

Assembly of Eloah

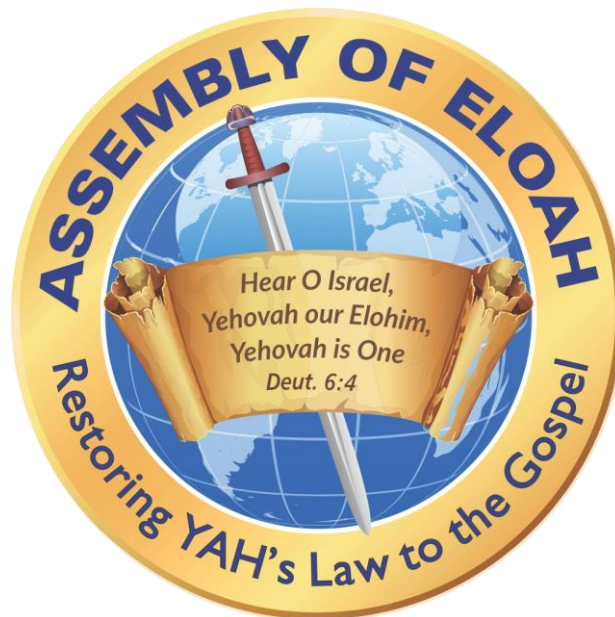
This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent -- Jesus Christ. Jn. 17:3

Fruit of the Spirit

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David Treat

The Holy Spirit should be producing character traits known as fruits of the spirit in those in whom it dwells.
This paper examines the fruit produced by that indwelling of the Holy Spirit.



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Fruit of the Spirit

Y^ehovah's law emanates from His character. It is His nature, His personality. His spirit is the power through which He works. The law is a physical manifestation of the spiritual traits that make up the character and mind of Y^ehovah. The relationship between the two can't be broken. Upon realizing that Y^ehovah must be obeyed, we begin to keep His law. The keeping of the law and the understanding thereof brings us to the realization that we must repent of wrongdoing. Repentance then leads us to desire baptism and receipt of the Holy Spirit. Once we are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, we become a new creation.

2Cor. 5:17 ESV Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

From our re-creation, we begin to grow stronger, just as a child, as he matures, becomes stronger. We exercise faith through the spirit by overcoming our flaws and improper behavior. Faith being the trust that Y^ehovah will fulfill His promises for obedience to Him and His laws. The old things that made us who we are, begin to fade as the new creation grows through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We truly become a new person.

Rom. 6:6-7 ESV We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. (7) For one who has died has been set free from sin.

As we go through the transformation process, our minds and thought processes are changed (Rom. 12:1-2).

Rom. 12:1-2 ESV I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present

your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (2) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

It is part of the spiritual worship of our God to be transformed by His spirit into a new creation with His law written in our hearts and minds.

Jer. 31:33 ESV For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

We'll know if the law is written in our hearts if we instinctively obey it.

Rom. 2:13-16 ESV For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. (14) For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. (15) They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them (16) on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

As we mature in the faith, the law becomes fused with God's spirit within us to form the bond that drives us to desire to obey Him. We no longer want to do things that will disappoint Him. The behaviors that manifest themselves as a result of this bonding are called by Paul, the fruit of the spirit.

Gal. 5:22-25 ESV But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (24) And

those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (25) If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

We are known by our fruits. Our fruits are nothing more than the actions and behaviors that manifest themselves outwardly.

Mat. 7:15-20 ESV "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. (16) You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? (17) So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. (18) A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. (19) Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (20) Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

Paul is referring to false prophets here but the principal is sound for everyone. If you want to know what someone is about, just watch how they behave over a period of time. People can't hide who they truly are forever.

We are to glorify our Creator by walking upright before Him. We do this by bearing the fruit of the spirit.

John 15:8-10 ESV By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. (9) As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. (10) If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

Let's examine each of these fruits in more detail so we can understand what it is we are to be developing as character traits.

Love

The first fruit of the spirit that we are to develop is Love. We should be showing love for all men but especially to our families and brethren. This love extends itself even to those that may not have our best interests at heart.

Luke 6:27-35 ESV "But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, (28) bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. (29) To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. (30) Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. (31) And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. (32) "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. (33) And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. (34) And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. (35) But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

The Greek term used for love in this passage is *Agapao*. It means to love in a social or moral sense. It is a love that is not quite as close as *Agape* or brotherly love, but it is love or concern for one's welfare none the less. It's by showing sincere concern for the welfare of others that we prove we are sons of the Living God; even when they don't love us back. This love is a natural by-product of the indwelling of the spirit. Christ gave his disciples a new commandment.

John 13:34-35 ESV A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I

have loved you, you also are to love one another. (35) By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

By loving one another we prove to all that we are Christ's disciples and sons of God. This is not a nice-to-have brethren. This is a must. We **must** develop the ability to do this. It is a sign of our spiritual maturity.

Mat. 5:43-48 ESV "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' (44) But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, (45) so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. (46) For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? (47) And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? (48) You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Another aspect of love is correction.

Heb. 12:5-13 ESV And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. (6) For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." (7) It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? (8) If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. (9) Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? (10) For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. (11) For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (12) Therefore lift your

drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, (13) and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

We are our brother's keepers. We are to look out for one another and we are to correct each other when we see wrongdoing. If serious enough, we eject them from the assembly for their own good and the good of the assembly.

1Cor. 5:1-6 ESV It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. (2) And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. (3) For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. (4) When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, (5) you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. (6) Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

With God all discipline is for the good of those being disciplined not to relieve the anger or wrath of the one executing the discipline. Let's not forget that the root word of discipline is disciple. The best form of discipline is setting a good example.

Brethren, we are required to exercise the indwelling spirit of Y^ehovah and develop this ability, if we are to measure up to the standard who is Jesus the Christ.

Joy

The Greek term used here is *chara*. It means cheerfulness or calm delight. This

one is a most difficult concept to understand. How can one make themselves joyous? Joy happens as we understand that the problems we may face in this world are insignificant in comparison to the reward we will receive upon the return of Christ. Life is hard and full of trials and tribulations. The Apostle Paul learned to be content no matter what his situation.

Phil. 4:10-13 ESV I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. (11) Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. (12) I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. (13) I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Through Christ we can learn to be content. The strength we receive from him and the spirit that dwells in us makes the trials easier to bear. We are told to find joy in trial.

Jas. 1:2-4 ESV Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, (3) for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. (4) And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

David spoke much of joy in the psalms.

Psalm 4:6-8 ESV There are many who say, "Who will show us some good? Lift up the light of your face upon us, O LORD!" (7) You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound. (8) In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

Psalm 16:1-11 ESV **A Miktam of David.**

Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge. (2) I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you." (3) As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight. (4) The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips. (5) The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. (6) The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. (7) I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. (8) I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. (9) Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. (10) For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. (11) You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 32:10-11 ESV Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD. (11) Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

There are many more Psalms that could be listed but those can be part of an independent personal study.

Joy comes through an understanding of the plan of salvation and the result of our calling. If we have true faith, we will find joy even in questionable circumstances.

John 15:11-19 ESV These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. (12) "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. (13) Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. (14) You are my friends if you do what I command you. (15) No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what

his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. (16) You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. (17) These things I command you, so that you will love one another. (18) "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. (19) If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Even though we may be tried and feel worn out by the wickedness in the world, there will be joy for us.

John 16:20-22 ESV Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. (21) When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. (22) So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.

Our faith grows as we mature spiritually and become more convinced of the plan of God. Through trials our faith is tested. In hind sight, we see how it was tested and that Y^ehovah sees us through the trials. This confidence in Him and His plan will bring joy to the heart of His saints.

Peace

The Greek term for peace is *eirenē*. Of this term Thayer says:

of Christianity, the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is

Peace offerings were made prior to Jesus' sacrifice to engender peace between us and Y^ehovah. It was a form of thank offering. Edershiem has this to say about the peace offering:

IV. The most joyous of all sacrifices was the *peace-offering*, or, as from its derivation it might also be rendered, the offering of completion. *

* It always followed all the other sacrifices. This was, indeed, a season of happy fellowship with the Covenant God, in which He condescended to become Israel's Guest at the sacrificial meal, even as He was always their Host. Thus it symbolised the spiritual truth expressed in Rev. 3:20, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.' In peace-offerings the sacrificial meal was the point of main importance. Hence the name 'Sevach,' by which it is designated in the Pentateuch, and which means 'slaying,' in reference to a meal. It is this sacrifice which is so frequently referred to in the Book of Psalms as the grateful homage of a soul justified and accepted before God (Psa. 51:17; Psa. 54:6; Psa. 56:12; Psa. 116:17-18). If, on the one hand, then, the 'offering of completion' indicated that there was complete peace with God, on the other, it was also literally the offering of completeness. The peace-offerings were either *public* or *private*. The two lambs offered every year at Pentecost (Lev. 23:19) were a public peace-offering, and the only one which was regarded as 'most holy.' As such they were sacrificed at the north side of the altar, and their flesh eaten only by the officiating priests, and within the Holy Place. The other public peace-offerings were slain at the south side, and their 'inwards' burnt on the altar (Lev. 3:4-5). Then, after the priests had received their due, the rest was to be eaten by the offerers themselves, either within the courts of the Temple or in Jerusalem (Deut. 27:7). On one occasion (1Ki 8:63) no less than 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep were so offered. Private peace-offerings were of a threefold kind (Lev. 7:11): 'sacrifices of thanksgiving' (Lev. 7:12), 'vows,' and strictly

'voluntary offerings' (Lev. 7:16). The first were in general acknowledgment of mercies received; the last, the free gift of loving hearts, as even the use of the same term in Exo. 25:2, Exo. 35:29 implies. Exceptionally in this last case, an animal that had anything either 'defective' or 'superfluous' might be offered (Lev. 22:23).

Peace is a byproduct of the Law of Y^ehovah. Peace comes through loving His law. Loving His law comes through the indwelling of the spirit. In this way, all of the fruit of the spirit builds upon the others.

Psalm 119:165 ESV Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble.

Prov. 12:20 ESV Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but those who plan peace have joy.

Prov. 16:7 ESV When a man's ways please the LORD, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

We are commanded to be at peace.

Mark 9:50 ESV Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Peace is to be sought after with great effort.

Psalm 34:14 ESV Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

It is the spirit of God that gives us peace. The spirit and the knowledge of the plan of salvation should allow us to find peace regardless of our circumstances because we realize that whatever happens in this physical life is temporary.

John 14:25-27 ESV "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. (26) But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. (27) Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

John 16:33 ESV I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

After baptism and the receipt of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, our minds are on the spirit not the flesh. Peace comes through that changing of the mind.

Rom. 8:5-9 ESV For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. (6) For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. (7) For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. (8) Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (9) You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

Patience

The Greek term for patience here is *makrothumia*. It simply means longsuffering patience. God is, thankfully, longsuffering with us as we test Him with our shortcomings and hard heads. We are to develop this same character. We are told that we should bear good fruit in patience.

Luke 8:15 ESV As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in

an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

Through trials, we gain patience and patience or endurance is the building block upon which experience and hope are built.

Rom. 5:3-5 ESV Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, (4) and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, (5) and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Patience or endurance is more than just not getting frustrated when something is not going your way. It means not losing your zeal for the work of God. It means not losing faith even when life seems intent on destroying you. It means, as the salt of the earth, we don't lose our flavor.

Mat. 5:13 ESV "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

We are warned not to lose our saltiness for it cannot be returned once it is lost. We have to stay focused on the prize and be zealous for God and His work.

It is through patience that we receive the reward we all seek as His children.

Rom. 2:6-8 ESV He will render to each one according to his works: (7) to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; (8) but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.

We are called to walk the walk not just talk the talk.

Eph. 4:1-3 ESV I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, (3) eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Col. 3:12-14 ESV Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, (13) bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (14) And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Just as our standard exemplified patience, we must also exemplify patience.

1Ti. 1:16 ESV But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

Kindness

The Greek term for kindness is *chrēstotēs*. It means usefulness, that is, moral excellence (in character or demeanor); gentleness or goodness. We are to be morally upstanding in all we do. We are to live as examples in our community. It is by our examples that people come to know what we are. Our religion is how we live our lives.

1Ti. 4:12 ESV Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

We are to be a light to the world and, in so doing, we will bring glory to the Father (Mat. 5:14-16).

Mat. 5:14-16 ESV "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. (15) Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all

in the house. (16) In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

It is through the kindness that develops in us that we become examples to the world. It is by the spirit that this is made possible.

Kindness is a sign that we fear Y^ehovah.

Job 6:14 ESV "He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty.

Refusal to show kindness will have its penalty.

Psalm 109:14-16 ESV May the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out! (15) Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth! (16) For he did not remember to show kindness, but pursued the poor and needy and the brokenhearted, to put them to death.

Rom. 11:22 ESV Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

Pursuing kindness will indeed have its reward.

Prov. 21:21 ESV Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness, and honor.

Brethren, this fruit of the spirit is not a choice. It's not something we can do or not do. It is required of us by our God.

Mic. 6:8 ESV He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Zec. 7:9-10 ESV "Thus says the LORD of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another, (10) do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart."

Col. 3:12-13 ESV Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, (13) bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

The kindness of our loving God and savior has to become part of our character. He requires it of us and as we meet it out, it will be given to us.

Goodness

The Greek term used here for goodness is *agathosune*. It simply means virtue; that is beneficence, goodness. We are instructed to have an excellence about us in our moral conduct.

2Pe. 1:3-7 ESV His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, (4) by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. (5) For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, (6) and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, (7) and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

By demonstrating self-control or virtue, we become partakers of the divine nature. We strive to be good even though there is

only one who is good and that is God the Father.

Mat. 10:18 ESV and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles.

Psalm 25:7 ESV Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!

Zec. 9:16-17 ESV On that day the LORD their God will save them, as the flock of his people; for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land. (17) For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty! Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the young women.

This is the goodness that comes from a desire to please God. If we desire to please God, we will strive to be like Him. We have all known people that are just "good souls". There is a goodness in them that will not allow them to do harm to others. This is what we are called to be.

Mat. 10:16 ESV "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

Faith

The Greek term used here is *pistis*. It has the following meanings: persuasion, that is, credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), especially reliance upon Christ for salvation; abstractly constancy in such profession; by extension the system of religious (Gospel) truth itself: - assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity.

Faith is a necessary element to the Christian development. Christ told his disciples, when they were unable to cast

out a demon that it was due to their lack of faith.

Mat. 17:18-20 ESV And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was healed instantly. (19) Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" (20) He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you."

Christ told the Pharisees that they should not have neglected faith in their strict law keeping.

Mat. 23:23-24 ESV "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. (24) You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

God's law is a law of faith. Abraham was the father of the faithful and he kept the law. It is through faith in God's promises that we keep the law. Without faith in the promises of God, what need would there be for law-keeping? It is only by faith that we desire to keep the law.

Rom. 3:31 ESV Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

Without works, faith is of no use. If one's faith doesn't drive them to do good, to keep Y^ehovah's laws, then what good is it? Our faith has to manifest itself in action just as every other fruit of the spirit is manifested.

Jas. 2:14-26 ESV What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? (15) If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in

daily food, (16) and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? (17) So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (18) But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (19) You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! (20) Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? (21) Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? (22) You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; (23) and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. (24) You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. (25) And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? (26) For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

It is our faith that makes us righteous in the eyes of God (Rom. 5:1).

Rom. 5:1 ESV Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

If we then are righteous, we will live by faith.

Rom. 1:16-17 ESV For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (17) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

What does it mean to live by faith? It's quite simple, brethren. If we believe what we are told in scripture and we abide by it, we are living by faith. If we trust in the

word of Y^ehovah, then we have faith. Paul defines faith for us.

Heb. 11:1-40 ESV Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. (2) For by it the people of old received their commendation. (3) By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. (4) By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. (5) By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God. (6) And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. (7) By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. (8) By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. (10) For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. (11) By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. (12) Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore. (13) These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. (14) For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. (15) If they had been

thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. (16) But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city. (17) By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, (18) of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." (19) He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. (20) By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau. (21) By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, bowing in worship over the head of his staff. (22) By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones. (23) By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. (24) By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, (25) choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. (26) He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. (27) By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. (28) By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them. (29) By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned. (30) By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. (31) By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given a friendly welcome to the spies. (32) And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— (33) who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of

lions, (34) quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. (35) Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. (36) Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. (37) They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— (38) of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. (39) And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, (40) since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Our faith is what protects us from Satan's attacks.

Eph. 6:16 ESV In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;

As we experience God's hand in our lives, our faith grows. We can begin to see the cause and effect relationship in His law and the positive effects of keeping it. As we see the blessings that occur as a result of our obedience, our faith grows stronger. These blessings may not happen as quickly as we might want but they will happen, if we obey. It is by exercising the laws, statutes and principals of God that we gain faith in Him and His ways. If we are to bear this fruit of the spirit, we have to live according to His way.

The subject of faith deserves a study in its own right and the surface has barely been scratched in this study. This subject will be covered in detail in a future study.

Gentleness

The Greek term used here is *praotēs* and it simply means, gentleness and by implication humility or meekness. Christ told his disciples that the meek, or gentle, would inherit the earth.

Mat. 5:5 ESV "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

The word translated gentle in verse 5 is *praus* which is derived from SGD 4235 *praotēs*. We are to be mild mannered and gentle. We are not to be a reviler, which is to say abusive or mischievous (I Cor. 6:9-10).

1Cor. 6:9-10 ESV Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, (10) nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

In order for us to inherit the kingdom of God, we must put on gentleness or meekness as part of our character. We can't be one given to railing, abusive or insolent behavior. If we have this character flaw, we must put it off and, through the spirit of God, allow gentleness to develop. We are admonished in scripture to do so.

Eph. 4:1-3 ESV I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, (3) eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Col. 3:12-14 ESV Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, (13) bearing with one another and, if one has a

complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (14) And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

1Ti. 6:11 ESV But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.

2Ti. 2:24-26 ESV And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, (25) correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, (26) and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

As brothers we are required to treat each other with the same gentleness with which our Father in heaven treats us.

Gal. 6:1-2 ESV Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. (2) Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Eph. 4:1-6 ESV I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, (3) eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (4) There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— (5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1Ti. 6:12 ESV Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

It's clear from the above scriptures what is expected of us. Gentleness is a manifestation of the indwelling spirit of God. If it isn't, then we need to be on our knees in prayer asking God to give us the strength to overcome. By failing to overcome a harsh or abusive way, we are potentially quenching the spirit and that could lead to the second resurrection.

Self-Control

The Greek term used here is *egkrateia* which means, self-control (especially continence), temperance. Thayer defines it as: self-control (the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites).

A lack of self-control can bring much misery on a person and those around them.

Prov. 25:28 ESV A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.

1Cor. 7:5 ESV Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

A person without self-control will be carried along by the wind. They will follow those that run to do evil. They will be blown around by every wind of doctrine. We are called to be strong in the faith and to exercise self-control.

1Cor. 9:24-27 ESV Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. (25) Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. (26) So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air.

(27) But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

2Ti. 1:6-7 ESV For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, (7) for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Our failure to exercise self-control and the other fruit manifested by the Holy Spirit can disqualify us for the reward.

2Ti. 3:1-8 ESV But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. (2) For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, (3) heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, (4) treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, (5) having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. (6) For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, (7) always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. (8) Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith.

We are to be in control of our wants and desires. It is lust that leads to sin. Lust can be sexually based or based on covetousness. Covetousness and lust go hand in hand. Peter tells us that if we put on the fruit of self-control, amongst others, we will not become unfruitful and useless (2 Pet. 1:4-8).

2Pet. 1:4-8 ESV by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. (5) For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and

virtue with knowledge, (6) and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, (7) and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. (8) For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Brethren, everyone lives their lives behind a façade. We are called to live our lives out in the open.

Mat. 5:14-16 ESV "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. (15) Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. (16) In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Mark 4:22 ESV For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light.

John 7:4 ESV For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world."

If we live a life that is pure, we have nothing to hide. The fruit of the spirit should shine forth from Y^ehovah's people so they are noticed as a peculiar people. As stated earlier in this study:

Mat. 7:16-20 ESV You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? (17) So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. (18) A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. (19) Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (20) Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

As we mature in the spirit, our light should shine. These manifestations of the spirit should be seen in the people of God. It is a requirement from our Father that we grow and overcome. We are becoming more like our elder brother with every passing day. From Passover to Passover, we examine ourselves to ensure we are continuing to grow.

One must measure themselves against the standards set by those who have gone before us. All things are written in scripture for our admonition.

Exercise the spirit that has been freely given and fight the fight as Paul instructed. Then the fruit of the spirit will be manifested in each and every one of us.

Amen Y^ehovah