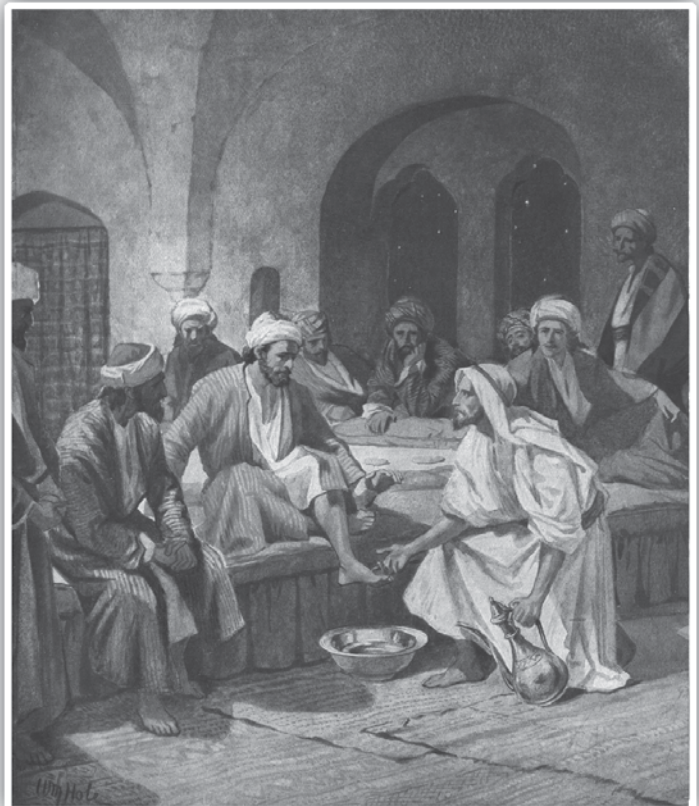
Have you ever known anyone who has a mean and grumpy attitude? Bullies are mean-spirited. They say and do things that hurt another person’s feelings. They may even hurt another person physically. If you know someone like this, how does this person’s behavior make you feel? It probably makes you feel uncomfortable and fearful. You probably don’t want to be around that person. 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 an act of kindness 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. 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.

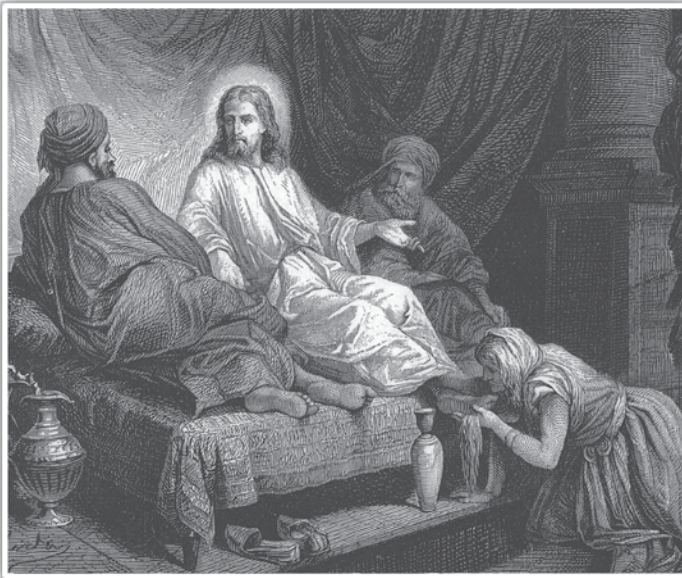


best way to get out of that feeling? — it is to do something thoughtful for someone else.

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 hard 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.”*



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 this time, 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 pilfer 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 praised 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 spending so much money? This scripture explains what God thinks of unkind and mean-spirited

behavior: "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) If someone has an impure heart, then they will look at the kind acts of others as foolish and a waste of time.

Even though Jesus corrected Judas for his unkind behavior, Jesus treated Judas with kindness right up to the end. Jesus gave Judas every opportunity to repent 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 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. 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 correct box to answer the questions.

1. An excellent way to stop feeling angry or sad is to do something good 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 those who do evil.

True  False

4. Bullies are:

- a. usually grumpy and mean-spirited.
- b. fun to be around.
- c. usually joyful.

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.
- b. sell her perfume for a lot of money.
- c. do something kind 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:

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

9. Judas was the Apostle who carried the money bag for the group as they traveled.

True  False

10. Judas was critical of Mary because:

- a. he would have been even more loving.
- b. he was selfish, critical and wanted Mary to look bad and himself to look better.
- 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 so 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. helps people in the banking business.

14. Mary's act of kindness:

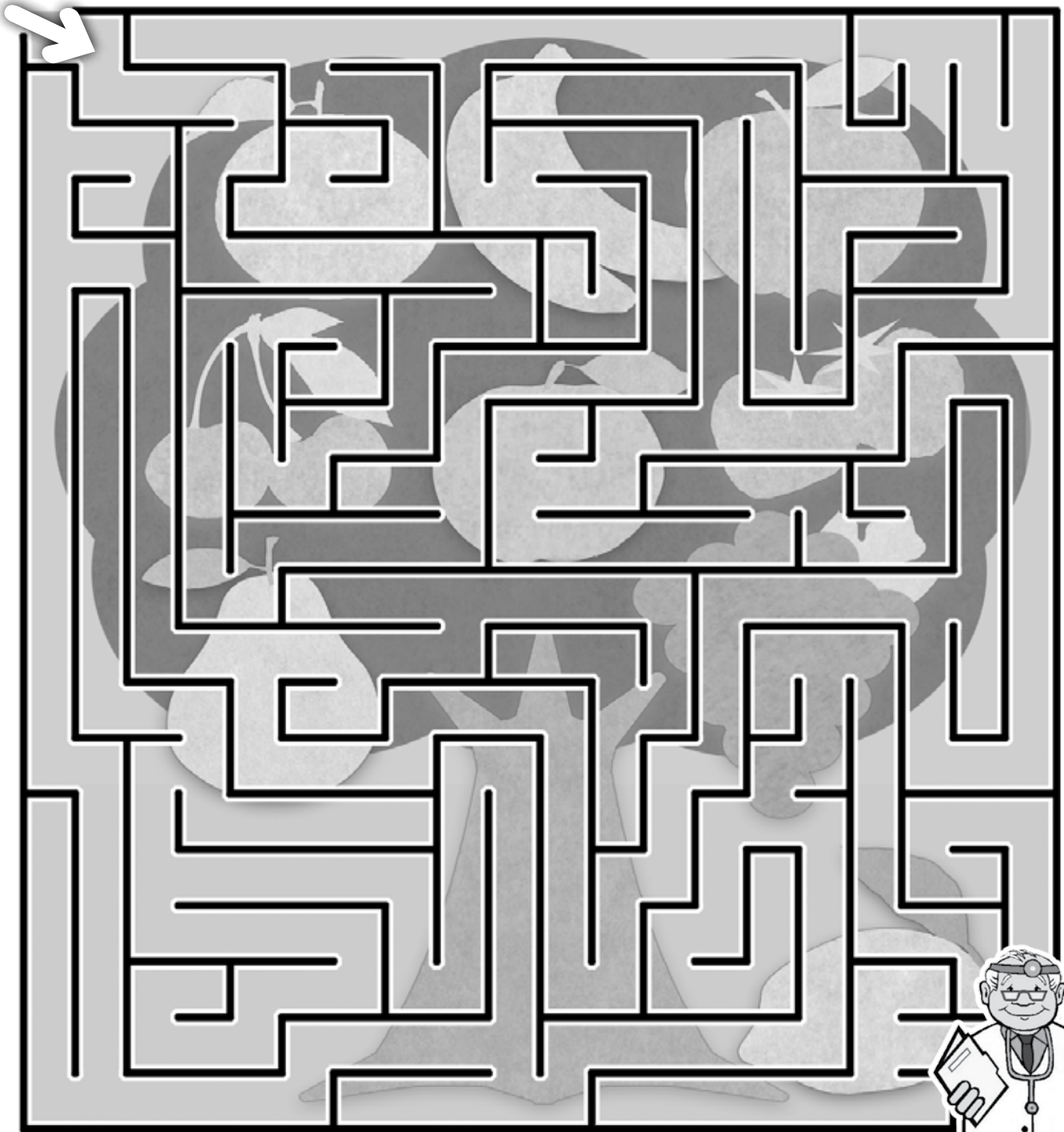
- a. was done simply out of love for Jesus.
- b. was a waste, because Jesus died anyway.
- c. was only for attention.

# KINDNESS

*Help Grandma Get to Her Doctor Appointment*



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





# GOODNESS

Lesson Text: Galatians 6:10

There were only two people who ever lived who were really GOOD — Adam before he sinned, and Jesus. Someone is *good* if they are unstained from sin. But, *“...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,”* (Romans 3:23) so, why are we told to develop this *fruit of the spirit* 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....”* (Psalm 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 if we want to be good, we will do our best to guard the intentions of our hearts — our wills. *“Above all else, 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 call 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 right up to the top with chips. His father then said, *“Now go and fill the basket with apples.”* The son replied, *“But father, the basket is already full, how can I add apples?”* *“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 very good lesson for all of us. Are we filling our minds with good things, or things which will be of no value?

It is also 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 the spirit 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.

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 in 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 evil speaking 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 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 better 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. "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. We never know how much our little efforts to do good will mean to

someone. It will definitely be a good witness to them of the *fruits of the spirit*. 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 and who hurt us? In Romans 12:20 and 21, 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) In Old Testament times people would heat their homes and cook their food with hot coals, but sometimes the fire would go out. When that happened, 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 will 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 forgiveness — 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.

# GOODNESS

## What Have We Learned?

Check the correct box to answer the questions.

1. Adam (before he sinned) and Jesus were the only two people who ever lived who were pure 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 clean his heart from secret, willful 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. 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. only listen to loud music so that we can't think of anything else.

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:

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

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. The third way we can develop a good and pure heart:

- a. is by sitting around playing video games.
- b. is by spending more time selfishly.
- c. is by good actions and good works.

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

- a. even to our enemies.
- b. to ourselves.
- 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.”  
1Peter 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 \_\_\_\_\_.” Ephesians 3:9
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

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# 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 seen Him in person. 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) 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

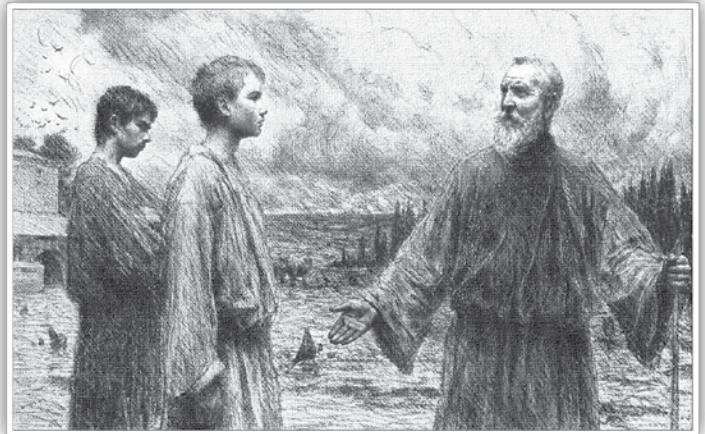
One prophecy that has come true and that adds to our faith in God is the return of the Jewish people to their homeland in Israel. God promised the Jews that they would return to the Land of Israel. *“And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and 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 over 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, 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 are 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 us. 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 promise? Are we trustworthy?

Jesus gave us a parable which is a very good example. *“A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ He answered and said, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second son and said likewise. And he answered and said, ‘I 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 didn't follow through with his actions. He was not faithful to his word.

An even greater lesson from this parable is about the Nation of Israel. Some of the Jews repented and gave their hearts to God to do His will. But others (their religious rulers) made a show of faithfulness,



but were really only seeking their own selfish aims and honor. These 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. 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 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.

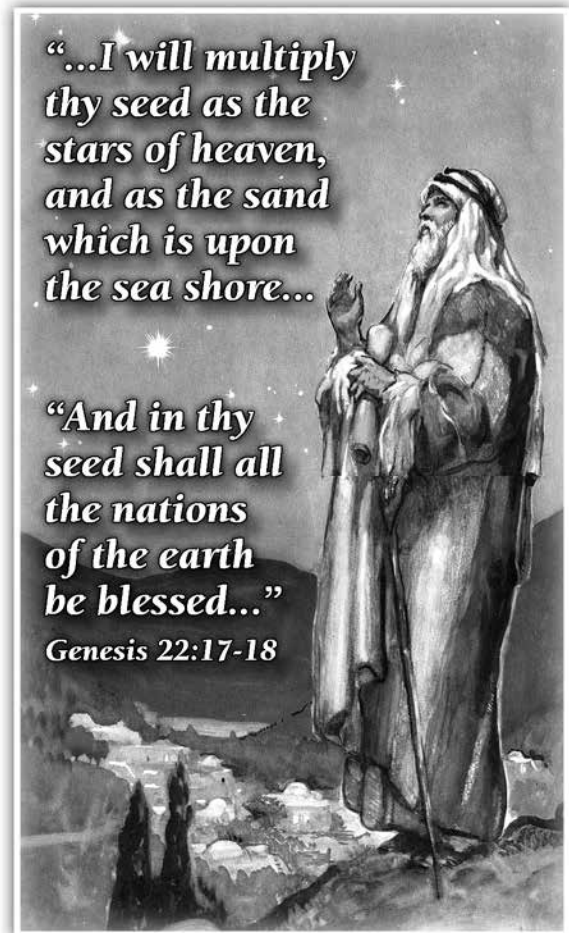


If we say that we have *faith*, we should live our *faith*. God is *faithful* to His promises, and we should also be *faithful* to Him and to others. “Let us hold fast the profession of our *faith* without wavering; for he is *faithful* that promised.” Hebrews 10:23

Hebrews Chapter 11 lists many of the Ancient Worthies who were extraordinary examples of *faith*. 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. He trusted in God, and so he again 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.

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



“...I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore...”

“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed...”

Genesis 22:17-18

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 Jews, are returning to their national homeland — Israel. Genesis 12:1-9; 22:1-18

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

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



# FAITHFULNESS

## What Have We Learned?

Check the correct box to answer the questions.

1. Another word for FAITH is TRUST.

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.

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. never have any problems.
- c. bless all the families of the earth.

7. Jesus' parable about the two sons gives us 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 sincerely repent and ask God for forgiveness from something that we did wrong, 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 it 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. Follow the thread with Scriptures. Three samples are given.

## Genesis 1:26-31

1. Adam and Eve were created perfect.

2. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and the penalty of death began.

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!

4. The flood came upon all but faithful Noah and his family who carry on the **Promise**.

5. Abraham is tested and proved that he loved God supremely. He is given an **oath (Promise)** by God that his **Seed** will bless all the families of the earth.

6. Isaac is a faithful son who inherits the **Promise** given to Abraham.

7. Jacob is a faithful son who next inherits the **Promise** given to Isaac.

8. Jacob is told that the **Seed** would come through the tribe of Judah.

9. Jacob dies and his twelve sons inherit the **Promise** given to him.

10. Israel is given the Law to protect the **Promise** and guarantee that the **Seed** would be fulfilled through Judah.

11. Moses became the mediator of this Law Covenant—**Promise**.

12. The Tabernacle is provided with its characters, structure and ceremonies for a **schoolmaster** to lead Israel to the **Seed Promised** to Abraham.

13. Judges were given to Israel to help them to be faithful—another protection to bring forth the **Promised Seed**.

14. Israel demands a King instead of Judges.

15. Saul becomes the first King of Israel.

16. Saul loses faith and David becomes King over Israel in his place.

17. David is from the tribe of Judah and the **Seed of Promise** passes through his Son.

18. David's Son, King Solomon, built the Temple which replaced Israel's Tabernacle.

## Deut. 28:1-68

19. Israel is given many prophecies through major prophets such as Isaiah and Jeremiah and minor prophets such as Hosea and Zephaniah. They warn Israel to be faithful or they will lose the right to the **Promise**.

20. John the Baptist declares that Jesus is the Lamb of God who will take away the sin of the world.

21. Jesus fulfills the Law, is faithful even unto the death of the cross, and he becomes the **Head** of the Church.

22. Jesus is the **Seed Promised** to Abraham.

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**.

24. Israel is being regathered and being prepared as part of the **Promised Earthly Seed** — to be a light to the Gentile nations.

## Romans 4:16

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!



# 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) Jesus meant that in God’s Kingdom people will be teachable and child-like. They will learn to be innocent from sin and will be gentle.



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, people think only 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 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 sinned, they more than likely learned quickly that they had made a mistake and became good 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 and comfort of being obedient children.



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. They 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, 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. 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 in it [a harsh and unhelpful word] 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 that Jesus washes our feet from the defilements of the earth — not real feet and real dirt, but the bad words, actions and lack of a gentle spirit that we pick up from the world.



The way that Jesus instructs us is by lessons such as these from the Bible. Often it is 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 as from the Lord.

# GENTLENESS

## What Have We Learned?

Check the correct box to answer the questions.

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. better hunters.
- b. more childlike — innocent, gentle and eager to learn from Jesus.
- c. in a hurry to build elaborate churches.

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. model citizens.
- c. become selfish and hurtful to others.

5. Adam and Eve probably learned from their mistakes and 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 a sacrifice of 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 better looking.

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 back at his show-off brother, Abel.

11. It takes a stronger character to be gentle.

True  False

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

- a. we should take our shoes off when we eat.
- b. everyone has dirty feet.
- 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 fame 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

A tenderhearted and sweet tempered person is a \_\_\_\_\_ person.

God only disciplines so that He might teach valuable \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus is gentle as a \_\_\_\_\_, but he is also the “\_\_\_\_\_ of the tribe of Judah.”

Jesus said, “permit the \_\_\_\_\_ to come unto me,” because people in the kingdom are going to be \_\_\_\_\_ and 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    | GENTLE  | WEAKNESS  |
| TREE     | LESSONS | CAIN      |
| CHILDREN | JEALOUS | TEACHABLE |
| LION     | SOFT    | LAMB      |
| ABEL     | MERCY   | GRAIN     |



# SELF-CONTROL

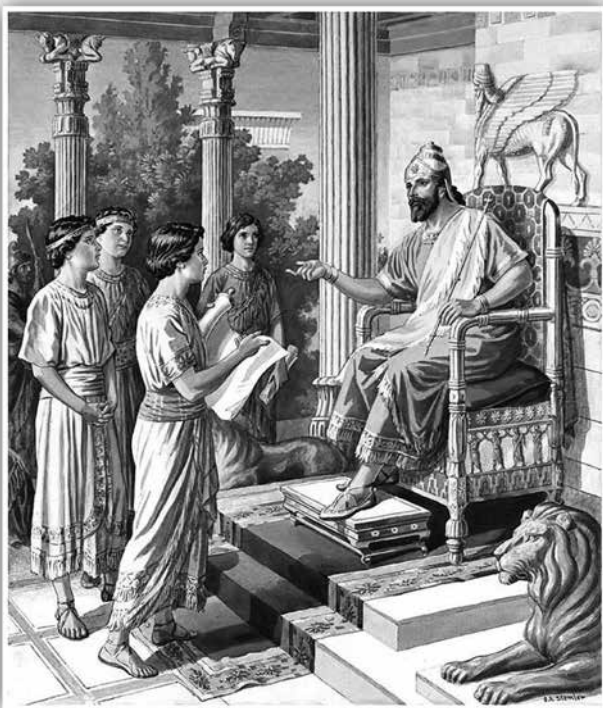
Lesson Text: Daniel 1:1-21

Of the many “fruits of the spirit,” 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.” 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 Hebrew men who lived hundreds of years before Jesus’ time.

Back then, the people of Israel disobeyed God’s commands to live more noble and righteous lives than the pagans. 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 food from the King’s table which had been offered to idols. This food was tempting and tasty, because it was rich in fat and sugar. But the four Hebrews all said, “Please do not ask us to eat this food, for it has been offered to idols, and it is not as healthy for us as our own choice of food.”

Daniel, who came forth as a leader among the Hebrew youth, knew in his heart that if they grew strong 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 what was not offered to idols.



The King’s servant was fearful that the Hebrews would become sickly if they didn’t eat a hardy 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 at the faces of the people who ate the King’s food, and 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 — a little thing — they developed strength of character. That way, when they were confronted with a more difficult experience, they were able to be strong and do the right thing. In the case of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednigo, 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 being self-controlled. 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 are going to be good 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 of the spirit.

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 of the spirit self-control. 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 correct box to answer the questions.

1. It is 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 riding a horse and chariot.
- b. becoming a better 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. 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's servant was told to give the four Hebrew young men:

- a. jobs in the King's kitchen.
- b. rich and delicious food from the King's table which was offered to idols.
- c. gold, silver and precious jewels.

7. The four Hebrew young men told the servant that they preferred to eat healthy meals and not rich food.

True  False

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

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

9. Because Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego 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. a harmful habit.
- b. foolishness.
- 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 the spirit, God:

- a. does not really care, because He is better than everyone else.
- b. is glorified.
- c. makes us rich and famous.

13. If we exercise self-control, then it shows that we love God and others 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 follow the crowd.

---

# ALL of the FRUITS of the SPIRIT

## WORD MATCH

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 OF THE SPIRIT | HONEST               |
| LOVE                 | SELF-DISCIPLINE      |
| GENTLENESS           | TENDERNESS           |
| SELF-CONTROL         | REST                 |
| PATIENCE             | GRATEFUL             |
| JOY                  | THOUGHTFULNESS       |
| TRUTHFUL             | PROMISE              |
| JESUS                | CHARITY              |
| COVENANT             | HONORABLE            |
| RESPECTABLE          | HELPFULNESS          |
| RIGHTEOUS            | NEIGHBORLY           |

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# Fruits of the Spirit



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