



9 - GENTLENESS



She can't even form a sentence yet, but I can already tell that my granddaughter loves to cook. She's obsessed with dishes, mixing spoons, and measuring cups. Put a bowl and a spoon in her hand, and she starts mixing away like she's baking a cake. It doesn't matter how many other toys I put in the box, she'll always go back to the bowl and the spoon.

She's like her mommy that way. In fact, I'd venture to guess that's exactly why she does what she does. She wants to be like her mom in every way possible and she's watched while Madison cooks.

As I got to thinking about that today I was reminded of those who love God. When we love our Father, we look to Him as we grow. We want to live as He lives, we want to love in the gentle way that He loves.

In fact, the Bible tells us to be imitators of God as beloved children:

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. (Ephesians 5:1-2, NASB)

And, how do children imitate their parents? They follow in their footsteps as admiration leads to action. Paul doesn't simply tell us to adore the Lord, he is telling us here to take action. To live as Christ lived and to walk in love as He loved.

≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡

Jesus instructs us to imitate His gentleness in Matthew 11:29 where He says, "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

I read a little parable this week about a traveler, walking down a country road, who saw a farmer out working in his field.

Hoping to find a place to rest, the traveler approached the farmer, "Are you a Christian?" He asked.

Pausing for a moment, the farmer stepped away from his plow, asked the traveler for a pen and a paper, and proceeded to write down a list of names.

"Go and ask these people," he said, "and they will tell you."

As I read that story, I got to thinking about my own life and the people who know me. Who would they say that I am?

Jesus says, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:35, NIV)

Stop and think about that for a minute, it's not by the way that we dress or what church we attend, it's by the way that we love. It's the forgiving way we react to those who hurt us. It's the goodness we bestow on those who hate us. It's the gentle way we react to those who curse us. It's the way we pray for those who use us. That's how they know we belong to God. That's how they know we are His.

≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡

The Greek word for "gentleness" in Galatians 5:23 is *praotēs* (Strong's G4236) which is often translated as "meekness" in scripture. It also means "mildness."

The world tends to define a gentle and meek spirit as weakness, but that's far from the truth. Flying off the handle is the easy way out—the difficult path is patient endurance. That takes inner strength. John MacArthur defines it well when he writes,

"'Meekness' is a humble attitude that expresses itself in the patient endurance of offenses. 'Gentleness' is a virtual synonym. It implies leniency and long-suffering. Meekness is not weakness; it is power under control." – John MacArthur

Better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city. (Proverbs 16:32, NIV)

1 Peter 3:3-4 talks about the hidden man of the heart, which is a meek and quiet spirit, saying that they are of great price to the Lord.

A gentle person isn't self-seeking. She's Christ-seeking. She walks away from injustice believing in the wisdom and sovereignty of God. She is strength under control, not by her own will but by the power of the Holy Spirit. A quiet spirit doesn't stir up trouble. She knows how to stay calm under pressure, she's non-confrontational, easy going, and even tempered.

The thing is, we can't change the world, but we can allow God to start changing us.

Gentleness is found in many forms such as meekness, humility, and

Notice the Gentleness of Christ

lowliness of mind. These are all things that go against our natural desire to excel and be seen in this world. We are driven by a need to be right, to be in charge and to come first, and time and again, our flesh deceives us into thinking that settling for anything less is a sign of weakness.

Take a look at this quote from GotQuestions.org, it sums up why the Jews refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah:

The Jews rejected Jesus because He failed, in their eyes, to do what they expected their Messiah to do—destroy evil and all their enemies and establish an eternal kingdom with Israel as the preeminent nation in the world. The prophecies in Isaiah and Psalm 22 described a suffering Messiah who would be persecuted and killed, but they chose to focus instead on those prophecies that discussed His glorious victories, not His crucifixion. – Got Questions.org

They wanted a king, who would rule over their enemies, but instead they saw a man who was oppressed and afflicted and brought as a lamb to the slaughter. They wanted strength, but what they thought they saw was a weak and broken man who refused to strike back.

It's amazing what people miss out on when they refuse to open their eyes. What they failed to see, is the same thing that many people fail to see today which is the incomparable power of gentleness.

Humility, submission, and lowliness of mind can only occur when the soul is triumphant over the flesh—when our desire to come first is put aside for the good of another. Or in the case of our Savior and Lord, His desire was put aside for the good of mankind.

Let's take a look at the following verses:

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. (John 10:17-18, KJV)

Do you see the power in those two verses? It's incredible! There wasn't a single moment during His life when Jesus was under the thumb of mankind. Every step that He took to the cross was a willful and deliberate act of service to His Father.

Like Christ, we are called to be gentle and meek as we submit our lives one to another. We're called to love, and to walk in humility, esteeming others higher than ourselves. And what might that look like to us?

It's giving up your chance to win an argument for the sake of your marriage.

It's letting another go first in line.

It's holding your tongue when you'd rather lash out.

It's giving up your seat on the bus to an elderly person.

It's allowing your husband to make choices on behalf of your family.

It's stepping back to let others shine.

It's forgoing a simple pleasure to buy a coat for the homeless.

It's bathing the sick.

≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡

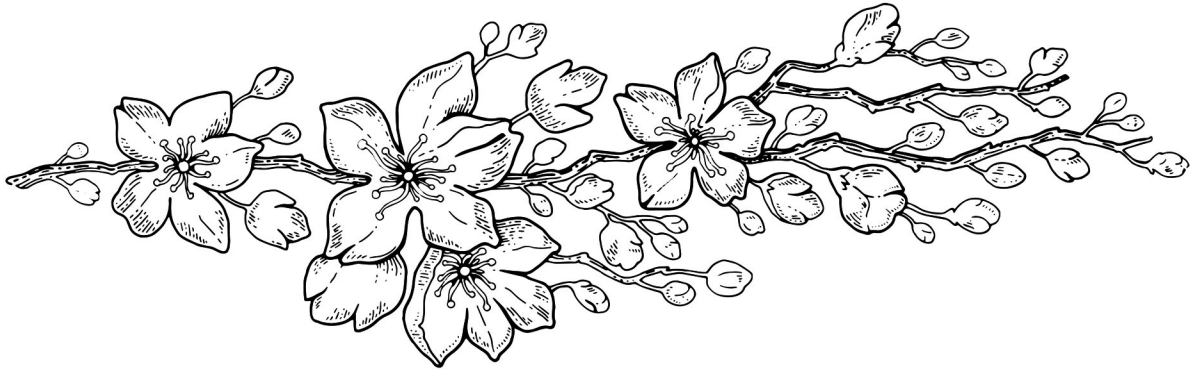
Psalm 18:35 tells us that David was made great by the gentleness of God, which is to say that his greatness and prosperity was a gift of God's kindness and grace on his life.

Ephesians 5:1 tells us to be imitators of God. What does the word imitate mean?



Think about your life and the people who know you.
Who would they say that you are?

What adorning or ornaments does 1 Peter 3:4 tell us that we should wear?



Why did the Jews refuse to accept Jesus as Messiah?

Read Isaiah 53 as it describes the gentleness of Christ. Write verse 7 out here:



We must fly to the cross and pray to the LORD to crucify our tempers and renew us in gentleness and meekness.

– Charles Spurgeon –



Proverbs 15:1 tells us that harsh words stir up anger. Why do you think a gentle answer has the opposite effect? Can you think of an example?

What sets us apart as disciples of Jesus?



The heart in which the Holy Spirit lives
will always be characterized by
gentleness, lowliness, quietness,
meekness and forbearance.

– A.W. Towzer –



We see Jesus as a man who was gentle and meek.
Can you think of any examples from His life?



10 - SELF-CONTROL



Anyone who's been on the internet for a while has witnessed their fair share of challenges. We've seen the ice bucket challenge, the mannequin challenge, the planking challenge, the hot pepper challenge, and of course, the cinnamon challenge.

I didn't have to be challenged to know how hard it is to swallow a teaspoon of cinnamon. I've been there and done it before. In fact, someone once told me that a teaspoon of cinnamon a day kept the calories away. And well, that someone lied.

All that a teaspoon of cinnamon did was make me choke and gasp for air and reach for milk. Trust me, it wasn't good. But you probably know that already because I'm guessing that you're a little bit wiser than me. Who would have thought that something so good, could be so bad? Or is it?

I'm reminded of two verses from the book of Proverbs:

Hast thou found honey? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it. (Proverbs 25:16, KJV)

Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; (Proverbs 20:13, KJV)

One look at these verses reminds me, there's nothing wrong with cinnamon, there's nothing wrong with honey, and there's nothing wrong with sleep. But there might be something wrong with the way that we use them. Too much of a good thing can be a bad thing.

The Bible tells us that "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." (Proverbs 25:28, KJV)

You see, this isn't so much a matter of one eating too much or sleeping too much. The question is, who's winning the battle between our Spirit and flesh? If we're prone to choosing the feel-good easy-way out, will we be equipped and ready to stand when the enemy comes?

≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡

Self-control is protection of the soul. When that breaks down, the enemy makes his way in.

Matthew Henry explains it by saying, "The man who has no command over his anger, is easily robbed of peace." Satan seeks to rob and destroy, if we're not protecting ourselves from the enemy, he will get in.

Self-control isn't easy, but it has to be learned as we take up our cross. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. (Zechariah 4:6b, KJV)

Wikipedia defines temperance this way:

Temperance in its modern use is defined as moderation or voluntary self-restraint. It is typically described in terms of what an individual voluntarily refrains from doing. This includes restraint from revenge by practicing non-violence and forgiveness, restraint from arrogance by practicing humility and modesty, restraint from excesses such as extravagant luxury or splurging by practicing prudence, and restraint from rage or craving by practicing calmness and self-control.

I like that definition as it encompasses temperance in its entirety, and as you'll see in this chapter, we're using the words temperance and self-control interchangeably. It's not just controlling our appetites, it's also controlling our temper, our tongue, and our flesh. It's forgiving when it's difficult to do so. It's stepping back when you're angry. It's putting down your fork when you've had enough. It's picking up your Bible each day. It's putting your charge card back in your purse. It's cooling your temper. It's turning off the computer when it's getting late. It's speaking kindly when you want to lash out. It's patiently waiting when you want to rush in.

But here's the thing, just because you see the word "self" in self-control, don't think for a minute that this isn't the work of the Holy Spirit. Just as the other fruit springs within, so does the fruit of temperance. John Piper explains it by saying, "His working appears in our acting." It has to begin with the will to do well and His strength to follow it through.

For it is God who works in you to will and to act on behalf of His good purpose. (Philippians 2:13, NIV)

The onus is on us to use what God gives us, and yet the power behind it is always from God. Let's not confuse that by sliding back into sin. Let's not abuse the grace we've been given.

≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡

Self-control apart from the work of the Holy Spirit is impossible. Jesus tells us in John 15:5
"Apart from me you can do nothing."

Yield Yourself to the Spirit

Indulgence is a desire to please one's self, whereas self-control is a desire to please God. The working of the Holy Spirit not only plants that desire in our heart, it works within us to nurture it. Our desire to please God must always outweigh our desire to please the flesh.

When I was a young bride, I adopted the clever idea of hiding my bowls and my pots in the oven. It was a great way to clean up fast when company was at the door. As it turns out, one day I invited a couple over for dinner, and while I was busy preparing the food, I shoved the dishes into the oven to hide the mess. The thing is, I forgot they were in the oven when I turned up the heat.

Let's just say, plastic bowls do not hold up at 350 degrees. The smell was unbearable. So bad in fact that my guests had to wait in the back yard while Michael tossed out the melted bowls one by one.

What's my point in all this? Trials have a way of testing our boiling point. It's easy to control our actions when the going is good, but turn up the heat and our true character shines. Even a soft-spoken person may curse when his hammer misses the nail. Anger, frustration, disappointment, pain, and pride are just a few of the things that bring our true character out. An ugly heart stinks to high heaven, but a pure heart is a sweet aroma to God. And so, it's important that we're working from the inside out. Try sticking to a diet when you're depressed or overtired. The struggle is real. We're fighting a losing battle if we're not strong from within. Our actions will always depend on our heart. Get that right with God and our actions will follow.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. (Luke 6:45, KJV)

It starts with prayer, dedication, and meditation on the Word. These are the things that feed our soul and strengthen our faith. I want to be strong when I have good decisions to make.

One of my least favorite things is wanting so desperately to do something, but lacking the self-control to follow through. Whether it's a diet or a new habit I want to incorporate, I want my Spirit to make the decision not my heart.

≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡

The goal of self-control is to overcome the flesh as we follow the Spirit.

Life is more than just pleasing myself, it's about pleasing God--treating my body as a temple of the Holy Spirit, practicing habits that are pleasing to Him, using my tongue to speak wisely and kind. I can't be the faithful servant I want to be without self-control.

Paul writes,

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1, KJV)

Following our heart doesn't lead us down the best paths. In fact, the Bible warns us in Jeremiah 17 that the heart is deceitful above all things. It tells us that we need things when we don't, and if we followed it we'd sleep in too late, eat too much, and eventually come to poverty. That's where the heart wants to lead us.

Temporal happiness doesn't offer the long-lasting joy that one yields through hard work, commitment, and adherence to the Spirit. The Spirit, unlike the heart, leads us safely through life.

We don't slip into holiness like a comfy recliner. It's more like climbing a mountain through rough terrain. And by the fruit of the almighty Spirit of God working in us and through us we fight the good fight. We press on to the goal. We crucify the flesh. We cast aside anything that weighs us down. We bring our bodies into subjection. We count all things as loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

Temptation has a way of finding us doesn't it? We don't even have to leave our home to be tempted. In fact, you could be tempted right now, right where you are. And so we must be ready to stand our ground and choose well at all times.

Remember David in 2 Samuel chapter 11. He didn't go looking for temptation, but sure enough, temptation found him. Standing on the roof of the palace, he noticed a beautiful woman bathing nearby. Instead of turning away from temptation, he stepped further in. Like so many others who have been in a similar situation, David ignored his conscience and chose to entertain sin. Instead of surrendering himself to God's will by turning away, he defied God by resisting the Spirit and choosing the flesh.

When you entertain sin, you fan the flame, until you're consumed by its fire. By sending his servants to inquire about her, David entertained a lust that soon overtook him. The consequences of this as we know were horrific. David and Bathsheba lost the son they conceived, her husband Uriah was killed, and David disappointed the Lord. If this can happen to a servant like David, it can easily happen to us.

Self-control isn't all about saying "no." It's really about saying "yes." Yes, Lord I surrender myself to Your will. Yes, Lord I yield myself to the Spirit. Yes, Lord I'm following Christ.

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (Romans 6:16, KJV)

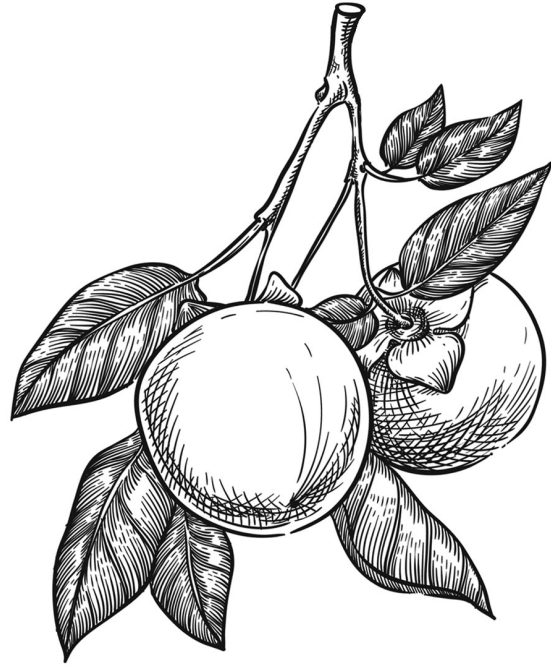


You are more than the sum total of your feelings and perfectly capable of that little gift from Jesus called self-control.

– Lysa Terkeurst –



What does the Bible compare a man
that has no rule over his spirit to?



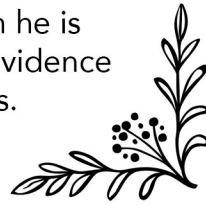
What do you think that comparison means?

What does Proverbs 16:32 say? Write the verse out here.



Surely what a man does when he is
taken off his guard is the best evidence
for what sort of man he is.

– C.S. Lewis –



What part does the Holy Spirit have in the work of self-control?

Why is it unwise to follow your heart?

What are some areas of your life in which you lack self-control?



ANSWER KEY:

Chapter 1

What is the true meaning of patience?

Not our ability to wait, but how we act while we are waiting.

What makes the bitter sweet, and how?

The cross. There's transforming power in the message of the cross, and when that cross takes center stage in the heart of man, it makes the bitter sweet.

What is the difference between fruit and vegetables, and why is it important?

Fruit contains seeds that in turn will plant themselves in the hearts of those around us, and thereby spread the faith. Vegetables don't.

Fill in the Blanks:

And he shall be like a _____ by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his _____ in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. (Psalm 1:3, KJV)

tree planted, fruit

The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the _____ yieldeth fruit. (Proverbs 12:12, KJV)

root of the righteous

Why did Jesus curse the fig tree in Mark 11?

There were leaves on the tree giving Jesus the impression that there would also be fruit. And so, like many today, the tree was appearing one way and living another.

When Jesus explains the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:18-23, what does He say about the seeds that fall on good soil?

He that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

What do you think the soil represents in this parable?

Those that hear the Word of God and live by it.

What happens to trees that are not exposed to the wind?

They do not develop stress wood and are weakened.

We learned how trees are strengthened by the stresses of the wind. Can you remember a time when you were strengthened by the winds of adversity? What did you learn through that trial?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Which fruit of the Spirit do you feel are most evident in your life?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Which fruit would you most like to see grow in your life?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Chapter 2

What is the mark of a true disciple?

That we love one another

Matthew 3:8 (NIV) says, "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance." What do you think that means?

It means that our lives should reflect the commitment we made to turn away from our sin and serve others.

According to 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, list 7 things that love is or does.

is patient,
is kind.
rejoices with the truth
always protects
always trusts
always hopes
always perseveres

List 8 things love isn't or doesn't do:

does not envy
does not boast
is not proud
does not dishonor others
is not self-seeking
is not easily angered
keeps no record of wrongs
does not delight in evil

According to Matthew 5:44, what are four ways we should respond to our enemies?

We should love them.
We should bless them.
We should do good to them.
We should pray for them.

Read "The Parable of the Prodigal Son" in Luke 15:11-32. What are some things we can learn from the father in this story about the way we treat others?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Is there someone that you have a difficult time getting along with? What are some ways you can love them?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Fill in the Blanks:

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt _____ with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt _____. (Matthew 22:37-39, KJV)

love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, love thy neighbour as thyself

And over all these virtues _____, which binds them all together in perfect unity. (Colossians 3:14, NIV)

put on love

What can we learn about love and forgiveness from Joseph? (See Genesis 45:5)

This answer may be different for everyone, but what we see here is that he was able to his eyes off of those that hurt him to focus on God.

What did Joseph do after he revealed himself to his brothers? (See Genesis 45:15)

He kissed them and wept over them.

Chapter 3

What can we learn about joy from John 16:22?

That no one can steal it from us.

What do you think it means when the Bible says “Weeping endures for a night, but joy comes in the morning?” (Psalm 30:5)

Some season in life that are harder than others, but His blessings are new every day. There’s always joy to be found up ahead.

Look up the verses in Philippians that mention “joy” or “rejoice” and highlight them in your Bible. Write one of the verses out here:

This answer will be different for everyone.

Look up the word “joy” at dictionary.com how might that definition of joy be different from the fruit of joy in a Christian’s life?

The earthly definition of joy is that it’s caused by something good or satisfying. The fruit of joy stems from within and isn’t dependant on our circumstances.

Think of a recent time in your life when you could have and should have traded sorrow for joy? What was getting you down? And why was it hard to let go of your pain?

This answer will be different for everyone.

What does Hebrews 12:2 mean when it says, “...Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross...?”

Rather than settling for the temporal high this world has to offer, He chose the joy set before Him. By enduring the cross, He chose to reach for the prize ahead instead of the earthly one at His side.

I shared a story about my dad who found joy in the midst of his trial when he was dying of cancer. Can you think of a similar story that either happened to you or someone you know?

This answer will be different for everyone.

What hope can we cling to when everything feels like it’s slipping away?

The reminder that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us, and that this world isn’t our home.

In my Father’s house are many rooms; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. (John 14:2, KJV)

Fill in the Blanks:

A joyful heart is good _____, But a _____ _____ dries up the bones.
(Proverbs 17:22, NAS)

medicine, broken spirit

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with _____ _____ and full of glory. (1 Peter 1:8, KJV)

joy unspeakable

What do you think this verse means? (If you aren’t sure, try looking it up in Matthew Henry’s

Concise Commentary)

Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them. (Psalm 126:5-6, NIV)

When we mourn for our sins, or suffer for Christ's sake, we are sowing in tears, to reap in joy. (Matthew Henry)

Chapter 4

When was Psalm 63 likely written, and what was David doing at the time?

It was likely written when David went to the forest of Hereth in Judah (1 Samuel 22:5). He was in hiding from Saul.

Who did Saul punish for helping David evade him?

Saul ordered the priests of Nob to be put to death for helping David (but the king's servants would not lift a hand to strike the priests of the Lord, so Saul ordered Doeg the Edomite to strike down the priests and the entire city of Nob as retribution).

What is the Hebrew word for "Peace", and what does it mean?

The Hebrew word for "Peace" is "Shalom." It means wholeness or completeness. It carries with it the idea of living according to God's Word.

Who falsely declared "peace peace" in Jeremiah's time, and what was the outcome?

The prophets and priests declared peace when there was open sin and rebellion against God. Jeremiah prophesied they would be cast down and punished.

What did David do when he was unable to sleep?

He would meditate on God's word.

What was the common greeting found at the beginning of all of Paul's letters to the churches? (Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, etc.)

Grace and peace to you.

What was the first declaration of peace in the Bible, and to whom was it made (Gen 15:15)?

Abram. God declared He would send Abram to his fathers in peace at a ripe old age (Abram's name was later changed to Abraham when God made a covenant with him.)

The power to take peace from the earth was given to the rider of what color horse (Rev. 6:4)?

Red.

What two things are we to pursue according to Hebrews 12:14?

Peace and holiness.

Proverbs 12:20 says deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil. What is promised to those who bring peace?

Joy.

And the _____ of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your _____ and _____ through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7, KJV)

peace, hearts, minds

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect _____, whose _____ is stayed on thee: because he _____ in thee.” (Isaiah 26:3, KJV)

peace, mind, trusteth

When I remember thee upon my bed, and _____ in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth _____ after thee: thy right hand _____. (Psalm 63:1, KJV)

meditate on thee, hard, upholdeth me

Chapter 5

How does longsuffering differ from patience in general?

It's being patient with others in spite of affliction.

What is the Greek word for longsuffering and how is it defined?

The Greek word for longsuffering is “makrothymia” (Strong’s G3115) which is forbearance, longsuffering, and slowness in avenging wrongs.

What does Isaiah 53:7 say? Write the verse out here.

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7, NIV)

What was Joseph’s response to his brothers in Genesis 50:15-21?

He comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

How did Job respond to his trials in Job Chapter 1?

He fell to the ground and worshipped the Lord.

Is there someone in your life that you are struggling to get along with? What came between you? And how do you think Jesus would respond to this person?

This answer will be different for everyone.

What are the four ways that Jesus instructs us to respond to our enemies in Luke 6:27-28?

Love your enemies. Do good to those that hate you. Bless those that curse you. Pray for those that mistreat you

What did Jesus say in Luke 23:34?

Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

How have you acted in the past when people have tested your patience? Would you have the same reaction today?

This answer will be different for everyone.

God allows both problems and people to develop our patience. Can you think of any situations in the past that you’ve grown from?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Chapter 6

If you had the courage to do and say what you're thinking would you still be as kind as you are? Think of a time when your thoughts may have differed from your actions.

This answer will be different for everyone.

In Ephesians 4:32 Paul tells believers to be compassionate and forgiving. Is there anyone with whom you are not compassionate and forgiving? Why not?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Look up the word "hypocrite" at dictionary.com what does it mean?

A person who pretends to have virtues, moral or religious beliefs, principles, etc., that he or she does not actually possess.

In Ephesians 4:31 what 6 things does Paul tell believers to get rid of?

Bitterness, rage, anger, brawling, slander, and malice.

What does the kindness of God do according to Romans 2:4?

It leads men to repentance.

What are some negative intentions that can fuel acts of kindness?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Why should we love our enemies, or go an extra mile without getting it back?

Because we're called to be Christ-like and to reflect His compassion and grace in this world.

What are some ways that The Good Samaritan reflected the character Christ in Luke 10? Hint: I can find 7 of them, see if you can find more.

He approached the man – Luke 19:10, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

He was a Samaritan – Isaiah 53:3, "He was despised and rejected by men."

He bandaged his wounds – Psalm 143:3 “He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”

He poured oil on him – Psalm 23, “You anointed my head with oil.” (to set apart as holy)

He poured wine on him – Ephesians 5:18, “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” (to fill with the Spirit)

He paid the man’s debt – 1 Corinthians 6:20, “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

He said he would return, and when he did, he would repay them yet again – “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”

In Matthew chapter 14 we read about the feeding of the 5,000. What does verse 14 reveal about the heart of Jesus and His motives that day?

He fed and healed them because He had compassion for them.

What are 7 things we are commanded to put on according to Colossians 3:12-13?

Mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, and forgiveness.

Chapter 7

What does Galatians 6:8 say? Write the verse here.

Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. (NIV)

How is goodness most clearly defined?

Uprightness of heart and mind.

What does it mean to shine our light, and why do we do it?

To be an example of God’s love to others, so they will glorify God.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6. What does Paul say about those who sow sparingly? What are the seeds they are sowing?

Those who sow sparingly will reap sparingly. The seeds they are sowing are good deeds.

In Galatians 6:9 Paul talks about reaping a harvest. What do you think that means? (Also see 2 Corinthians 5:10)

The rewards we receive on judgement day.

In the Parable of the Ten Virgins, what made five of them foolish? What did they fail to recognize?

They failed to recognize the fact that a lamp without fuel is nothing more than religion without Christ.

Can you think of a time when you did something good for the right reason?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Can you think of a time when you did something good for the wrong reason?

This answer will be different for everyone.

What does Luke 3:8 say to the modern church?

Religion won't save you. You're not saved by association, you're not saved because you're a member of a certain church. John is preaching repentance here, and telling them that fruit is a result of repentance.

Fill in the Blanks:

For the fruit of the Spirit is in all _____ and _____ and truth.
(Ephesians 5:9, KJV)

goodness, righteousness

Be not _____ of evil, but overcome evil with _____. (Romans 12:21, KJV)

overcome, good

But love ye _____, _____, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again;
and your _____ shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind
unto the unthankful and to the evil. (Luke 6:35, KJV)

your enemies, reward

Chapter 8

What does James 2:17 mean?

That faith and works should go hand in hand.

What is the Greek word for faith, and how is it defined?

The Greek word for faith is Pistis (Strong's G4102) defined by Thayer's Greek Lexicon as: fidelity, faithfulness, i.e. the character of one who can be relied on.

Why was Abel's offering better than Cain's in Genesis Chapter 4?

By bringing the firstborn of his flock, Abel was bringing his best. He was trusting God for the second, and third, etc.

Why was the poor widow's offering better than the others in Mark Chapter 12?

They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on

What are some of the ways that faith was expressed in Hebrews chapter 11? In other words, what actions did they each take? Can you find 5?

Abel offered God his best.

Enoch pleased God.

Noah built an ark.

Abraham left home to follow God's direction.

Abraham offered his son (the thing he loved most) as a sacrifice.

Moses' parents hid and protected their child against the king's commandment.

Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God.

Moses and the Hebrews kept the Passover.

Joshua marched around the walls of Jericho.

How does Abraham's faith differ from that of The Rich Young Ruler in Mark Chapter 10?

Abraham was willing to give up the one thing he loved most.

In what ways was The Rich Young Ruler like Cain?

He was willing to give up some things to God, but wasn't ready to give God his best.

Have you ever had to give something up for your faith? If so, what was it? And, was it hard to give up?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Charles Spurgeon explains faith by saying that it is made up of three things. What are they, and how do they work together?

Knowledge, belief, and trust. We gain knowledge of Who Christ is by reading the Word. We believe that He is Who He says that He is, and we trust that He will do what He has promised to do.

What is the difference between blind faith, and the kind of faith that Charles Spurgeon is talking about?

Blind faith lacks evidence and information. True faith is based on the knowledge of God's Word, and the promises made by a trusted Savior.

Chapter 9

Ephesians 5:1 tells us to be imitators of God. What does the word imitate mean?

To follow or endeavor to follow as a model or example. (dictionary.com)

Think about your life and the people who know you. Who would they say that you are?

This answer will be different for everyone.

What adorning or ornaments does 1 Peter 3:4 tell us that we should wear?

A meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

Why did the Jews refuse to accept Jesus as Messiah?

The Jews rejected Jesus because He failed, in their eyes, to do what they expected their Messiah to do—destroy evil and all their enemies and establish an eternal kingdom with Israel as the preeminent nation in the world.

Read Isaiah 53 as it describes the gentleness of Christ. Write verse 7 out here:

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Proverbs 15:1 tells us that harsh words stir up anger. Why do you think a gentle answer has the opposite effect? Can you think of an example?

This answer will be different for everyone.

What sets us apart as disciples of Jesus?

The way that we love.

We see Jesus as a man who was gentle and meek. Can you think of any examples from His life?

This answer will be different for everyone. Some answers may be:

The way that He was with children.

The fact that He laid down His own life on the cross.

That He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.

That He was silent before His accusers.

If gentleness and meekness is not weakness, what is it?

Power under control.

Can you think of a time in your life when you should have been gentle and kind but weren't? What happened? What would you do differently now?

This answer will be different for everyone.

Chapter 10

What does the Bible compare a man that has no rule over his spirit to?

It's like a city that is broken down without walls.

What do you think that comparison means?

Satan seeks to rob and destroy, if we're not protecting ourselves from the enemy, he will get in.

The man who has no command over his anger, is easily robbed of peace. (Matthew Henry).

What does Proverbs 16:32 say? Write the verse out here.

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. (KJV)

What part does the Holy Spirit have in the work of self-control?

For it is God who works in you to will and to act on behalf of His good purpose. (Philippians 2:13, NIV)

Why is it unwise to follow your heart?

The Bible tells us that the heart is deceitful above all things (Jeremiah 17:9). The heart tells us that we need things when we don't, and if we followed it we'd sleep in too late, eat too much, and eventually come to poverty. That's where the heart wants to lead us.

What are some areas of your life in which you lack self-control?

Satan seeks to rob and destroy, if we're not protecting ourselves from the enemy, he will get in.

Why is Luke 6:45 key to self-control?

Trials have a way of testing our boiling point. It's easy to control our actions when the going is good, but turn up the heat and our true character shines. We're fighting a losing battle if we're not strong from within. Our actions will always depend on our heart. Get that right with God and our actions will follow.

What are some ways in which Christians should be self controlled?

Satan seeks to rob and destroy, if we're not protecting ourselves from the enemy, he will get in.

What was David's first mistake when he saw Bathsheba bathing nearby?

David ignored his conscience and chose to entertain sin. Instead of surrendering himself to God's will by turning away, he defied God by resisting the Spirit and choosing the flesh.