

Humility

TEXT: 1 Peter 5:5,6; Luke 14:7-11; Proverbs 29:23

KEY VERSE: What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? — Micah 6:8

In the series of lessons for this quarter, we are considering the characteristics of true Christians. Undoubtedly the subject of today's study, humility, is an excellent place to start. We must have a humble attitude to walk with the Lord. See Isaiah 57:15.

1. What is your explanation of the principle developed in James 4:10 and Luke 14:11?
2. What characteristic, if exhibited, would cause God to resist us? Why? See James 4:6.
3. To what people does God give grace? Why is it important to receive this blessing from God?
4. Is this statement true or false? "The thoughts in 1 Peter 5:5 are that young people should advise their elders what to do." Give a reason for your choice.

5. According to our text, what else does Peter tell us to do? How can we do this?

6. The passage of Scripture in Luke 14:7-11 is called a parable, and was certainly good instruction for those who were present. What do you think it might teach us today?

7. The sin of pride is first in the list of sins that God considers abominable (Proverbs 6:16,17). It is believed that Satan was cast out of Heaven because of pride. He wanted to be equal with God (Isaiah 14:12-15). It is no wonder that his children tend to display his nature! Proverbs 29:23 says that a man's pride shall bring him low. Explain.

8. Write a paraphrase of Proverbs 16:18.

9. Why is it necessary to have humility in order to gain God's favor?

Forgiveness

TEXT: Genesis 45:1-15; Matthew 6:14,15

KEY VERSE: For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

— Matthew 6:14

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract No. 104 — Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a necessary attitude in the Christian life. To receive forgiveness, one must be willing and able to forgive others. Jesus, on Calvary's cross, showed the perfect example of forgiveness. Stephen, while being stoned to death by his persecutors, cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"—certainly an act of forgiveness. See Acts 7:60.

1. Write your own definition of the word *forgive*.

2. What are some similarities/differences in the meanings of the following words?

Repentance

Contrition

Humility

Godly sorrow

How do these words relate to forgiveness?

3. In what way were Joseph and Stephen like Jesus?

4. When you consider the treatment Joseph received at the hands of his brothers, why do you think he helped his family during the famine?

5. Explain how forgiveness relates to the fruit of the Spirit, found in Galatians 5:22,23.

6. Explain why it is important for a Christian to show a forgiving spirit through his actions.

7. What are evidences of true forgiveness? Give examples.

8. If someone asks you to forgive him, is it necessary to be sure he is sincere? Explain your answer.

9. Why is our measure of forgiveness so important?

Obedience

TEXT: Mark 5:18-20; Ephesians 6:1-9

KEY VERSE: Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. — Matthew 7:21

If we comprehend the fact that all those who are disobedient to God will go to a lost eternity, we will realize how necessary it is for us to obey the Word of the Lord. It is important to be obedient to our parents and to those who have the rule over us. In so doing we are obeying the instructions given in Scripture. See Ephesians 6:1 and Hebrews 13:17.

1. Our text states that to honor our father and mother is the first commandment with promise. To which of the Ten Commandments is this referring? What is the promise?

2. Define *obedience*.

3. Colossians 3:20 says that children should obey their parents. Why is the thought in this verse such an important first step in a child's life?

4. Our lesson says that fathers should not provoke their children to wrath. What do you think this means?

5. Explain the meaning of bringing up children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

6. How does Ephesians 6:5,6 apply to us today?

7. If we realize that the Lord is watching us while we work, and we are trying to do a job that is pleasing to Him, what are we promised?

8. In the part of the lesson text taken from Mark, Jesus had just performed a miracle by healing a man possessed with a devil. As Jesus left the country of the Gadarenes, this man wished to accompany Him. Why do you think Jesus told this man to go back to his home and friends? What was the result of his obedience?

9. What might the consequences be if there were no obedience . . .

- in the home?
- in the school?
- in the church?
- on the job?
- in our country?

10. In order to obtain the ultimate goal—Heaven—we must obey. What is the key that will help us obey His commandments? See John 14:15.

Faith

TEXT: Mark 2:1-12; Hebrews 11:6

KEY VERSE: But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. — Hebrews 11:6

It happened in real life! Friends of a paralyzed man heard about Christ, believed in His power to heal, and took action to bring the paralytic to Jesus. Undaunted by impenetrable crowds, and with sheer determination sparked by faith, they opened a passageway in the roof and let the man down, bed and all, at the very feet of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, He first forgave the man's sins. Then, to the amazement of the crowd, He told the man to take up his bed and go to his house—and he did!

1. The formula for obtaining the desired answer from the Lord involves the sum of two essential elements. Read James 2:14-26 and write what you think the two elements are.

2. In the key verse, stated below, underline with a single line those words which deal with faith. Then go back and underline with a double line those which relate to action. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

3. The paralyzed man was unable to come by himself to Christ. Others helped him. What action does this fact suggest to us who believe in Jesus as the Christ?

4. In your own words, paraphrase the definition of faith given in Hebrews 11:1.

5. If Christ were coming to your city, consider several urgent needs concerning yourself or friends that would prompt you to visit Him. List some of the needs that are important to you now.

6. We have established that faith is a vital factor in receiving something from God. How can one's faith be increased? See Romans 10:17.

7. Look up the following Scriptures, and next to each reference write what that Scripture says should be done to receive an answer.

Matthew 6:6

Matthew 21:21,22

John 20:26-29

1 John 1:9

1 John 3:20-24

8. How much faith does one need to get results from God? See Matthew 17:20.

Virtue

TEXT: Daniel 6:1-28

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Psalm 118:4-14

KEY VERSE: Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. — 1 Corinthians 15:58

The Apostle Peter adds virtue to the foundation of faith (2 Peter 1:5). Virtue is the quality that will help the Christian stand for what is morally and spiritually right. The word *virtue* as used in our text means, “all moral excellence, especially courage and spiritual fortitude.” A person must stand for the faith that he embraced at salvation by showing forth the courage to do what is right.

1. Explain what is meant by the portion of today’s text about Daniel which states that “an excellent spirit was in him.”

2. Show evidence of how Daniel’s life exemplified virtue.

3. Explain how the word *faithful* in verse 4 of the text relates to virtue.

4. Daniel maintained his spiritual fortitude even when doing so meant possible death. Does God expect Christians today to go to such extremes? Explain. See Revelation 2:10.

5. Entrapment was used against Daniel. How might this device be used by the devil against a Christian today?

6. List ways in which God assisted Daniel because he maintained his spiritual fortitude.

7. List some ways in which Christians will be blessed when they maintain their virtue at all times.

8. Using Daniel's success as an example, how might standing fearlessly for the things that are spiritually right affect the lives of those a Christian comes into contact with?

Knowledge

TEXT: Proverbs 2:1-9

KEY VERSE: Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge. — Proverbs 23:12

Acquiring doctrinal knowledge should not be confused with growing in grace. While it is important to improve our understanding of the precepts of God's Word, this is not necessarily paralleled to a deepening of spirituality. The study of the Word is vital to Christian growth, but it must be applied to our lives, and not be only head knowledge.

1. In this quarter's lessons, we are studying Christian characteristics and attributes, some of which are found in 2 Peter 1:5,6. Knowledge is one of those attributes. Why is it so important?

2. Read the dictionary definitions for the words *knowledge* and *wisdom*, and then explain in your own words the difference between the two. Give a hypothetical example of each.

3. How is general knowledge acquired? List ways in which knowledge of spiritual things is acquired.

4. Human knowledge, apart from divine knowledge, is not capable of satisfying the soul of man. As we search the Scriptures we find some references to this effect. Look them up and write the main idea of each verse.

1 Corinthians 1:19

1 Corinthians 3:19

2 Timothy 3:7

5. A child gains much of his acquired knowledge based on experience. How is the concept of knowledge by experience also true in the spiritual sense?

6. What must we do to build the foundation for the right kind of knowledge and spiritual discernment? In John 5:39 and Romans 15:4 you will find the answer.

7. How might the Lord increase our spiritual knowledge through correction? See Hebrews 12:5-11. At what point does the knowledge gained through correction become wisdom?

8. For personal thought and meditation, figure the amount of time that you study for general knowledge (school, job, etc.), _____. Then add the time spent in recreation, sleep, etc., _____. Now figure the time spent in study for spiritual knowledge, including Sunday school, church, prayer meetings, daily spiritual study, etc., _____. If your time spent for general knowledge plus time spent in extra curricular activities outweighs the time spent to gain spiritual knowledge, it points out the importance of being sure that the time given for our daily Bible study and worship is quality time. We should also take advantage of each opportunity to worship together and fellowship with those who are of like mind so we can grow spiritually.

Temperance

TEXT: Proverbs 16:32; Luke 21:34-36 (Spirit); Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (Time); 1 Corinthians 9:25-27 (Desires); James 1:26; 3:2 (Tongue)

KEY VERSE: And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. — 1 Corinthians 9:25

Adam Clarke defines *temperance* as, “the proper and limited use of all earthly enjoyments, keeping every sense under proper restraint.” In reading 2 Peter 1:5-7, we find that this is another aspect of Christian character that God expects us to add to our spiritual life.

1. Proverbs 16:32 indicates that one needs to rule his spirit. Explain how you think this verse relates to temperance.

2. Looking at Luke 21:34, and using a dictionary, briefly define the following:

Overcharged

Surfeiting

Drunkenness

3. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19,20. Because of lack of temperance or lack of moderation, there are many things that could be done to defile the temple of God. For example, one may eat too much, or too little. Give other examples showing how the temple of God can be abused by extremes.

4. Temperance for Christians involves moderation, not in sinful habits or wrongdoing, but in things that are lawful. Suggest how temperance could be exercised in the following areas:

Use of time

Control of appetites

Use of money

5. Temperance, or self-control, is discipline. Explain what you think Paul meant in 1 Corinthians 9:27.

6. How do you “bridle” your tongue (James 3:2)? Controlling the tongue is more than eliminating the obvious sins of the tongue, such as lying or swearing. In what ways should a Christian be watchful or exercise control over his tongue? See Proverbs 10:19.

7. Moderation in all aspects of our daily living will be possible if we can answer these questions in the affirmative. Pose a hypothetical question or situation that might confront one in your peer group, and make an application using the following questions.

Will it glorify God? 1 Corinthians 10:31,32

Can it be done for the Lord? Colossians 3:23,24

Can it be done in Jesus’ name? Colossians 3:17

How will it appear to others? 1 Thessalonians 5:22

Would it hinder another Christian? Romans 14:21

Does it involve the wrong company? 2 Corinthians 6:14,15

Does it compromise my testimony? 1 Corinthians 6:12

Is this God’s will for me? James 4:15,17

Am I willing to face it in the Judgment? 2 Corinthians 5:10

5. In our text we find many promises for the one who has patience. List three of them and explain why they are important to you.

6. Heat is a common element necessary to many refining processes. Read 1 Peter 4:12,13, and write what you think these verses have to do with patience.

7. Read Malachi 3:2,3. In the refining of gold, there are certain steps which are necessary to achieve the perfect end results—steps which cannot be circumvented or abbreviated. Can you name some other areas where refining must follow certain steps to achieve the desired result?

Godliness

TEXT: Titus 2:1-13

KEY VERSE: Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. — 1 Timothy 4:8

We have been studying the progressive pattern for the development of Christian character (2 Peter 1:5,6). According to this plan, godliness follows patience. Exercising patience in the endurance of “fiery trials” will help bring about this development of godliness. Godliness is different from worldliness, and is only attainable through a strong desire to please God.

1. Explain what *godliness* means to you.

2. Using the following Scriptures, list some of the criteria of godliness that we can measure our lives by.

Acts 24:16

Ephesians 6:18

James 1:27

James 3:17

2 Peter 3:11

3. A person who is worldly is more concerned about things of this world than about spiritual or eternal things. The concerns of a godly person are the opposite. Give a biblical example of one godly person and one worldly person.

4. Physical fitness and exercise are major concerns in our day. However, 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs us to exercise ourselves unto godliness. What are some of the ways this can be done?

5. Today's text gives instructions to five different ages and classes of individuals. Name the five. What conclusion can we draw from this?

6. According to 2 Peter 1:4, Christians are to have a certain nature. What is it? When we have that nature, what do we escape?

7. What criterion should we use to discern whether something is worldly or godly?

8. "Profit" is an important word in business circles. Referring to our key verse, explain what you think is meant by the phrase "Godliness is profitable unto all things . . ." Be specific!

Brotherly Kindness

TEXT: 2 Kings 4:8-17

KEY VERSE: By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

— John 13:35

Brotherly kindness is most often referred to in the Bible as brotherly love. Brotherly love cannot be exemplified in isolation. The hallmark of the Body of Christ is not the number of members, or the size of the edifice for worship, or the finely tuned administration of the organization. It is the strong attachment between members of Christ's flock.

1. The Bible is a great source of examples of brotherly kindness. One is given in the account of Elisha and the Shunammite woman found in our text. Describe what this woman did to show brotherly kindness to the prophet.

2. Though the Shunammite couple were not looking to be repaid for their kindness, what blessing did they receive from God? Is our kindness toward our brothers and sisters in Christ ever compensated? If so, how?

3. Listed below are several other examples of people in the Bible who exemplified brotherly kindness. Tell in your own words the circumstances under which their love was shown.

Aaron and Hur: Exodus 17:12

Jonathan: 1 Samuel 18:3,4

David: 2 Samuel 9:6,7

Paul: Philemon 12,15,16

4. Compare your feeling and consideration for a brother in Christ to the consideration shown to your own body.

5. Read the following Scriptures and write what instruction you find in each which shows how we can exemplify brotherly kindness.

Romans 15:1

Galatians 6:2

Ephesians 4:32

Hebrews 10:24

1 Peter 4:8

6. When is it the responsibility of the individual to show brotherly kindness? When is it the responsibility of the church?

7. In some cases, when a need presents itself, it may seem that another is more qualified or better able to assist or take care of the situation. Explain how this could be used as an excuse by one not wishing to get involved.

8. Present an everyday situation in which brotherly kindness can be shown to the following.

A newcomer to the church

The elderly of the church

Someone who is sick

Widows and widowers

Your pastor

A new convert

9. What are some of the positive results we might expect to see when brotherly kindness is practiced?

Love

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

KEY VERSE: And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. — Colossians 3:14

Someone has said, “Love is properly the image of God in the soul; for God is love. By faith we receive from our Maker; by hope we expect a future and eternal good; but by love we resemble God; and by it alone are we qualified to enjoy Heaven and be one with Him throughout eternity.” Love is the fulfilling of the Law. The Law did not have power to change men’s lives, but Christ, who is love personified, did!

1. The first three verses of our text reveal that many good things can be absolutely worthless without love—the Christlike kind of love. List these good qualities opposite the verses below.

1 Corinthians 13:1

1 Corinthians 13:2

1 Corinthians 13:3

2. Pick two or more of the qualities named above. How can these qualities be shown without love (that is, with a wrong motive)?

3. Question 2 developed how certain human qualities can be exercised without the presence of divine love. Now show the merit of these qualities when divine love is present.

4. In verses 4-7, we are given the elements of love—those of which Christian love is made. Each of these elements can be given common names: they are virtues which we hear about often. And with Christ in our hearts they can be practiced by every person in every situation in life. Alongside each of the elements listed on the next page, write a synonym that is more familiar in our day.

Love suffereth long . . . Beareth all things
And is kind
Love envieth not (Clue: think positive)
Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up
Doth not behave itself unseemly
Seeketh not her own
Is not easily provoked
Thinketh no evil
Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth
in the truth
Believeth all things
Hopeth all things
Endureth all things

5. List three things mentioned in verse 8 to which divine love is superior. Why?

6. "Now and then," is an expression in modern English language. Find two instances in our text where these words are used. Contrast the *now* with the *then*.

7. In your estimation why would the Apostle declare that divine love is the greatest attribute?

Thankfulness

TEXT: 1 Chronicles 16:7-36

KEY VERSE: Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. — Psalm 106:1

How nice it is to receive heartfelt thanks from someone to whom we have given a gift or for whom we have done some favor. Surely then, the God of all the universe and on whom our very lives depend, is pleased when those of His creation show and express thankfulness for the many blessings He daily sends our way. See Psalm 68:19.

1. The portion of text we are studying is referred to as a “psalm,” although it is not included in the Book of Psalms. Who was the author? What was the occasion? See 1 Chronicles 16:1.

2. At different times, musicians and singers had been appointed and used in the worship of the Lord. How were an orchestra and choir used to express thanksgiving? See 2 Chronicles 5:13.

3. What verse in the text might be used to explain the reason for singing and testifying in church? In what way can a testimony be considered thanksgiving?

4. Make a list from this psalm in our text of some of the marvelous works that the Lord had done for the Children of Israel for which they were to be thankful.

5. To whom were the Israelites to tell of the glory of God and His marvelous works? Who are we supposed to tell of God's greatness?

6. How do we develop a spirit of thanksgiving even during times of great difficulty? See 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

7. As we serve God with all our hearts, He truly will supply all our needs (Philippians 4:19). List some of the things you would consider needs.

8. List some of the things the Lord has given above and beyond your needs.

9. Give an example of when Romans 8:28 was proven in your own life.

Quarter Review

TEXT: 2 Peter 1:4-11

KEY VERSE: For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. — 2 Peter 1:8

In the course of this quarter, we have delved into the meanings of a number of Christian attributes. We have discovered that individually they are important facets of Christian character. We began the series with lessons on humility, forgiveness, and obedience. However, for the purpose of this overview, we will focus on the subjects mentioned in our text in Peter.

1. Considering the key verse, why are the attributes mentioned in our text so important?
2. What does it mean to be *barren* and *unfruitful*?
3. Why was faith the first attribute that Peter mentioned—the one to which he admonishes us to add the others?
4. The definition of *virtue*, as used when the King James version of the Bible was translated, includes “courage and spiritual fortitude.” Why would Peter have felt it necessary to add this characteristic after one has established his faith through an experience of salvation?
5. Peter admonishes the Christian to add “knowledge.” What is one way this knowledge is acquired? See John 5:39 and Romans 15:4. How does it apply to Christian growth?

6. One who gets too involved in study can be on dangerous ground (Ecclesiastes 12:12). How can “temperance” in our lives be of value? Cite some possible dangers in carrying the studying or gaining of knowledge to an extreme.

7. We read in James 1:4, “But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” In what way might temperance and patience be connected?

8. How can we, as mere human beings, possess and demonstrate godliness? Name some of the qualities of this attribute.

9. The term “brotherly kindness” implies the exhibiting of love toward our brother. How would you differentiate this from the “charity” which is mentioned in verse 7 of our text as the final ingredient in Peter’s formula?

10. When followed completely, how does the formula given in our text produce a fruit-bearing Christian? What is it about these particular qualities, when well-balanced within a life, that makes them an influence on others?

11. To what extent are the instructions of this lesson optional?