

GROWING UP IN CHRIST, PART ONE

***The Fruit of the Spirit:
Developing the Character of Christ***



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Dear Saint,

God bless you in the name of Jesus Christ.

We are very thankful for your interest in this pair of seminars collectively called *Growing Up In Christ*. Part One is titled *The Fruit of the Spirit—Developing the Character of Christ*, and lays the foundation for a walk of power addressed in Part Two: *Teaching and Activation in the Manifestations of the Gift of Holy Spirit*. God's Word makes it plain that our Heavenly Father is concerned with the development of our godly character and our motivation, as well as with our faith and works (Matt. 7:15-23, 1 Cor. 13:1-3). We must each therefore establish our hearts in His ways so that our works will truly glorify Him.

It is our fervent prayer that these courses will greatly enhance your relationship with God and the Lord Jesus Christ to the end that you are confident of your ability to "walk in Christ's steps," both in heart and action. We love you and are excited for you to learn the thrilling truths contained in God's Word and echoed and illuminated in these seminars. Please let us know how you are doing in your spiritual growth, and if there is any more we can do for you.

We want to thank all the men and women who made contributions to these seminars, especially those who taught some of the material. On behalf of all who shared God's Word in these seminars, let us say how much we appreciate the opportunity to serve and guide you into understanding this vital aspect of what God and the Lord have provided for us. We pray that they will be pleased with this attempt to glorify them, and that the Word will be magnified and the holy spirit energized in as you as you practice these timeless truths.

In His service,

Mark & Karen Anne Graeser, John Lynn, John & Jenivee Schoenheit

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The Fruit of the Spirit

Usages of the words “spirit,” “flesh” and “sin”:

- There are numerous usages of the word *pneuma*, “spirit.” When it is used in opposition to the word “flesh,” it has the meaning of “the new nature.” As “flesh” is put by the figure of speech Metonymy (where a part is put for a whole) to stand for “the old nature,” “spirit” is “the new nature,” of which we are partakers (“divine nature” **2 Pet. 1:3**). Sin is also used in the sense of the “old nature,” or the “sin nature.” (**Rom. 6:12,14; 7:17; 8:4-9; Gal. 5:1,16-26**)

What are the “fruit of the spirit?”

- The “fruit” of the spirit are personal qualities, attitudes and ways of being that are characteristics of both God and Christ. They are evidenced in our lives not by a mystical or metaphysical process, such as “operating the manifestations of the spirit,” but by a walk of obedience to God’s commandments as we are empowered by the spirit of God. We are “transformed by the renewing of *the mind*” (**Rom. 12:2**), not by trying to renew *the flesh*, which is an impossibility.
- We are *commanded* to love, rejoice, let peace rule, etc, and therefore we see that these are choices we can make. When we are obedient to walk in our new nature, we experience the transformational power of the holy spirit to help us be Christ-like. God has provided the means for us to walk like Jesus did, but we must work along with Him as He works in us to be obedient to this new way of being. Christ must be “formed in” us (**Gal. 4:19**) and he must come to “dwell” in us by our walk of faith (**Eph. 3:17**) until we are rooted and grounded in love. See the October, 1997 *CES* monthly letter, which is at the back of in this syllabus.

“Walking by the flesh” or “Walking by the spirit?”

- To know whether or not we are walking in the new nature, we must become adept at recognizing the characteristics of the flesh: selfishness, self-absorption, self-indulgence, envy, vanity, false pride, fear, impatience, laziness, arrogance, foolish talking, backbiting, etc., etc. (There are about 110 different Greek words for behaviors and attitudes spoken against just in the New Testament). We will then be able to “shift gears,” repent and submit ourselves to Christ. The question always is: Who or what is governing our lives—our self-interest or Christ?
- “Walking by the spirit” involves two realities: the *manifestations* of the spirit (His “voice”) and the *fruit* of the spirit (His ways), so that we can walk in the *power* of Christ and have the *character* of Christ. Either one without the other is not truly “walking by the spirit.” It is not an accident that both “manifestation” and “fruit” are singular to emphasize their integrity as an interrelated whole; each is nine-fold. These facts mark these two realities as being powerfully related.

See the October, 1997 CES monthly letter, which is included as an appendix to this syllabus.

Love

"The most excellent way"

1 Corinthians 12:13b

What is this thing called "love" (*agape*)?

1. In *A Critical Lexicon And Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, E.W. Bullinger states regarding the Greek word *agape*: "Love that is self-denying and compassionately devoted to its object. It is expressive of God's relationship to us and the relationship between the Father and Son. Love is the distinctive character of the Christian life in relation to the brethren and to all."
2. *Agape* is impossible to define exactly. It is known from the *action* it prompts (**John 3:16; 1 Cor. 13:1-8**). Christian love is not an impulse from the feelings, nor does it always run with natural inclinations, nor is it evidenced only by those things in which some affinity is discovered (things naturally liked). The love of God in a person is not drawn out by the loveliness of its objects. It is an exercise of the will in deliberate choice. Love your enemies (**Matt. 5:44; Ex. 23:1-5**).
3. *Agape* is commanded (*phileo* isn't), so it must be related to obedience, commitment and action more than to feeling and emotion. "Loving" someone is to obey God on another's behalf, seeking his or her long-term blessing and profit.
4. Love energizes faith and empowers us to give and keep on giving (**Gal. 5:7**).

A Characteristic God

God is love (**1 John 4: 7-12, 16b**)

For God so loved... (**John 3:16**)

A Characteristic of Christ

Always does His Father's will (**Matt. 26:39b**)

Jesus' love for his Father and for man is clearly evidenced by the sacrifice he made for all (**1 John 3:16**)

He loved and gave himself (**Eph. 5:1,2**)

The all surpassing love of Christ (**Eph. 3:17,18**)

His healings and miracles were energized by his love (**Matt. 14:14; Matt 15:32; Matt. 20:34; Mark 1:41; Luke 7:13**).

Commanded of believers:

The love of Christ compels us (**2 Cor. 5:14**).

We love with a new quality of love, the basis of his "new commandment" (**John 13:34**).

Obey the two great commandments (**Mark 12:30,31**).

Be rooted and grounded (**Eph. 3:17b, 18**).

Be imitators of God (**Eph. 5:1,2**).

Love with actions and truth (**1 John 3:18; Eph. 4:15**).

Love others as He has loved us (**John 13:34**).
 Live a life that is worthy (**Eph. 4:1-3**).
 Put off the old and put on the new (**Eph. 4:22-24**).
 Live as children of light (**Eph. 5:8-11**).
 Love covers a multitude of sins (**1 Peter 4:7-8**).
 “Just say NO”—it’s an act of will (**Titus 2:11-13**).

Love—The Greatest Virtue
Colossians 3:12-14

- (12) Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.
- (13) Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.
- (14) And **over all these virtues put on love**, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

The greatest...is love (1 Cor. 13:13)

1 Corinthians 13:4-8, Romans 8:5:

Spiritually minded	Fleshly minded	Application
Patient (v. 4)	Quick-tempered	Proverbs 15:18
Kind (v. 4)	Mean-spirited, hurtful	Proverbs 11:17
Zealous for the cause of another	Envious, jealous (v. 4)	Philippians 2:4; 1 Corinthians 10:24
Meek	Boastful (v. 4)	Proverbs 27:2
Humble	Proud (v. 4)	Proverbs 18:12
Always appropriate	Rude (v.5) (<i>KJV</i> -“unseemly”)	1 Peter 4:9
Other seeking; self-sacrificing	Self-seeking (v. 5)	Philippians 2:21
Slow to anger, easily entreated or criticized	Easily angered (v. 5) (<i>KJV</i> - provoked)	Proverbs 16:32; 25:28
Forgiving, not bearing grudges	Keeps a record of wrongs (v. 5)	Luke 7:47; 23:34; 1 Peter 4:8
Truth-seeking; light-loving (v. 6)	Delight in and dwells on evil (v. 6)	Proverbs 16:6; Ephesians. 5:8-14
Protects & supports (v. 7)	Abandons & undermines	1 Thess. 5:14,15
Trusts (& is trustworthy) (v. 7)	Suspicious and irresponsible	Proverbs 11:13
Hopes (v. 7)	Despairs, gives up on people easily	Hebrews 12:1-3
Perseveres (v. 7)	Gives up in adversity	Hebrews 12:1-3
Unfailing (v. 8)	Always falls short	Proverbs 18:24

Other Greek words translated as “love”:

1. *Phileo*= natural affection.
2. *Eros*= sexual or erotic love.
3. *Storge*= love within a family, the love of parents for children.

Other points:

1. God uses an action model to define love, rather than a feeling model.
 - Love is inextricably linked to obedience (**John 14:15,21,22,24,31**).
 - Love for others is the test of authentic love for God. If you do not love your brother, you lie if you say you love God, because if you are not being obedient to God, you therefore do not “love” Him, biblically speaking (**1 John 4:19-21**).
2. Love costs (**2 Sam. 2:4**).
3. Love includes both knowledge of the one you love and an accurate assessment of who they are (**Phil. 1:9**).
4. Love others as you would have them love you—this works as long as you have a healthy idea of how to be loved. It is good to find out what love “language” they best understand: acts of service; encouraging words; physical contact; quality time; gift-giving, etc. (see Gary Smalley and John Trent: *The Language of Love*, Focus On The Family, Colorado Springs, 1988).

Joy

What it is not:

A constant feeling of ecstasy; a smile painted on your face; blissful ignorance; denial; it is not “an inside job” that so inward that you never actually experience it.

What it is:

Webster’s 1828 Dictionary: “German *jauchzen*: to shout...its radical sense is probably to shout or to leap, or to play or sport, and allied perhaps to joke and juggle... The passion or emotion excited by the acquisition or expectation of good; that excitement of pleasurable feelings which is caused by success, good fortune, the gratification of desire or some good possessed, or by a rational prospect possessing what we love or desire...” The “goods” we have possessed are the gift of holy spirit, the wonderful Word of God, and many blessings from God our Provider. This joy should be visible so others can be won by it.

A characteristic of God’s nature, presence and acts of deliverance

- There is joy in receiving and understanding the Word of God (**Jer. 15:16; Neh. 8:8-12; Luke 24:32**).
- Joy is associated with His kingdom, both metaphorical and millennial (**Rom. 14:17; Isa. 35 and 51:11**).
- There is joy in the presence of God (**Ps. 16:11; Ps. 43:4; 1 Chron. 15:12-28; Ezra 3:12**). God’s Word says He’s always with us (**Matt 28:20; Rom. 10:9,10; Col. 1:27**). We needn’t ask Him to come into our meeting; He’s there if I am. However, the more we experience His presence in us, the greater our joy.
- Therefore, there is joy in having the gift of His nature, holy spirit, dwelling in us (**Rom. 15:3**); there is great joy in the fellowship that we have with other believers who are also manifesting His nature. He has called us into a community of faith (**Phil. 4:4**); it is not good that we should be alone, so the last Adam has put us in a family.
- Joy is associated with the manifestation of the power of God resulting in deliverance (**Acts 8:5-8**).

A characteristic of Christ’s life and walk

The fact that the Bible does not specifically show Jesus being joyful does not mean he didn’t manifest joy. Joy was part of his Messianic experience as prophesied in **Psalms 16:11**, both before and after his resurrection (**Heb. 12:2**). Christ has joy and desires that those who follow him have complete joy also (**John 15:11; 16:24**).

What it does:

- Joy gives us a sound basis for optimism; it helps us look at a future that is desirable and possible (**Heb. 12:2**).
- It gives life and health to our bodies (**Prov. 15:13,30; 17:22**).
- Joy provides buoyancy in our walk. We may be temporarily submerged in sorrow and tears in grief, but with God’s help we bounce back (**Ps. 30:5; Ps. 126:5; 1 Thess. 4:13**). We are not plastic, but resilient!

- It strengthens us for the work we are called to do (**Neh. 8:10**). The “joy of the Lord” is the genitive of relation, and is both objective and subjective. Joy belongs to the Lord, *and* the Lord is the reason for our joy.

The Choice to Rejoice!

- In both the Old and the New Testaments, joy is commanded (**Deut. 16:15; 1 Thess. 5:16**) so it must be a choice of our will, based upon how we think about our circumstances. **1 John 5:3** says His commandments are not grievous.
- Joy can result from the way we choose to interpret the things that happen to us, especially painful things. After being beaten the apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus. They were honored to be treated as poorly as their Lord and Savior (**Acts 5:41**), as he had warned them they would be (**Matt. 5:11,12**).
- Joy is related to an attitude of gratitude, which is a choice of viewpoint—God’s or ours; what we have or what we don’t have (**Col. 1:11,12**).

Take the Joy “Test”:

Joy is a frequent theme of the reproof epistles (particularly 2 Corinthians and Philippians), because a lack of joy is one of the first indicators that we are getting off of right doctrine and practice. Do you have more joy in serving now than last year? Ten years ago? If not, why not? Looking into the causes of a lack of joy can engender repentance and a return to healthy belief and practice, or we can make up a story or a doctrine that justifies our despair.

Lessons on joy from Philippians

- Whenever Christ is preached (**1:18**).
- The heart of a genuine leader is to bring joy (**1:26; 2:1,28,29; 2 Cor. 1:24**).
- Likemindedness among the believers is a joyful occasion (**2:2**).
- Rejoice in the Lord, and what He has done for you (**3:1; 4:4**).
- The people Paul won were a source of joy to him when they continued standing (**4:1; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:9; 3 John 4**). When they quit standing they were a source of astonishment (**Gal. 1:6,7**).

How to maintain joy:

- Joy is maintained by true humility and an ability to laugh at one’s fleshly inadequacies, shortcomings and foolishness. It also helps to see the humor in life’s absurdities, paradoxes and misunderstandings.
- There is joy in service to others (**2 Cor. 5:18-20; Gal. 6:9**). We may be the only Bible they read. We are to live in such a way that we inspire the weary to walk from where they are to *their* Promised Land.
- Choose to think more of what *He has done for you* than what you have done or not done.
- Joy is powerfully associated with hope (**Heb. 12:2; 2 Cor. 12:1-7**). Let God build in your mind and heart His vision for you.
- Deuteronomy 30:19—choose life! Life is a joy, not a burden.

Moment by moment you can make the choice to rejoice!

Peace

What it is not:

Indifference; resignation; avoidance of conflict; denial—“If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs, perhaps you don’t understand the situation.”

What it is:

Thayer’s Greek Lexicon:

1. National tranquillity; exemption from the rage and havoc of war. (**Rev. 6:4; 12:20; 24:2**). Associated with the death or elimination of enemies (**Acts 9:31**).
2. Peace between individuals, *i.e.*, harmony, concord.
3. Security, safety, prosperity, felicity (because peace and harmony make and keep things safe and prosperous). From the Hebrew—*shalom*—ancient Jewish salutation, a formula of wishing well, blessing, addressed by the Hebrews to departing friends; depart into a place or state of peace; go in peace (**2 Kings 5:19; Mark 5:34**).
4. The Messiah’s peace (**Luke 2:14, et al.**).
5. According to a conception distinctly peculiar to Christianity, the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthy lot, of whatsoever sort that is: (**Rom. 8:6; 2 Pet. 3:14**). Comprehensively of every kind of peace (blessing), yet with a predominance apparently of the notion of *peace with God*. Opens and closes many epistles (**Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1, et al.**)
6. Of the blessed state of devout and upright men in anticipation of final judgment (**Rom. 2:10**)

Peace, the fruit of the spirit, involves each of the above.

A Characteristic of God

- In the Lord God is peace and strength (**Isa. 26:3,4**)
- The God of peace (**1 Cor. 14:33; 2 Cor. 13:11**); Be led by the spirit and the God of peace will be with you (**Phil. 4:8,9**)
- The peace of God (**Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15**)

A Characteristic of Christ and His work

- **Isaiah 9:6**—The Prince of Peace, one of His titles.
- **Luke 2:14**—On earth peace, good will to men.
- **Luke 12:51**—Not a sentimental “peace,” because He is the occasion of division also.
- **John 14:27; 16:33**—He gives true peace (not just wishes or commands it).
- **Ephesians 2:14**—He is our peace.
- **Ephesians 2:15**—He made one new man, making peace between Jew and Gentile.
- **Ephesians 2:17**—He preached peace among us.

- **2 Thessalonians 3:16**–the Lord of peace.

A theme of Romans and Ephesians, two doctrinal pillars of the Church:

- The result of justification (**Rom. 5:1**).
- The result of being spiritually minded (**Rom. 8:6**).
- The result of reconciliation (**Eph. 2:15**).

Peacemakers

- **Matthew 5:9**–Blessed are they.
- **Romans 14:19**–Follow the things that make peace.
- To be a peacemaker you must be prepared to enter conflict, and hear out both sides before judging (**Prov. 18:13**).

Romans 12:18,19

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.

Associated with other ideas:

- Righteousness (**Prov. 28:1; Ps. 34:14; James 3:18**); Peace is the end result of chastisement leading to righteousness (**Heb. 12:11**).
- Joy; along with righteousness and joy, what “the kingdom of God” is all about (**Rom. 14:17; 15:13**).
- Grace (**Rom. 1:7, Gal. 1:3, et al**).
- The Gospel (**Eph. 6:15**).
- Contentment, thankfulness (**Phil. 4:7-13; I Tim. 6:6-11**).
- The number “one” (**Eph. 2:15**); -A double minded man is unstable; he’s divided in his mind (**James 1:8**); focus on one thing at a time, one day at a time, *etc.*

Peace personified:

- It will guard (like a military garrison) (**Phil. 4:7**)
- Let it rule (like a referee or an umpire) (**Col. 3:15**)
- The mortar between Christians- the bond of peace (**Eph. 4:3**)

How it shows up

When it is lacking

Internal control	Need for external control
Unity among believers	Strife, division, discord
Justice, mercy	Injustice; tyranny; domination of others
Quiet strength	Weakness, victim mentality
Reconciliation	Strife; brawling
Responsible submission to authority	Rebellion, envy, resentment
Order, creativity	Disorder, chaos
Contentment, thankfulness	Dissatisfaction, restlessness, covetousness
Forgiveness	Desire for revenge and retaliation

Things that rob peace:

- Lust, covetousness, selfish ambition (the “I” is not satisfied with having).
- Unfavorable comparison with others and what they have (envy, unthankfulness).
- Lack of focus, direction, mission (every wind is favorable for him who has a goal).

How to “keep the peace:”

- Follow the **Philippians 4:7** recipe:
 1. Be anxious for nothing (that’s a command).
 2. In everything by prayer (gaze intently on God’s promise of provision).
 3. And supplication (specific prayer—get clear on your need).
 4. With thanksgiving (a very crucial ingredient).
 5. Let your requests be made; take responsibility to *ask* (you have not because you ask not—**James 4:2**).
- In the midst of trouble, acknowledge God and allow Him to direct your paths (**Prov. 3:5**).
- When others are giving their opinion, ask God’s opinion and then rest in the answer (**Col. 3:15**).
- Live one day at a time; do one thing at a time, *etc.*

God is not a God of disorder but of peace—1 Corinthians 14:33

Longsuffering

What it is not:

Being a doormat; being too spiritual to get angry at people; tolerating sin indefinitely.

What it is:

From *makrothumia*, (makro= long; *thumia*= temper, passion or anger). Hence, the ability to hold back anger for a long time, or “long” “suffering.” *Thayer’s*: to be of a long spirit, not to lose heart, hence:

1. To persevere patiently and bravely (**Heb. 6:15; James 5:8**).
2. To be patient in bearing the offences and injuries of others; to be mild and slow in avenging; to be long-suffering, slow to anger, slow to punish. This is also seen in the Hebrew *erek aph*: **Ex. 34: 6; Num. 14:18; Ps. 86:15; Jer. 15:15**).

The difference between “patience” and longsuffering”:

Vine’s: **Longsuffering** (*makrothumia*) is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger, and is associated with mercy, and is used of God. **Patience** (*hupomone*) is the quality that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial; it is the opposite of despondency and is associated with hope (**1 Thess. 1:3**); it is not used of God.

Thayer’s: “*Makrothumia* and *hupomone* occur together in **Colossians 1:11; 2:2; 1 Corinthians 6:4,6; 2 Timothy 3:10; James 5:10,11**. Lightfoot remarks: ‘The difference of meaning is best seen in their opposites. While *hupomone* is the temper that does not easily succumb under suffering, *makrothumia* is the self-restraint, which does not hastily retaliate a wrong. The one is opposed to cowardice or despondency, the other to **wrath or revenge (Prov. 15:18; 16:32)**. This distinction, though it applies generally, is not true without exception.’”

A characteristic of God

- **Psalm 103:8**—The Lord is compassionate and gracious, **slow to anger** and abounding in loving kindness.
- **Joel 2:13**—For He is gracious and compassionate, **slow to anger**, abounding in loving kindness and relenting of evil.
- **Jonah 4:2**—You are a gracious and compassionate God, **slow to anger** and abundant in loving kindness and one who relents concerning calamity.
- **Nahum 1:3**— The Lord is **slow to anger** and great in power.
- See also **Romans 2:4; 9:22; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:9, 15**.

A characteristic of Christ

- **1 Timothy 1:16**—Paul was the model or type of the Lord’s longsuffering for those who would later believe. Who was more deserving of anger and punishment, yet received mercy,

because he opposed the Lord ignorantly (*agnoeo*, without knowledge) in unbelief (not willful disobedience)?

How it shows up?	What happens when it is absent?
Humility: one is willing to forego his “right” to justice in order that another might be won	Seeking revenge; self-indulgence (“I’m not getting what I deserve” as a default position)
Mercy: not demanding what is deserved, but looking deeply into the motives and circumstances of another before passing judgment	Jumping to conclusions and judgments;
Anger is finally expressed for the benefit of others as well as our own	Unbridled anger; hot-temperedness; anger used to control or dominate the behavior of others, rather than setting of rational boundaries

- Many of the “works of the flesh” listed in **Galatians 5:20** contain at least an element of anger: enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions; factions, envying.
- A lack of longsuffering is a main contributor to the sabotaging of all kinds of relationships due to the destructive power of unbridled anger. Believers have always been commanded to be slow to wrath, but in the gift of holy spirit we have the provision to live that way (**Ps. 145:8; Prov. 14:29; 15:18; 16:32; James 1:19**)

Other points:

- It is one aspect of the love of God (**1 Cor 13:4**).
- It is an important quality in maintaining unity with other Christians (**Eph. 4:2**).
- It is an important quality of Christian leadership, especially accompanying biblical instruction (**2 Tim. 4:2**).
- It is a crucial quality to manifest if we want to have fellowship with God. It helps us wait upon Him. It also helps us relate to others the way He does.

***Makrothumeo*—verb form**

Matthew 18:26,29; Luke 18:7; 1 Corinthians 13:4; 1 Thessalonians. 5:14; Hebrews 6:15; James 5:7 (2x), 8; 2 Peter 3:9.

***Makrothumos*—adverb form**

Acts 26:3 hear me patiently.

***Makrothumia*— noun form**

Romans 2:4; 9:22; 2 Corinthians 6:6; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 1:11; 3:12; 1 Timothy 1:16; 2 Timothy 3:10; 4:2; Hebrews 6:12; James 5:10; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:15.

Kindness (*KJV*—“Gentleness”)

What it is not

Inappropriate mercy; caretaking; relieving godly sorrow; mushy sentimentality

What it is

1. The Greek word is *chrestotes*, a noun, and the adjective is *chrestos*.
2. Kindness is a fruit of the spirit, the new nature. As such it is a characteristic of the Christ in us and it is something we need to develop as we strive to be more like Christ.
3. Kindness is sweet, mild, and full of graciousness. It pervades and penetrates the whole nature of the person and mellows anything harsh and austere. It is ready and willing to do good.
4. It is very close to goodness except it does not include the concepts of rebuking and correcting.
5. You cannot turn kindness on and off like a switch. It becomes part of your nature. As we move closer to being like Christ we will find that we will be kind in more and more circumstances.
6. American culture, as a whole, has completely moved away from biblical kindness, and it will take some aggressive work to reclaim it. Just watch any sitcom on TV any night of the week and you hear cuts, slams, stabs and sarcasm as a regular part of communication. We cannot talk like that and say we are attempting to be like Christ.

A characteristic of God

- **Luke 6:35**—For He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
- **Romans 2:4** (2x)—His quality that leads us to true repentance.
- **Proverbs 18:19**—An offended brother is hard to be won.
- **Ephesians 2:1-7**— God will exhibit His kindness.

A characteristic of Christ:

- **Matthew 11:30**— My yoke is easy (kind) and my burden is light.
1. The yoke of Christ is “kind.” It has no barbs or sharp edges. It won’t rub you raw.
 2. Note the metaphor: Christ is the Master, and we are his. Before knowing him, we are yoked to sin, and carry its great burden. When we trust in him, and enter his service, he enters our life, is yoked with us, and takes the majority of the burden as a stronger animal would in a double-tree yoke. He does not stand back and whip us, but gently enters the yoke with us and shares our burden. Sin, on the other hand, is an unkind and merciless taskmaster (**John 8:34; Rom. 6:6-23**) who burdens us to death, which is our final “wages.”
- **Luke 15:3-31**—The parables of the lost sheep, the lost jewel and the forgiving father illustrate the kindness of Christ to help the needy, the ones considered the dregs of society.

Kindness is commanded of the believer

- **Ephesians 4:31,32**–Responsibility is placed squarely on the believer to act in kindness toward one another.

Experiencing God’s kindness helps us to be kind

- **1 Peter 2:3** (“good” = “kind”) – If others experience our kindness it helps them to be kind
- **1 Corinthians 15:33**– Bad company corrupts “kind” character.

Kindness relates therefore to the relieving of the burdens of others:

- **Luke 10:25**– Parable of the “KIND” Samaritan.
- **Luke 5:39**– “Better” is “kinder.” It does not “bite” and leave a bad aftertaste.
- **2 Corinthians 6:3-10**–Kindness never causes people to stumble.

On true kindness:

- There is a sense that the level of kindness can be determined by how far out of our comfort zone we are willing to go to help. True kindness must be separated from sentimentality, *e.g.*, see a lost kitten and give it milk (may not take much internal kindness).
- **Proverbs 14:21 and 31**– Be kind to the needy.

Goodness

What it is not

- Being wishy-washy; refusing to “think evil;” a Pollyanna; always avoiding a conflict in order to get along; elevating “friendship” and “relationships” above genuine godliness.

What is it?

1. “Goodness” is the Greek word *agathosune*. It does not appear in the classical Greek writings at all, and first appears in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament. It refers to the person who has the moral quality described by *agathos*, “good.” It is uprightness in heart and life, and the person who exhibits the fruit “goodness” is upright and honorable, shows a moral excellence and is acceptable to God.
2. This moral excellence requires an educated conscience, evidenced by a willingness to give up personal comfort as part of the price of doing the right (the “good”) thing.

What is it—“Fruit with teeth”

1. “Goodness” can be called the “fruit with teeth,” because goodness, while it has a lot in common with “kindness,” very clearly also contains the idea that it is a *good* thing to uphold standards, enforce the law, and punish wrongdoers. The grammarian Richard Trench writes: “A man may display his *agathosune*, his zeal for goodness and truth, in rebuking, correcting, and chastising.” The church father Basil wrote, “*agathosune* is more narrow [than *chrestotes*, “kindness”] and uses words of justice and judgment.”
2. Goodness resists evil. If there is no “goodness” in the Christian’s life, evil is displayed without fear of consequences. Trench writes: “The world expresses contempt for goodness that seems to have only the harmlessness of the dove and not the wisdom of the serpent. Such a contempt would be justified for a goodness that has no edge, no sharpness, no righteous indignation against sin or willingness to punish it.”
3. “Goodness” is usually associated with activity rather than inner nature, although the good actions spring from the good heart: “The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart” (**Luke 6:45**). Goodness is not self-absorbed or comfort-oriented. Many “good” tasks are uncomfortable to perform.
4. “Goodness” is anchored in God and in God’s revelation to man. In the Scripture, “good” is often contrasted with “evil.” Moral relativism leaves both “good” and “evil” up to the feelings and inclinations of the individual. In a system without godly standards all kinds of “good” things become “evil”. Thus holding people accountable becomes evil (you may hurt their “self-esteem”), punishment of any kind becomes evil (they were not really at fault, but were victims of society), saying that someone is wrong becomes evil (why be so narrow minded), etc.

The fact is that God’s Word is the final authority on that which really is “good.” Moral relativism is not new. More than 700 years before Christ, Isaiah wrote:

“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter” (**Isa. 5:20**).

A characteristic of God

- God is good. He is kind to the ungrateful and evil men (**Luke 6:35**). Note: God still says they are ungrateful and evil, but He is kind to them anyway.
- God is upright (upholds the highest standards of moral excellence), holds sinners to account and finally gives the disobedient what they deserve (**Rom. 1:18-32**).
- God is willing to embrace His own discomfort in order to uphold His righteous standards (**Isa. 53:10**). He endured the horrible spectacle of His Son’s humiliation and death.
- God is a righteous judge (the day of vengeance of our God—**Isa. 61:2**) and will finally remove all that is not good from His earth.

A characteristic of Christ

- Sacrificed His own life so that God’s standard could be upheld. It was this standard with which He struggled in the garden, asking if there couldn’t be another means to achieve the same result (**Luke 22:42**).
- Christ went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil (**Acts 10:38**).
- Christ stood against the evil of His day.
- He was not “good in the same sense God is” (**Mark 10:17,18**), but his goodness was in upholding the goodness of God.

The believer’s “goodness”

- The three uses of “goodness,” *agathosune*, in the New Testament (beside **Gal. 5:22**):

Romans 15:14

[In this verse, “instruct” (*NIV*), “admonish” (*KJV*) is the Greek word *noutheteo*. Unfortunately there is no exact English equivalent to it, but the idea is to bring about change in a person’s behavior by speaking words to him. *The Amplified Bible* has “competent to admonish *and* counsel *and* instruct one another.”] Here, the “goodness” combined with knowledge makes one competent to admonish-counsel-teach each other.

Ephesians 5:9

In the context of verses 8-11, the “good” person not only has no fellowship with the darkness, but he or she “exposes & reproveth” it.

2 Thessalonians 1:11

In the context of their love for each other, their work proceeding from their faith, and the persecution they were enduring, Paul is praying that the Lord will fulfill the “good” things that the Thessalonians had purposed to do. Their “goodness” is seen against the backdrop of the discomfort and persecution they were experiencing, and in their steadfastness in the face of such discomfort.

When goodness is present	When it is absent
Commitment to right belief and conduct	Commitment to what's comfortable, normal, traditional, popular
Following the path of righteousness	Following the path of least resistance (makes men and rivers crooked)
Upholds standards and enforces godly laws; holds self and others accountable for godly standards of behavior	Makes excuses for sinful behavior
Allows others to appropriately experience the consequences of their behavior	Habitually relieves self and others of the consequences of sinful behaviors
God-centered; uphold his standards even when they make you uncomfortable or disgusted with yourself	Self-centered; you are "god" and set whatever standards make you comfortable
Appreciation of grace and mercy as undeserved, responding with commitment to love and obey one so good and kind	Think grace and mercy are your right as a license to sin without consequences
In parenting, establishing fair and consistent standards that are followed up with appropriate consequences; "sparing not your souls for their crying" (Prov. 19:18)	Vacillating on your standards; inconsistent punishments; weakening when it involves inconveniencing yourself or enduring the child's anger and rebellion

Biblical examples of "goodness"

1. The "good" Samaritan (**Luke 10:25ff**): Performed an act of love, kindness and goodness. The Samaritan had an internal inclination to do the right thing, while the Priest and Levite, under the Law and the moral excellence expected in their office, passed by. This is goodness as it overlaps with "kindness."
2. Jesus performed many good acts that were well received. He changed water into wine when the bridegroom ran out and would have been embarrassed. He healed many sick. He raised the dead. He spoke words that brought strength to the downtrodden and self-condemned. He delivered many from the power of demons. In most of these cases, the "good" act was also a "kind" act, and the astute student sees that both words refer to the same action.
3. Jesus also performed many actions and said things that, while "good," cannot be considered "kind." He pronounced "woes" upon Capernaum, Bethsaida and Korazin because they did not repent. He called the Pharisees a "brood of vipers," not out of bitterness or with venom, but rather to reprove them and warn those who were following them (**Matt. 12:34**). He once said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan, you are a stumblingblock to me" (**Matt. 16:23**). He indirectly referred to a Gentile Canaanite woman as a "dog" (**Matt. 15:26**).
4. When Jesus Christ cleansed the Temple (**Mark 11:15-18**), he knew it was not popular and would bring the wrath of the religious leaders down on him but it was the will of God.

5. **Deuteronomy 13:6-11** is a good example of being “good” when it is not fun, exciting, or pleasurable to be good. Good people do what is good even when it is uncomfortable to them.
6. **Mark 6:17-20** records that John the Baptist reproved Herod Antipas because he married his brother’s wife, a thing strictly forbidden in **Leviticus 18:16** and **20:21**. This act of goodness gave Herod and Herodias a chance to repent and obey the Scripture, and it set a good example for other believers to stand on the Scripture they knew, but John’s act of goodness was unappreciated by Herod who threw him into prison and then executed him.
7. **Luke 23:50** shows Joseph of Arimathea, a “good” man, lay his reputation and social standing on the line as a member of the ruling body of Israel, the Sanhedrin, in order to bury Jesus in fulfillment of the Scripture. It greatly complicated his life to get involved, but he knew it was the right thing to do.
8. The apostles and disciples in the early church repeatedly refused to make their lives easier by discontinuing their practice of preaching and teaching in the name of Jesus Christ. They chose beatings and jailings rather than compromise their “goodness.” (**Acts 3-19**).

Conclusion:

The world has such a twisted sense of what “good” really is, and that the person who hopes to truly be “good,” *i.e.*, have his or her heart and actions aligned with the will of God, must be willing to study, meditate on the Word and pray for understanding. No matter how “good” something seems to the natural man, it is not really good unless it lines up with the will of God.

“All that is required for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing.”

Faithfulness (*KJV*—“Faith”)

What is it?

Faith=*pistis* (Greek): Trust, confidence, assurance; faithfulness. Faith is that simple trust in the promises and character of God. Faithfulness means continued faith or perseverance. Trust—we trust God because God is trustworthy; then we manifest the characteristic of being trustworthy toward Him, doing His will; then we are trustworthy with other people. The fruit of faithfulness relates primarily to our ability to be trustworthy in our dealings with others.

A characteristic of God

- **Genesis 1:1-24**—His Word is powerful and creative.
- **Deuteronomy 7:9**—Know...He is God, the *faithful* God.
- **Psalms 86:15**—Abounding in love and *faithfulness*.
- **Psalms 89:2**— That you established your *faithfulness* in heaven itself.
- **Psalms 89:30-33**—Nor will I ever betray my *faithfulness*.
- **Psalms 119:86**—All thy commandments are *faithful*.
- **Lamentations 3:23**— Great is thy *faithfulness*.

A characteristic of Christ:

- **Matthew 7:21**—He came to do the will of God
- **Luke 22:42**—Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.
- **John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38-40**—Do the will of Him who sent him.

Characteristics and examples of faithful believers:

- **Proverbs 11: 13**—A trustworthy man keeps a secret (keeps confidences)
- **Proverbs 25:13**—A trustworthy messenger delivers the message verbatim
- **Daniel 6:4**—They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy
- **Luke 16:11,12**—Faithful in little, faithful in much
- **Luke 19:17**—Trustworthy in a small matter
- **1 Corinthians 4:17**—Timothy was faithful in the Lord
- **Titus 1:9**—Hold firmly to the trustworthy message
- **Hebrews 3:5; Numbers 12:7**— Moses was faithful

How to be trustworthy & faithful:

1. **Psalm 15:4; Ecclesiastes 5:5,6; Romans 14:13**— Make up your mind to be faithful
2. **Luke 16:10-12**— Know there is a reward.
3. **Hebrews 10:32-36; 12:1**—Persevere—let us run with perseverance the race.
Persevere—to persist in anything undertaken, to maintain a purpose in spite of difficulties or obstacles.
 - **Romans 5:3**—Suffering produces perseverance/character/hope
 - **1 Corinthians 9:24-26**—Run to get the prize
 - **2 Timothy 2:22**—Pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace

- **Philippians 3:14**–Press toward the mark

1. Get with others who are being faithful (**Heb. 10:21-25**).
2. Follow the example of other faithful ones (**Heb. 11: lff** “By faith”).
3. Look to Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith (**Heb. 12:2,3**).

Blessings of faithfulness

- Joy
- Trusted by others
- Rewards

Trustworthy

Untrustworthy

Keeps promises, values his own words	Makes excuses; rationalizes; holds his own word in contempt
Governed by words, promises	Governed by feelings and circumstances
Detail-minded	Considers details beneath him or judges them unnecessary
Obedient	Murmuring and complaining (Phil :12)
Goal and task-oriented	Distracted by circumstances

2 Corinthians 1:18-22

- (18) But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.”
- (19) For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not “Yes” and “No”, but in him it has always been “Yes.”
- (20) For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.
- (21) Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ.

Meekness (NIV, NASB “Gentleness”)

What it is not

Weakness; spinelessness; indecisiveness; man-pleasing; gullibility

What it is

- Greek: *praotes*.
- Vine’s *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*: “It is an inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly towards God. It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting; it is closely linked with the word “humility” (*apeinophrosune*) and follows directly upon it (**Eph. 4:2**)”
- Calmet’s *Dictionary of the Bible* (1732): “A calm, serene temper of mind, not easily ruffled or provoked; a disposition that suffers injuries without desire of revenge, and quietly acquiesces in the dispensations and will of God (**Col. 3:12**). This temper of mind is admirably fitted to discover, to consider and to entertain truth (**James 1:21**).
- Webster’s *1828 Dictionary of the English Language*: 1. n. Softness of temper; mildness; gentleness; forbearance under injuries and provocations. 2. In an evangelical sense, humility; resignation; submission to the divine will, without murmuring or peevishness (petulance, aptness to murmur and complain); opposed to pride, arrogance and refractoriness (obstinate disobedience).
- Meekness is a way of being, opposed to boldness of manner, and is to be the default manner for leaders in the Body of Christ (**1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Cor. 10:1,2**)
- Vine’s: “Described negatively, meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all.”
- It is “meek” biblically to be confident of God’s and Christ’s calling and power in your life.

A characteristic of God

- Seen in the give-and-take conversation with Moses about his feelings about being called (**Ex. 4:1-17**)
- Seen in the giving of the people of Israel what they wanted: a king (**1 Sam. 8:7-9**)

A characteristic of Christ

- **Matthew 11:29**—I am meek and lowly in heart
- **Acts 9:13-16**—Seen in the way Jesus handled Ananias’ objection to His command
- **2 Corinthians 10:1**—Paul’s assertion of his apostleship is based on Christ’s meekness and gentleness.”
- Vine’s: “...it must be clearly understood, therefore, that the meekness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the fruit of power. The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was ‘meek’ because he had the infinite resources of God at His command.

Commanded of believers, especially leaders:

- Especially evident in godly leadership and the exercise of authority—to serve, not to dominate or tyrannize. (1 Cor. 4:21; Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim 2:25)
- 1 Timothy 6:11—the best texts have *praopathia*; it is one of the things that a man of God must “pursue.”

When meekness is present and absent:

Flexibility; open to future possibilities; able to adjust and learn what needs to be learned to be competent; will try new things	Rigidity; commitment to tradition and the past ways, even when unfruitful
Teachable, coachable	Arrogant; think you know more than you do; assume you’re better off than you are
Open to reproof; humble; willing to consider your sin and wrongs and shift as necessary to be more like Christ; takes criticism graciously	Hard-headed; prideful; always right—can’t admit when wrong; resentful of criticism; out of touch with personal sin and how it affects others
Will hear reproof from anyone at any time in any manner, even from enemies; values truth and righteousness above all else	Willing to accept reproof only from close friends who approach them in the “right” way at certain times; values loyalty above all else
Learns readily from others; admires other’s success and competence; emulates excellence	Too self-absorbed to notice how others are doing things; envious of others’ success, especially competitors
Uses authority to serve and coach others to their personal best, even if that is better than his; as willing to follow as to lead; doesn’t need to lead to feel valuable	Authoritarian; uses authority to elevate self; keeps people from outshining them; jockeys to keep control and look good; needs to lead to feel good about self.

- C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (p. 99):
 “Do not imagine that if you meet a really humble man he will be what most people call “humble” nowadays: he will not be a sort of greasy, smarmy person who is always telling you that, of course, he is nobody. Probably all you will think about him is that he seemed a cheerful, intelligent chap who took a real interest in what you said to him. If you do dislike him it will be because you feel a little envious of anyone who seems to enjoy life so easily. He will not be thinking about humility: he will not be thinking about himself at all.”

Self-Control (KJV “Temperance”)

What it is not

- Trying to reform the flesh by self-discipline; overcoming sinful tendencies by outward religious practices; asceticism (the religious doctrine that one can reach a higher spiritual state by rigorous self-discipline and self-denial).

What it is

1. The Greek word for “temperance” is *enkrateia*. The root word is *kratos*, which means power in action; strength exerted. *Enkrateia* means mastery over self; self-control (as opposed to self-indulgence). E.W. Bullinger’s *Lexicon and Concordance*: “The grace by which the flesh is controlled” (2 Cor. 12:9). This grace is supplied by the new nature, the gift of holy spirit.
2. God designed the human mind to control the human body, but not without holy spirit as the rudder for the mind. “Self-control” implies a standard to which to conform. The Word of God provides the standard, and holy spirit provides the ability. *Belief* is the basis of *behavior*. To overcome destructive behaviors, we must *believe* that we have been freed by grace from the tyranny of our sin nature. When we believe, we manifest our ability to overcome by the power of the spirit within (2 Cor. 3:18).
3. Temperance or self-control equals **self-government**, *i.e.*, freedom to choose what I think, say and do no matter what “happens” to me. At the bottom line, God has given us the capacity to rise above the lure of sin and the ravages of self-destructive evil (Prov. 25:28; 2 Pet. 1:4; James 1:14,15).
4. A commitment to self-control without being motivated by love for others feeds prideful ambition and self-glorification.

There is a relationship between truth, character and behavior:

“The fruit of the spirit” is found in Galatians 5. The book of Galatians corrects the practical failure to adhere to the doctrine of Romans, specifically salvation by grace through faith. Thus, Galatians reiterates some of the key doctrinal points made by Romans, especially **Galatians 5:16**: “...live by the spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.” In context, we see that false teaching encourages sinful behaviors and character flaws. Hence it is significant that the fruit of the spirit are articulated in this section of Scripture, in opposition to the “works of the flesh.”

1. We must have knowledge, and then *act* on it (Heb. 4:2; 11-12).
2. We must notice any deviation from the truth.
3. We must meet our internal enemy head-on with the power of Christ.

Vine’s: “The various powers bestowed by God upon man are capable of abuse; the right use demands the controlling power of the will under the operation of the spirit of

God; in **Acts 24:25** the word follows ‘righteousness,’ which represents God’s claims, self-control being man’s response thereto; in **2 Peter 1:6** it follows ‘knowledge,’ suggesting that what is learned requires it to be put into practice.”

Related scriptures:

Galatians 5:1

1 Corinthians 6:12ff

Romans 7:18-25

2 Corinthians 12:9,15

Galatians 5:2-24

Romans 6:5-14

1 Corinthians 7:9—self-control over sexual passion

2 Peter 1:2-11

Titus 1:5-9—a qualification for leadership

Self-control is for the sake of others:

- **1 Corinthians 9:19-27**—Paul compares his self-discipline with that practiced by Olympic athletes for an earthly prize. Regarding these verses, Kittel’s *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Vol. II, p. 342) comments: “For the sake of the goal towards which he strives, the commission which he has been given and the task which he must fulfil, he refrains from all the things which might offend or hamper. It is not for his own sake, or for the sake of any necessity to salvation, **but for the sake of his brethren** that he practices self-control...”

Kittel’s (Vol. II, p. 340-2):

“Egkrateia” plays an important role in the philosophical ethics of classical Greece and Hellenism... In view of...this, it is striking how small a part is played by the term in biblical religion...It is significant that biblical religion finds so little place for the concept of self-control which in the Hellenistic and Greek world is so essentially ethical. The reason for this is that biblical man regarded his life as determined and directed by the command of God. There was thus no place for the self-mastery, which had a place in autonomous ethics...belief in creation cut off the way to asceticism. It saw in the world with its gifts the hand of the Creator. Finally, the gift of salvation in Christ left no place for an asceticism which merits salvation.”

Characteristics of the Two Natures

Fruit	New Nature; Christ; Holy Spirit	Old Nature, Self
Love	Forgiven Power Good jealousy—protective of what God gives Sacrifice Commitment Action	Unforgiveness; bitterness Fear Jealousy—possessive Convenience; comfort Feeling centered
Joy	Hope, vision; future rules Accomplishment Optimism Thankfulness The power of interpretation— <i>count it all joy</i>	Past; defeat rules Disappointment; bitterness Despair Unthankfulness Victimization
Peace	Righteousness Internal control Unity Justice Strength Reconciliation Responsible submission Order Contentment	Need for external control Confusion Division Injustice; tyranny Weakness; victim Strife; brawler Rebellion Disorder Envy
Longsuffering; patience	Control—God's power Humility Redemptive anger as a last resort	Hot tempered; unbridled Revenge Self-gratification; indulgence; anger used to control
Gentleness; kindness	Mercy, grace Diminish long term pain of others Father of prodigal son Looks on heart	Rigidity; religiosity Arrogance Form-driven Bitterness Older brother of prodigal son
Goodness	Not imposed from without Pure Concerned for the benefit of others Uprightness; integrity Resisting the way of the world	Self-absorption Evil Path of least resistance Threat of punishment Men-pleasing
Faith; faithfulness	Focus-outward-needs and object-one to provide Promises of God	Distraction; wavering Self-focus Doubt; distrust; fear

Characteristics of the Two Natures

	Perseverance Reason rules Action/works Commitment Full persuasion	Feelings rule Senses Comfort Mental assent
Meekness; gentleness	Flexible Future possibilities rule Teachable; open to reproof Humility—recognize weakness Use authority to serve, not dominate or tyrannize Take heat; not retaliate Takes cues from others	Rigid; self-focus Past rules Arrogant; think you're above reproof Out of touch with personal sin Authoritarian; uses authority to elevate self, not serve Resentful of criticism Retaliate; revenge My way is the best way
Temperance	Self-control Balance Integrity Need governs	Self-indulgence Extremes Idolatry—convetousness Wants (fleshly desires) govern

Genetic Determinism

Excerpted from an article in *US News and World Report*, April 21, 1997:

Basic personality is looking more and more like a genetic legacy. Nearly every week there is a report of a new gene for one trait or another. “Novelty seeking, religiosity, shyness, the tendency to divorce, and even happiness (or the lack of it) are among the traits that may result in part from a gene, according to new research.

This cultural shift has political and personal implications. On the personal level, a belief in the power of genes necessarily diminishes the potency of such personal qualities as will, capacity to choose, and sense of responsibility for those choices—if it’s in your genes, you’re not accountable. It allows the alcoholic to treat himself as a helpless victim of his biology rather than as a willful agent with control of his own behavior. Genetic determinism can free victims and their families of guilt—or lock them in their suffering.

The emerging view of nature-nurture is that many complicated behaviors probably have some measure of genetic loading that gives some people a susceptibility—for schizophrenia, for instance, or for aggression. But the development of the behavior or pathology requires more—what National Institute of Mental Health Director Stephen Hyman calls an environmental “second hit.” This second hit operates...through the genes themselves to “sculpt” the brain.

The Two Natures of the Child of God

By E.W. Bullinger

**Reviewed by
Randi Doan
Richland, Michigan**

The excerpts of Bullinger's work that I will cite here locate and situate the conflict between "the desires of the flesh and of the mind" and the "new man," which is created in Christ Jesus. Bullinger aptly notes in his Preface that ignorance of this conflict "warring in our members" is deadly. Clearly, this is why our Father took pains to illuminate it in Scripture. The scope of the study is neatly stated in the conclusion of his first chapter:

The experience of the child of God is described in Galatians 5:17 in the following words: "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." In everything but this, the mere professor can imitate the child of God: and it is this which distinguishes the merely religious person from the real Christian. Every true child of God . . . has an abiding experience of conflict within, as described in Galatians 5:17. But not every child of God understands the doctrine concerning it. To have the experience without knowing the doctrine is the fruitful source of confusion, and discouragement. To know the doctrine and not to have the experience is fatal . . . The only remedy for this is to learn directly from the Word of God all that is there taught concerning the nature inherited (from) Adam, and the nature bestowed through regeneration by God.

I sincerely hope you find edification in this treatment of each Christian's "daily challenge." Understanding this matter of doctrine is a threshold item, facilitating the emergence of a powerful and effective daily plan of action that can produce fruit for the Kingdom of Heaven. For your consideration, from the Preface:

In John 3:6, we have the teaching of the Lord Jesus on a fundamental doctrine: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." It states an eternal truth, but, it is the one truth which the natural man will not have. It declares that by nature we are descended from fallen Adam and are begotten in his likeness (Gen. 5:3), and are partakers of his fallen nature. Born of the flesh, we possess the nature of the begetter, and are flesh. This flesh, the teaching of Jesus declares, "profiteth nothing" (John 6:63): and in it "dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). But, as we have said, this is the teaching which man will not receive. Pulpit, platform, and press, with one voice proclaim the opposite, and declare that there IS some good thing in man and that all we have to do is to discover and improve it.

It is against this lie of the Devil that the axe of divine truth is laid when the Lord Jesus declares that "that which born of the flesh is flesh," that "the flesh profiteth

nothing;” and that in it dwells “no good thing.” If any good thing is to be found in man, it must be first be put in by God. It must be “born of the spirit,” and when that good thing is thus born and found in a man, then it is seen to partake of the nature of the begetter. It is holy spirit. It is divine. These two natures are so opposite in their origin, nature, and character that they each have several names, and each name reveals some fresh trait and some additional truth. Let us first look at the names by which man . . . is spoken of.

Bullinger’s paper then proceeds by listing seven phrases or names that he feels refer to the flesh, or the “old nature” in man. What follows is his discussion at the beginning of Chapter One of the first of these titles, “The Flesh.” It is particularly revealing because of the light that it brings to the subject of worship. The notes in brackets are mine.

“The Flesh;” as we have it in John 3:6. It comes by birth as generated by a fallen begetter. Concerning this flesh we are told, that it “cannot please God” (Rom. 8:8); it “profiteth nothing” (John 6:63); there is in it “no good thing” (Rom. 7:18).

Now this is vital and fundamental truth. The question is: Do we believe it? Do we believe God or man? If we believe God, we shall see that the great bulk of what goes by the name of “public worship” is vanity. True worship must be wholly that of the spirit or the new nature. We must be able to say with Mary, “My soul doth magnify the Lord, my spirit hath rejoiced in God my savior.”

[If you bristled at this criticism of public worship, please be patient. His point here is to juxtapose empty (though perhaps lovely) form with spirit-fired substance.]

It is only as saved ones that we can truly worship. If the flesh itself “profiteth nothing,” then it is clear that we cannot worship God with any of the senses which all pertain to the flesh. We cannot worship with our eyes by gazing at a sacrament. We cannot worship with our noses with the smelling of incense. We cannot worship with our ears by listening to music. Nor can we worship with our throats by singing.

Protestant Christians will agree with us in what we say about gazing on sacraments, or the smelling of incense, but what about the other senses of the flesh, what about the ears and the throats? [This, I believe is a figure of speech indicating “throats which fill the ears” and/or “all the senses at work to fill the throats and then the ears.”] The churches seem to be “music mad” and, what with choirs 1000 strong and string bands, solos, and choruses and anthems . . . we have come upon a time when the “flesh” seems to hold universal sway in what still retains the name of worship. [Bigger and better worship?]

This flood is advancing side by side with another, of which the cry is, be filled with the spirit.” But, the “Word of truth” is wrongly divided. For a full stop is put after the word spirit and thus, it is not noticed that, if we are all filled by the

spirit, it will be seen in the effect: viz., “speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts (not in your throats merely; and this, not to any audience or congregation but) to the Lord.” It is not an “ear for music” that is wanted, but a heart for music. From this title of the old nature we learn that the “flesh profiteth nothing.” This . . . truth is fundamental to Christianity, while the opposite is fundamental to religion. Religion has to do with the flesh: Christianity has to do with Christ and the new nature . . .

Bullinger could perhaps have better made the point that worship is not the doing of any of these “acts,” but is the result of the acts or words of God upon the spirit of Christ in the converted. Similarly, an important point could (and should) be extrapolated from this discussion, that the acts or words of God that so fill up the Christian that one “overflows” into worship are impressed upon us because of our closeness, through the spirit, to him, not because we experience “public worship” one or two hours per week. Thus, more emphasis could easily be put upon the aspects of Christian living that cause us to “speak to ourselves in psalms and hymns . . . making melody in our hearts to the Lord.” Music that flows from a heart of love and praise is what blesses God and people.

The point must be solidly made, too, that the application of our senses in worship is inevitable and necessary: how else can we pray, sing, or speak? And, further, that both the receiving of inspired music, psalms, prophecy and the giving of it require the involvement of our flesh, our senses. But, the great point here is that something more is necessary.

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