

The Fruit of the Spirit Lesson 9 1Q 2009

The Fruit of the Spirit is Meekness

SABBATH

Read Memory Verse – thoughts? What is meekness?

- Humbly patient, docile, calm, especially in the face of provocation
- No desire to promote self?????

Why will the meek inherit the earth? What makes the New Earth a safe place to live?

What is the difference between meekness and weakness?

Read third paragraph “Although weakness...” thoughts?

How do weakness and meekness look different and function different?

A woman who is married to a man who physically abuses her repeatedly, violently, broken bones, bloody lip, verbal assaults. If she stays and takes blame, “Oh, it wasn’t his fault...” is this meekness? How would a meek person handle it?

Does a person who is meek still live a life of Godlike love? Where is the focus of love? If the wife is meek, but genuinely loves her husband, what is her primary concern when her husband beats her?

What did Christ pray when they crucified Him? “Father forgive them they don’t know what they are doing.” Who was Christ concerned for?

What happens to the character, mind, reason, conscience of a man who beats his wife? If he persists living like this will he be saved,

even if he is elder in the church and “claims” Christ as his Savior? Why or why not?

What happens to the sinner who persists in sin? Does God get tired of him? Does the sinner ever wear out God’s patience? Does God ever become so disgusted with the sinner that God becomes something other than a God of love? If God always loves and never stops loving, what happens to those who persist in sin? What do you think about this description?

The prevalence of a sinful desire shows the delusion of the soul. **Every indulgence of that desire strengthens the soul's aversion to God.** In following the path of Satan's choosing, we are encompassed by the shadows of evil, and every step leads into deeper darkness and **increases the blindness of the heart.** {MB 92.2}

The **same law obtains in the spiritual as in the natural world.** He who abides in darkness will at last lose the power of vision. He is shut in by a deeper than midnight blackness; and to him the brightest noontide can bring no light. He "walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." 1 John 2:11. Through persistently cherishing evil, willfully disregarding the pleadings of divine love, **the sinner loses the love for good, the desire for God, the very capacity** to receive the light of heaven. The **invitation of mercy is still full of love, the light is shining as brightly as when it first dawned upon his soul; but the voice falls on deaf ears, the light on blinded eyes.**{MB 92.3}

No soul is ever finally **deserted of God**, given up to his own ways, so long as there is any hope of his salvation. "**Man turns from God, not God from him.**" Our heavenly Father follows us with appeals and warnings and assurances of compassion, **until further opportunities and privileges would be wholly in vain. The responsibility rests with the sinner.** By resisting the Spirit of God today, he prepares the way for a second resistance of light when it comes with mightier power. Thus **he passes on from one stage of resistance to another, until at last the light will fail to impress**, and he will cease to respond in any measure to the

Spirit of God. Then even "the light that is in thee" has become darkness. The **very truth we do know has become so perverted** as to increase the blindness of the soul. {MB 93.1}

What did you hear described? Did love ever stop? Did the light ever become dim or does it shine just as brightly? Then what happens? The sinner who persists in sin destroys the capacity to recognize and respond to love and truth. He becomes incurable!

What do you think it means the very truth we do know has become so perverted as to increase the blindness of the soul? What about the Sabbath in Christ's day? Did they know the truth of which day was the Sabbath? But because they rejected the truth about God what had the Sabbath become? And what did they accuse Christ of? And how did they treat the Lord of the Sabbath? Any risks for us today?

The truth about God's character of love is the center to which all other doctrines must align. Teachings which in any way undermine the truth about God's character will eventually harden the heart and obstruct our union with God.

SUNDAY

Read top dark section? Thoughts?

What does it mean to take Christ's yoke? If we surrender our lives to God, surrender our plans – surrender the "outcomes" to Him and simply follow His directions in carrying out our duty – doesn't that remove worry, stress and anxiety?

Read first paragraph, "Meekness is..." thoughts? Does the meek person seek to exert their rights? Fight for their fair share? Does that mean the meek person is a doormat and allows themselves to be run over?

Was Paul being meek when He opposed Peter publically? Why or why not? What was the difference? Was Paul standing up for himself or for Christ and the truth?

Are we to be more assertive in promoting the gospel, helping others?

How does a person learn to die to self? What brings a person to the point they die to self? What about this possibility, do you agree?

Paul could say: "I die daily." **It is the daily dying to self in the little transactions of life that makes us overcomers.** We **should forget self in the desire to do good to others.** With many there is a decided lack of love for others. Instead of faithfully performing their duty, they seek rather their own pleasure. {Mar 109.2}

God positively enjoins upon all His followers a **duty to bless others with their influence and means**, and to seek that wisdom of Him which will enable them to do all in their power to elevate the thoughts and affections of those who come within their influence. **In doing for others, a sweet satisfaction will be experienced, an inward peace which will be a sufficient reward.** When actuated by a high and noble desire to do others good, they will find true happiness in a faithful discharge of life's manifold duties. This will bring more than an earthly reward; for every faithful, unselfish performance of duty is **noticed by the angels and shines in the life record.** {Mar 109.3}

In heaven none will think of self, nor seek their own pleasure; but all, from pure, genuine love, will seek the happiness of the heavenly beings around them. If we wish to enjoy heavenly society in the earth made new, we must be governed by heavenly principles here. {Mar 109.4}

The greatest work that can be done in our world is to glorify God by living the character of Christ. {Mar 109.5}

Thoughts?

Why will heaven be safe? Because all will seek the good of others rather than self! How do we become like this? By choosing to cooperate with God in denying self and giving of ourselves to help others! This puts us in harmony with the law of love and healing takes place in our characters.

Why will acts of unselfishness shine in the life record? What is the life record? It is a photograph of your character! In your character every act of sin is faithfully recorded or in your character Christ has been reproduced by the work of the Holy Spirit.

- Angels of God are taking a **daguerreotype [photograph] of the character** just as accurately as the artist takes the likeness of the human features; and . . . **it is from this that we are to be judged!** {Mar 340.2}

Read last paragraph, “Ephesians 4:2...” thoughts? Is it not true that everything we have is a gift from God? All our boasting should be about God and Christ!

While this is absolutely true, what about when people give God credit for their own choices? It is true God gives us talents, health, wealth, intelligence and all the resources through which we achieve anything – but is there some aspect in which we exercise our own individuality in the use of all these resources, either for evil or for good?

If someone does something actually good, or loving, on this earth it is absolutely true that the only way that could happen was because of Christ’s death and the work of the Holy Spirit in their life. But does that mean the individual is not choosing to do the good themselves? When the Holy Spirit finishes His work in our lives we experience all the fruits of the Spirit and the last is, self-control? What does that mean? It means God’s plan is to actually heal us fully so that we are one day capable of living self-governed lives in harmony with His kingdom of love!

MONDAY

Models of meekness – when you think of those who modeled meekness who comes to mind?

What attributes, actions, behaviors demonstrate meekness?

Read fourth paragraph, “In Numbers...” thoughts? Meekness is a lack of “self-promotion” it is NOT a lack of interest in the welfare of others! Moses had great passion and energy when it came to protecting others and also protecting God’s reputation.

The last paragraph asks us to consider Jesus – how do you see meekness in the life of Jesus?

The lesson asks us to consider some specific experiences of Jesus:

John 18:20-23

²⁰ “I have spoken openly to the world,” Jesus replied. “I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. ²¹ Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said.”

²² When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby struck him in the face. “Is this the way you answer the high priest?” he demanded.

²³ “If I said something wrong,” Jesus replied, “testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?” ²⁴ Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

Thoughts? Was this meek? Why did Jesus speak this way? What was His goal? Was Jesus being insubordinate, sarcastic, or disrespectful? No, was this meek? Yes why?

Jesus still longed for these people, for those who could be won to Him. He was asking them to think about what He had done, review the evidences of His life, healing, helping, ministering, love in action and His teachings about His Father. Thus His answer was designed to reach others not protect Himself. He was trying to get them to think, to reason, to examine evidence, which would dispel their prejudice and lies.

What about when He drove the money changers from the Temple? Was this meek? Why or why not? Was He promoting self or was He promoting His Father and working to reach people with the truth,

working to overthrow the errors being taught by the religious leaders?

And, who ran and who stayed by? What does it mean that when Jesus overturned the tables, had a whip, and was “angry” that the children didn’t get frightened and run away but stayed behind and praised the Lord? Could you in church overturn the pulpit and pews and wield a whip such that the elders and pastors run out in terror but the children are not afraid?

Notice, only the guilty ran away, why?

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts? What does it mean the day of the Lord’s anger? What is the Lord’s anger? Do we get a clue from Jesus in cleansing the Temple?

- **“My anger will flame up like fire and burn everything on earth. It will reach to the world below and consume the roots of the mountains. I will bring on them endless disasters and use **all my arrows against them.**”** (Deuteronomy 32:22,23 – GN)... **“They fail to see why they were defeated;** they cannot understand what happened. Why were a thousand defeated by one, and ten thousand by only two? **The Lord, their God, had abandoned them; their mighty God had given them up.**” (Deuteronomy 32:29,30 – GN)
- **“When that happens, I will become angry with them; I will abandon them,** and they will be destroyed. Many terrible disasters will come upon them, and then they will realize that these **things are happening to them because I, their God, am no longer with them.**” (Deuteronomy 31:17 – GN)
- **“I will fight against you with all my might, my anger, my wrath, and my fury.** I will kill everyone living in this city; people and animals alike **will die of a terrible disease....** Anyone who stays in the city will be **killed in war or by starvation or disease...**It will be **given over** to the king of Babylonia, and **he** will burn it to the ground. I, the LORD, have spoken...I will set your palace on fire, and the fire will

burn down everything around it. I, the LORD, have spoken.”.”
(Jeremiah 21:5,6,9-10,14 – GN)

- “The LORD **has abandoned** his people like a lion that leaves its cave. The horrors of war and the LORD’s **fierce anger** have turned the country into a desert.” (Jeremiah 25:38 – GN)
- “The LORD, the God of Israel, told me to go and say to King Zedekiah of Judah, ‘I, the LORD, will **hand this city over** to the king of Babylonia, and **he** will burn it down. (Jeremiah 34:2 – GN)
- “Very well, then, **I will give you freedom: the freedom to die by war, disease, and starvation.**” (Jeremiah 34:17 – GN)
- “**You will feel my anger when I turn it loose on you** like a blazing fire. And **I will hand you over** to brutal men, experts at destruction.” (Ezekiel 21:31 – GN)
- “**I will hand you over to other nations** who will rob you and plunder you.” (Ezekiel 25:7 – GN)
- “**I will attack the people of Israel and Judah like a lion.** I myself will tear them to pieces and then leave them. When I drag them off, no one will be able to save them. **I will abandon** my people until they have suffered enough for their sins and come looking for me. Perhaps in their suffering they will try to find me.” (Hosea 5:14,15 – GN)
- **God’s anger is revealed** from heaven against all the sin and evil of the people whose evil ways prevent the truth from being known. **God punishes them**, because what can be known about God is plain to them, for God himself made it plain...They say they are wise, but they are fools; instead of worshipping the immortal God, they worship images made to look like mortals or birds or animals or reptiles. **And so God has given those people over to do the filthy things their hearts desire**, and they do shameful things with each other. **They exchange the truth about God for a lie**; they worship and serve what God has created instead of the Creator himself, who is to be praised forever! Amen. Because they do this, **God has given them over** to shameful passions....**Because those people refuse to keep in mind the true knowledge about God, he has given them over** to corrupted minds, so that they do the things that they should not do.” (Romans 1:18,19,22-26,28 – GN)

- Then "Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" "My God, My God, **why hast Thou forsaken Me?**" As the outer gloom settled about the Saviour, many voices exclaimed: The **vengeance of heaven** is upon Him. The bolts of **God's wrath** are hurled at Him, because He claimed to be the Son of God. Many who believed on Him heard His despairing cry. Hope left them. If **God had forsaken Jesus**, in what could His followers trust? {DA 754.3}

Thoughts? Does it make a difference how we understand God's anger and wrath? Why? What happens if we believe God's anger is active infliction of pain and suffering that would not otherwise be reaped by sin and rebellion? What happens to liberty? And if liberty is violated what happens to love?

Read second paragraph "Meekness is necessary..." thoughts?

Does this mean that only meek people are in roles of Bible teachers, pastors, church leaders? Or can people who don't have meekness end up in such roles? Caiaphas?

Would these words of EGW been helpful for the people in Christ's day to know Caiaphas was not correctly receiving God's word?

- Satan's representations against the government of God, and his defense of those who sided with him, were a constant accusation against God. His murmurings and complaints were groundless; and yet God allowed him to work out his theory. God could have destroyed Satan and all his sympathizers as easily as one can pick up a pebble and cast it to the earth. **But by so doing he would have given a precedent for the exercise of force. All the compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. He would not work on this line. He would not give the slightest encouragement for any human being to set himself up as God over another human being, feeling at liberty to cause him physical or mental suffering. This principle is wholly of Satan's creation.** {RH, September 7, 1897 par. 7}

The principles of the character of God were the foundation of the education constantly kept before the heavenly angels. **These principles were goodness, mercy, and love. Self-evidencing light was to be recognized and freely accepted by all who occupied positions of trust and power.** They must accept God's principles, and, through the presentation of truth and righteousness, convince all who were in his service. **This was the only power to be used. Force must never come in. All who thought that their position gave them power to command their fellow beings, and control conscience, must be deprived of their position; for this is not God's plan.** {RH, September 7, 1897 par. 8}

These principles are to be the foundation of education in God's church today. The rules given by him are to be observed and respected. God has enjoined this. His government is moral. Nothing is to be done by compulsion. Truth is to be the prevailing power. . All service is to be done willingly, and for the love of God. All who are honored with positions of influence are to represent God; for when officiating, they are in the place of God. In everything their actions must correspond to the importance of their position. **The higher the position the more distinctly will self-sacrifice be revealed if they are fit for the office.** Every heart that is controlled by these principles will be loyal. **But when those who profess to be in God's service resort to accusation, they are adopting Satan's principles to cast out Satan;** and this never will work. {RH, September 7, 1897 par. 9}...

Today **Satan is working upon human minds by his crooked principles.** These will be adopted and acted upon by some who claim to be loyal and true to God's government. **How shall we know that they are disloyal and untrue?-- "By their fruits ye shall know them." God does not force any one. He leaves all free to choose.** But he says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The Lord will not write as wise those who cannot distinguish between a tree that bears thorn-berries and a tree that bears olives. {RH, September 7, 1897 par. 15}

Thoughts?

What about the fact Caiaphas claimed to be protecting the church, the nation of Israel? Will those who use Satan's methods claim to be protecting orthodoxy, yet instead of presenting truth in love ultimately resort to coercion to obtain their way?

The Beast of Revelation will use such power to coerce – this is one of the very clear demarcations differentiating God's kingdom from Satan's.

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, "Meekness will be..." thoughts? Does meekness mean that all who are genuinely meek will have the same "personality"? Will there be meek people who have great variations in personality, talents, styles of communication, ability etc?

The lesson asks us to consider how some Bible texts reveal meekness:

Matthew 5:39: But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Thought? What is being taught here? A rule or a principle? Are there times when turning the other cheek would be sinful? What times? What is the principle of meekness? Not seeking to promote self, but seeking to promote the best for others.

What if your 5 y/o child has a temper tantrum and kicks and hits mommy or daddy because they can't have candy in the store. Should you turn the other cheek and buy them the candy? Why or why not?

What about a wife who is beaten by her husband?

Matthew 18:21,22: Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Thoughts? What does is the message from Jesus? Why is forgiving an offender meek? Whose heart is being revealed by forgiving? What would it mean not to forgive?

When we forgive does that mean we trust? Why or why not?

Galatians 6:1: Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

Thoughts? Isn't this an evidence of meekness, not considering someone who fell into sin worse off than ourselves, but recognizing them in need of healing just as we are?

2Tim 2:24,25: And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth

Thoughts? Have you ever had opportunity to do this?

THURSDAY

What is the reward of the meek?

FRIDAY

Question one – read and discuss

When we are meek we are not self-centered, meaning we are not fear motivated, further selfish activities cause more fear, thus other-centered, love and meek living results in less fear and more peace.

Science as demonstrated that altruism results in better mental and physical health.

Question 3&4 read and discuss