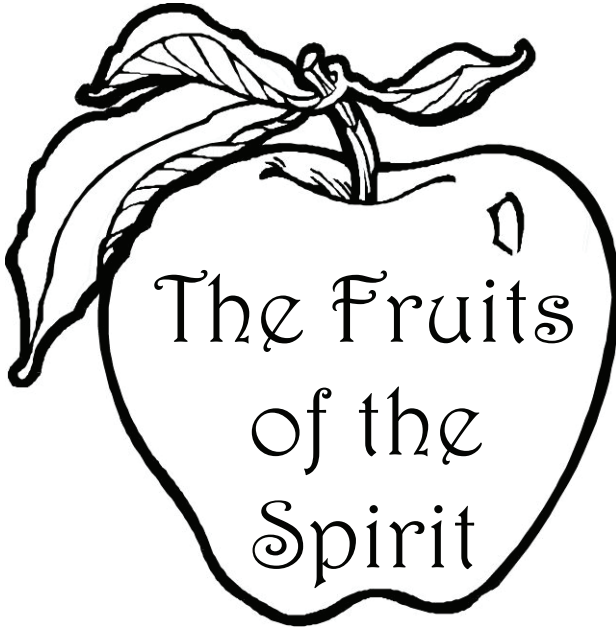


KINGDOM SEEKERS



But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,
peace, patience, kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23a

This book belongs to:

The Fruits of the Spirit

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revised by April Hoeksema - September, 2003

Lesson Outline

1. Why are fruits important?
2. About the Holy Spirit (Spirit of Christ, etc.)
3. About the gift of the Spirit in the Form for the Baptism of Infants
4. Using Galatians 5: love (verse 22)
5. Joy
6. Peace
7. Patience
8. Kindness
9. Goodness
10. Faithfulness
11. Gentleness
12. Self-control
13. Crucifying your old self
14. Walking by the Spirit
15. Living the Christian life

Lesson 1

Let's Look at an Orchard

Near Lake Michigan there are many fine orchards. Maybe you have done "pick your own" with parents or friends and have come home with cherries, grapes, peaches, or apples. If so, you'll know that fruit growers do not have orchards for the fun of it. No, they do all their hard work because they want their trees to produce fruit.

A few times during His stay on Earth the Lord Jesus compared His Church to an orchard. Because of what He said, we know that we were planted in the orchard (which is the church) to produce fruit.

During our Bible lessons this year we will be discussing the fruits of the Spirit. We will learn that Jesus expects us to produce fruits as well, and we will even talk about the kinds of fruits he demands of us. We'll also talk about what kind of fertilizer He will use on us and what kind of work He will do on each of us. As a matter of fact, we'll learn a thing or two about fruit farming and will see how it applies to our lives as young Christians.

Maybe the next time you take a big bite out of a beautiful apple, you will be reminded of something special, something really amazing, wonderful, and beautiful.

Scripture Reading: Luke 13:6-9

Let's Discuss It...

1. In the following Scripture passages, Jesus compared His Church, His people, you and me, with orchards and vineyards. Look up the following passages and read them carefully.

a. Matthew 21:18-22

b. Matthew 20:1-16

c. Mark 12:1-12

2. Share with your classmates about how the passages are the same or different.

3. In the parable in who is the owner of the vineyard?

4. Who is the vinedresser? What is his task or job?

5. What is the vineyard or orchard? How are they protected from the outside world?

6. List some of the fruits the Lord expects us to give Him. Read Galatians 5:22-23.

7. What does the trimming of the tree represent? Why is it done?

8. How does God water and fertilize in your and my life?

9. Think hard on this one! Why has the parable in Matthew 21 been called "The Parable of the Second Chance"? See Luke 13:8-9.

10. What does this parable have to do with James 2:26?

11. Luke 13 tells about you and me. What are we in this parable? What is our task or job?

12. This parable brings us comfort. What does the Owner do for his trees?

Let's Sum It Up...

An orchard is a precious possession. By using the parable Jesus makes it clear that we are precious in His sight. Yet He asks that you and I produce fruit. Our lives have meaning only when we produce fruit for Him.

Producing fruit is a command from God. But it is not always easy to do what he asks. We'll learn more about this in other lessons.

For Your Prayer List...

You have a prayer-list, don't you? On it you have names, many of them. Your parents are on it, your friends and relatives, the sick ones you know, the hungry and suffering people all around the world. Make sure you add the name of your Counselor as well. She loves being with you girls, but she needs your prayer. The work she does with and for you really isn't easy.

Puzzle

Match parts of the parable with what it represents.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Owner | a. Church |
| 2. Trees or Vines | b. Jesus |
| 3. Vineyard | c. Discipline |
| 4. Vinedresser | d. The World |
| 5. Fruit | e. Good works |
| 6. Trimming or pruning the branches | f. God |
| 7. Outside the vineyard or orchard | g. Christians |

Lesson 2 About the Holy Spirit

Suppose you dropped your mother's favorite vase. Big problem!

In your panic you decided to glue the pieces together. But no, it would just be a patched-up old vase with tiny pieces missing. Mom would not be very proud of owning it. So you promised her a new one.

You learned the hard way that there is a big difference between patched-up and new.

When the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost, He entered into the hearts of God's people and made them new. This newness changed these men and women completely. New people are totally different from what they were before. On the outside they look the same. But on the inside they are so different you can hardly recognize them.

The Church of our Lord confesses that there are Gifts of the Spirit and Fruits. The Bible tells us about them. There are two kinds of gifts: "usual" and "unusual" gifts. The "usual" gifts are given to all true believers. The "unusual" gifts are given to just some believers. Today's lesson is about these "usual" and "unusual" gifts.

In order that we might learn something tonight, you must remember that nothing is learned unless it is learned with your heart. Do you know what we mean by that?

Scripture Reading:

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 (the "unusual" gifts)

1 Corinthians 13:13 (the "usual" gifts)

Let's Discuss It...

1. Why must we have the Spirit? See John 3:7. What you need is that particular gift!

2. How can we receive the Spirit? See Acts 8:15.

3. Talk with your group about these "usual gifts" of the Spirit (See 1 Corinthians 13:13):
 - a. **Faith** is the **beginning** of our new life in Christ.
 - b. **Hope** is the **continuation** of our new life in Him.
 - c. **Love** is the **fulfillment**, making our lives full and rich.

4. Talk about each of the gifts found in 1 Corinthians 12:28.

5. Discuss the gifts in Mark 16:17.

6. Do you know any people who possess the unusual gifts mentioned in question 4?

7. Do you know any people who have the gifts found in question 5?

8. Why would the Lord give people these "unusual" gifts?

9. How may a person know that he or she has received the Holy Spirit?

10. Read John 14:26 and talk with your group about one of the works of the Spirit in a person.

Let's Sum it Up...

If you can honestly say that you love Jesus, it is wonderful. However, the Bible makes it clear that in order to be complete, you must also receive the Holy Spirit.

I'm sure that you agree that this is a matter of much prayer. In fact, it must be a part of our daily prayer. "Lord, please give me Your Spirit for I want to be Yours completely. I want to love and serve You."

Your Prayer List

Prayer is the most powerful weapon the Lord has given us. There are people in your church who are burdened with grief because a loved one has passed away. There are those who are now old and feeble when once they were young and full of energy like you. There may be a sick person you should remember. Don't forget: these people NEED your prayer!

Lesson 3

The Gifts of the Spirit

Most people love receiving gifts. I don't know about you, but I just love opening presents. There is the feeling of excitement: what will this present be? Is it the one I asked for?

When I was a young fellow I asked for a guitar. I pictured myself strumming away and yodeling to my heart's content. But I did not get my guitar. Mom gave me a recorder instead. I was not amused, as you can understand. Yet Mom had her reasons. It was not the cost, although a guitar costs much more than a recorder.

This shows that there is a reason why gifts are given.

The Holy Spirit, as we shall see tonight, is a great Gift Giver. He always gives us what we need, even if we do not know that we need it. What He gives has much more than a temporary value. His gifts have eternal value. They make a life rich, and they change it.

The gifts I received when I was in my early teens are no longer there. My recorder lasted for a few years, but I never played it much. Then it disappeared, I think.

Yet the gifts the Holy Spirit gave me are still there. They are still as exciting as when I first received them. Those gifts still make me feel rich.

Let's find out why.

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:36-39

Let's Discuss It...

Before you start make sure that you have Psalter Hymnals at your table. We will look at the Form for Baptism of Infants, Form Number 1.

1. Most, if not all, of you girls were baptized when you were still infants. Why were you baptized?

2. Does your baptism mean that because of it you will go to heaven? Why or why not?

3. What is baptism a sign of?

4. Look up the Second Part starting and read out loud the paragraph beginning with "For when we are baptized..."
What does God the Father "witness and seal"?

5. Look again at the Second Part. What does the Son seal?

6. By the way, what is meant with "witness and seal"?

7. What does the Holy Spirit promise?

8. Talk with your group about what the word "sanctify" means.

9. Talk with your group about what the word "imparting" means.

10. What do you and I "have in Christ"?

11. What are all the gifts of the Spirit mentioned in the Form for the Baptism of Infants?

12. "To have faith" means "to have surety". If you have faith, what are you sure of?

Let's Sum It Up...

The gifts of the Spirit are many. They are the gifts of surety.

The reason for the gifts is that we might be given the tools to love and serve the Lord and to make His Name great. But the gifts also will give you happiness. We will learn more about this in one of our next lessons.

For Your Prayer List...

Today's prayer list should contain our prayer for the Holy Spirit to dwell in the heart of every one of us.

We can pray by speaking, but we can also pray by singing a Psalm of Hymn. Maybe you should sing #397:1 together or #395:1,2.

Lesson 4 How the Bible Speaks of Love

"Mommy does not love me anymore," little Jenny cried after her mother had chided her. Jenny had carelessly dropped her cup of milk on the kitchen table.

Jenny was wrong, of course, for Mommy still loved her a lot. Little children seem to think that love must always be accompanied by smiles and hugs. Actually, little children do not quite understand what love is all about.

But do you and I? Does the world understand love? Isn't it true that in the eyes of many, love is there when a person receives much without realizing that love is very much a desire to give?

And what is love anyway? Is it just a feeling? When I love a person, do I feel good about that person and do I realize that he or she feels good about me? Is that what love is all about?

Maybe it's not so easy to discuss what love is. And certainly, we may become even more puzzled when we hear the Bible say that love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

And that's precisely what this lesson is all about.

Scripture Reading: 1 Corinthians 13

Let's Discuss It...

1. Can you tell what love is?
2. Look up Matthew 22:37-38. It says that to love God is a command. Can you explain this?
3. Reread Matthew 22:37. We read that we must love God with three abilities. Name them.
4. In the verse, what does "heart" stand for?
5. What does "soul" mean in the verse?
6. Finally, what does "mind" stand for?
7. Matthew 22 does not say that we must love God only. What else does it say? See verse 39.

8. Who is our neighbor? As you discuss this question, study Luke 10:25-37.

9. Read I John 4:8. Here it does not only say that God loves. What else does it say? How can you explain this?

10. What does Paul say in Romans 13:10?

11. In Matthew 5:44 we are told to love whom? Why must we love them?

12. Discuss what we will do if we love the Lord. See John 14:15.

13. Read and discuss John 15:12. To get a head start with your answer, read "Let's Sum It Up..." (see underneath the questions).

14. Who can still recite John 3:16 from memory? What does this verse say about God's love?

15. If "love" is a fruit of the Spirit, who are we to love?

16. What are some ways that we can show this love?

17. Ultimately, why does God want us to love?

Let's Sum It Up...

There are really two kinds of love. The first one is the one we often talk and read about. It is a strong feeling of affection whereby I like and need to be the receiver.

The second is more the kind of love whereby the "lover" is the giver. Real love is more interested in giving than in receiving. God's love (John 3:16) is the love "of the second kind".

For Your Prayer List...

We are such a selfish people! We want to receive and receive some more. Ask the Lord that He turns your loving into a desire to give...giving your heart to Jesus...giving your affection to your fellow man...giving food to the hungry...

"Lord, for your sake of the glory of Your Name, turn me into a loving person..."

Lesson 5 We're To Have Joy

When Alice entered the classroom that morning, her friends and her teacher noticed something different about her.

"What's the good news?" her friend Betty wanted to know.

"It's about Mom. She's getting much better and guess what: she might be coming home tomorrow! Isn't that great?"

It certainly was. Alice's mom had been admitted to the hospital a week earlier and the doctor had said that if she did not get surgery quickly she might not live.

The following days were full of worry. Dad tried to remain calm, but it wasn't easy. The whole family spent much time in prayer, the pastor visited mom every day, and the people of the church kept on phoning.

"We're so happy for you," the teacher remarked, "and we can tell that you are happy yourself."

"I surely am," Alice responded as she hugged her best friend. "It's so wonderful!"

Alice was happy and joyful at the same time.

Our lesson tonight is about joy.

Happiness is a glad feeling of the heart.

Joy is glad behavior because of happiness.

Scripture Reading: John 15:9-17

Let's Discuss It...

1. On the last page we said that joy is glad behavior because of happiness and happiness is a glad feeling of the heart. Can you give examples of joy as a behavior?

2. Look up 3 John 1:4. Do you notice that this small letter has only one chapter? Why is the apostle filled with joy? What is meant with "walking in the truth"? Do you see that John counts spiritual joy much higher than material joy? Discuss this.

3. How is 1 John 1:4 similar to 3 John 1:4? (notice that "our joy" can also be translated as "your joy").

8. What should be THE reason why your parents should be able to rejoice over you?

9. Discuss why your life must be filled with the kind of joy we talked about in this lesson.

10. If you lack this joy, what must you do about it?

Let's Sum It Up...

The Holy Spirit gives joy. The Lord wants us to be joyful and we should know why. In order to receive this joy that makes your and my life rich and happy, we must make sure that we have given our hearts to Jesus.

Have you already done so?

For Your Prayer List...

We must begin our prayers with praising and thanking the Lord. Jesus made this clear when He gave us the Lord's Prayer.

In our prayers we must also be mindful of the needs of others. Pray that your parents, relatives, and friends may have the joy we discussed in this lesson.

Lesson 6 The Fruit of Peace

War, as you know, is something terrible. It means death, fear, loneliness, hunger, and hopelessness.

During war people long for peace, for peace is the opposite to war. Peace means security, shelter, food, freedom, life, and future.

In the Bible, peace is often pictured as a relationship between God and man. We are to have peace with God. This type of peace says first of all that we are no longer at war with God. This may sound strange, war with God? But you know from the Bible that by our very (sinful) nature we hate God and our fellow man, we go against the will of God and sometimes we feel that we really hate Him. But when we are changed by God's love and have Jesus in our hearts, everything changes. Then there will be no more fear of God and no more anger against Him. Then there will be joy and peace.

The Holy Spirit, the Worker of fruits, also lets peace grow and develop. First there is peace with God, then peace with our fellow man, and finally, peace within ourselves.

That's what this lesson is all about.

Scripture Reading: Colossians 3:12-17

Let's Discuss It...

1. In the Bible, the word "peace" often expresses contentment and especially harmony. Some of this you'll find in 2 Timothy 2:22-23. Read and discuss this verse together.

2. Look up Colossians 1:2. How do these words sound familiar to you?

3. How would you explain the meaning of "peace" in Philippians 4:7?

4. In Ephesians 2:14 what does the Bible say about Jesus? What is meant by these words?

5. Discuss the meaning of "peace" in Romans 5:1.

6. Now turn to Romans 14:17 and discuss this verse.

7. Jesus once said that you and I must be the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13). With this in mind, discuss what Jesus said in Mark 9:50.

8. Discuss how you might make peace with a person you don't particularly like. Why must we make peace with that person?

9. Are you "at peace" with your brothers and sisters? What kind of peace must there be in a family?

10. The meaning of "peace" may be different in Jesus' words in Matthew 10:34. Read this verse together and find out. Why has Jesus not come to bring peace to the earth? How do you explain this when you read Luke 2:14?

Let's Sum It Up...

As a result of the Holy Spirit working in us we become people who don't just have peace; we also spread it, so that there is peace around us.

Peace is two things: a. absence of conflict
b. harmony

For Your Prayer List...

Today pray that the Lord will make us more loveable and peaceable for this is what Kingdom Seekers must be.

Pray also for those whose lives are filled with conflict. Ask that the Spirit give them the desire to surrender their anger to the Lord.

Lesson 7 Also Patience Is a Fruit

Three girls were leaning against the wall near the front door during recess.

"I can't wait for the Christmas holidays," Betty said to get a conversation going.

"Me too," agreed Susan, "and so does my older brother. He'll have his birthday just before the holidays start."

"So what?" Nancy inquired. "He'll be a year older, that's all."

"Right, but he'll also be old enough to get his driver's license, and he can't wait for that."

Rachel, the third girl, shrugged her shoulders. "I just can't wait for summer vacation, you know. My parents and I are planning a trip to Europe."

"I can't wait," each of the girls said.

"I can't wait" means "I am impatient." Many people are impatient, and they have many different reasons for it.

Our lesson of today explores another fruit of the Spirit: patience.

The dictionary says that patience is the ability to bear problems and calamities with calmness of mind.

The Bible says that patience is the power to submit oneself to the will of God. That it is to persevere in waiting for what God will do.

Get ready, for there will be much to talk about.

Scripture Reading: James 1:1-6

Before We Discuss It...

There are two things we must remember.

a. We are always in the presence of God. Therefore, everything we do is done in relationship with Him. This means that being patient or impatient is always a response to God.

b. The impatient girls of our story wanted things only for themselves. This means that our patience or impatience is often the result of desires that serve only ourselves. Patience, the fruit of the Spirit, is very different. It always has the Lord at the center. We will see this in the Bible passages we're about to study.

Let's Discuss It...

1. How may "patience" be different from "perseverance"? Can you explain your answer with an example? Discuss also Romans 5:3.

2. Sometimes "patience" and "longsuffering" are used as synonyms. Can you think of an example? In the King James Version of the Bible, see Jeremiah 15:15.

3. Another word for "perseverance" is "endurance". How might we obtain endurance? See James 1:3-4.

4. Also Jesus perseveres. How must we explain this from 2 Thessalonians 3:5? What does steadfastness mean?

5. Study James 5:7-8. What kind of patience must we possess? What must we await patiently?

6. In James 5:11 Job is mentioned as an example. Can you explain what Job endured?

7. Go back to the previous book of the Bible, to Hebrews 11: 13-15. Discuss why Abraham had to wait patiently. What did he have to wait patiently for?

8. In 1 Thessalonians 5:14 we are instructed to be "patient with everyone." Can you tell why?

9. In Psalm 37:7 we are instructed to "wait patiently for the Lord." Discuss the meaning of this verse.

10. Do the same with Psalm 40:1. In your answer discuss Psalm 90:4 and 2 Peter 3:8.

Let's Sum It Up...

We must be patient with one another because the Lord is very patient with us.

When we ask things of Him, we must wait patiently for Him since He always answers when it is His time to do so.

Patience is a part of love, and love perseveres (see 1 Corinthians 13:7).

When we ask Him to give us faith and peace in our hearts, we must wait for Him to answer us at His time.

For Your Prayer List...

Today ask the Lord to give you patience, perseverance, and make you longsuffering. By being impatient we can so easily become rude!

Ask the Lord to give you to be patient with your parents and for your parents to be patient with you. By our very nature we are so selfish!

Lesson 8 We Must Be Kind

Emily's grandfather was a wonderful man. Everybody who knew him agreed that he was happy, warm, and kind.

One could tell that he was kind. He had a warm smile, a twinkle in his eyes, and he was helpful and gentle. It was good to go for a visit to "Oma" and him, for the door was always open and he welcomed his grandchildren with a loving hug. He would always take time to chat with them, asking questions about Emily's skating lessons and her adventures with her friends. He would never bore people with endless stories about the time he when he was young, although it must be admitted that from time to time he would tell quite a tale.

When "Opa" came over to visit, he always found something to do for the family. One day he decided that Emily's bedroom needed a fresh coat of paint and some great wallpaper. He and Emily hopped in the car and went shopping for the supplies.

Emily's grandfather was what grandfathers are supposed to be: loving and kind.

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 2:1-9

Let's Discuss It...

1. What is kindness? Discuss each of the following human characteristics, and circle the ones that describe a kind person.

a. helpful

g. popular

b. sarcastic

h. selfish

c. polite

i. warm

d. forgiving

j. gentle

e. tenderhearted

k. pushy

f. humorous

l. compassionate

2. Discuss the following:

"The fruits of the Spirit are requirements." (see Galatians 5:22)

3. Look up Leviticus 11:45. We must be holy because God is holy. This verse shows that the Lord wants us to have some of His characteristics. The Lord is kind, therefore we must be kind (see also Luke 6:36). Discuss Jeremiah 31:3.

4. In Ephesians 4:32 the Lord commands us to be kind (to whom?). As a result of our sinful nature, we are not all that kind. But the Holy Spirit gives us the fruit of kindness! Discuss how the Lord gives us what He asks of us.

5. Discuss with examples how the Lord in His kindness is both merciful and helpful.

6. I'm sure that Emily's grandfather was also a tender person. Discuss what we mean with "tender" when we speak of a person. The Lord is tender, says the Bible (Luke 1:78).

7. What do you think? The Bible says that "love is tender" (so, of course is God's love). What does this mean to you? See 1 Corinthians 13:4.

8. Why is it comforting to know that God is kind? Discuss Isaiah 54:8.

9. We read from Ephesians 2. Discuss what the Lord says in verses 7 and 8.

10. Look up Psalm 31:21 in both the NIV translation and in the King James translation. Although these translations use different words, they say the same thing. How? Try looking in the NASB.

Let's Sum It Up...

The Lord wants us to be kind and wishes us to learn from the Word that He is kind. He desires that His children, you and I, should experience His kindness in our lives. This requires that through the Spirit our eyes should be opened in order that we might see and might learn Who He really is.

For Your Prayer List...

Today we should begin praying for people we know and who demonstrate the Lord's kindness in their own lives. Maybe you should go over the list of members of your church and look for names of people who serve the Lord with their kindness. Let's pray for those people tonight.

Lesson 9 The Fruit Called Goodness

Carla had a bit of a problem.

"I think that the fruits of the Spirit that we have discussed so far are very much alike. Is there much difference between peace, patience, and kindness? Is goodness different?"

It was an honest remark. Yes, when we just compare these words, they look much alike. Yet when we study the Bible carefully, we will see that there is a difference. Goodness is not quite the same as kindness. The dictionary tells us that goodness is more than just "doing good." It is a word that tells us about being friends with people, about following the rules, and about getting along with others. A girl who possesses the fruit of goodness is one whose deeds, words, and actions contain nothing that is bad.

The Bible tells us that God is good and it says this in at least a dozen different places. If we desire to learn about the fruit of goodness, we must study the goodness of God. When we study God's goodness we will discover what goodness is all about.

Scripture Reading: Psalm 107:1-31

3. The Lord sends His goodness to us. See Psalm 23:6.

4. Read Psalm 25:7. What is meant with "the sins of my youth?" Can you give some examples? How does the Lord's goodness shine in this verse?

5. In Psalm 33:5 we read that the Lord loves righteousness. Righteousness is "being right with God." When is a person right with God?

6. Discuss ways in which the "earth is full of the goodness (steadfast love) of God (same verse).

7. In Psalm 65:11 the word "goodness" (again, see the King James Version) is translated as "bounty". From verse 9 it is a Psalm that speaks to the heart of farmers. How? Bounty: a generous gift (see dictionary).

8. Ephesians 5:9 and 10 are fitting to close our discussions on "goodness". Here "goodness" is illustrated as "light". Discuss this using Matthew 5:14-16 as your guide.

Let's Sum It Up...

It often takes courage to be good, for the world does not want us to be good. We learned that goodness is an activity. It tells us that the Lord wants to see us as "light", as "bounty givers", as "striving to do good", and as positive in our dealings with others.

Psalm 23 is full of descriptions of the Lord's goodness.

For Your Prayer List...

There are people who are in need of our demonstrating kindness, patience, and goodness. Let's find out this evening who belongs to that group. We should follow it up with the prayer that the Lord will grant us the fruit called goodness. After our prayer we should discuss what we might do for those people.

Pray and work, remember?

Lesson 10

Let's Discuss Faithfulness

Helen knew the answer. "When you are joyful, you're full of joy, and when you're beautiful you're full of beauty. So when a person is merciful, he or she is full of mercy. Now that makes it easy: when you're faithful, you're full of faith..." then she stopped for a second. "And that does not make sense," she mumbled. Helen looked around the table at the faces of her friends. They all smiled, while some shrugged their shoulders.

The counselor smiled as well. "You know, Helen, you're not altogether wrong when you say that the word 'faithful' means 'full of faith'. Let's think about it. Is there anyone among us who can explain this?"

There were no volunteers.

"I still don't see it," Beth remarked. "Unless we may add a little word to it, maybe."

"Like what?" the counselor asked.

"Like the word 'in', I suppose. Perhaps when I have faith in a person I can be true to that person and that makes me faithful."

"Interesting," the counselor remarked. "Let's see if it works. What definition of 'faithful' does the dictionary give?"

There was the sound of rustling paper as the girls looked in dictionaries.

"I've got it," Janica announced. "Faithful: 'loyal' as 'a faithful friend'; 'trustworthy' as 'a faithful servant'; 'true' as 'a faithful account of what happened'."

"Great job. Now we know why the Lord wants us to be faithful and why He let His Spirit give us faithfulness."

But there is a bit more to it, as you will soon see...

Scripture Reading: Matthew 25:14-30

Let's Discuss It...

1. All of the gifts of the Spirit that we have studied so far are, first of all, qualities that are characteristics of God. God is patient and therefore He wants you and me to be patient. He is kind and good and therefore wants us to be the same. How do "joy" and "peace" describe God?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 1:9. How is God faithful in His calling?

Now read 2 Thessalonians 3:3. How is God faithful when He strengthens and protects?

3. In Hebrews 10 the verses 22 and 23 speak of God's faithfulness as far as His promises are concerned. What are these promises? See Psalm 40:10.

4. Study Revelation 1:5. Christ is the faithful witness. What did He witness before all peoples? See Luke 2:30-32.

5. What does the Lord instruct us to do? Revelation 2:10.

6. Read 1 John 1:9. What has Jesus promised to do? Why?

7. What does the Lord want you and me to do? See Psalm 89:1.

8. Why do we often find it difficult to be faithful to the Lord? How can this be changed?

Let's Sum It Up...

The Bible shows God's faithfulness in many, if not all its books. When we say God is faithful, we say that He is loyal, trustworthy accurate, and true. He wants His children to possess the same qualities and that's why He instructs His Spirit to give these to us for the purpose of making His name great.

For Your Prayer List...

Lord, I really want to know You. Give me the willingness to study Your Word.

I really want to be faithful to You. Please help me to be loyal, true, and trustworthy. Show me that You are always the Faithful One, also for me.

Help me to really love You as I should. I fail often, dear Lord. When I fail, please pick me up and put me on the proper path again.

Lord, please make me faithful to others because You want me to love my neighbor as myself...

Lesson 11 Are We Really Gentle?

There's an old television series named "Gentle Ben" that was once popular with young and old. Gentle Ben was a huge brown bear who had been tamed into being gentle. He did not attack people, and he did not bite. He really appeared to be a huge teddy bear that with his master went through weekly adventures.

Ben was gentle. The dictionary defines the word "gentle" as "kind, not rough, and friendly." When the Bible says that gentleness is a gift of the Holy Spirit, we have learned to understand this to mean that the Lord wants us to be gentle because He is gentle.

You and I have to be careful with this. In today's world a gentle person is easily called "a wimp", and a wimp generally speaking is a bit of a spineless person. In today's world you have to be tough, aggressive, and shameless. If you're not, you'll never make it. You'll have no friends, will not be popular, and will be left out.

The Bible makes it clear that there is enormous joy in being gentle. Let's find out why this is true.

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:9-11

Let's Discuss It...

1. Is Jesus gentle? See 2 Corinthians 10:1.
2. Look up James 3:17 for a biblical definition of gentleness.
3. Timothy was a young person. Read and discuss the instructions he received in 2 Timothy 2:22.
4. How does 2 Timothy 2:24 instruct us to be gentle? Our version uses the word "kind" in this verse instead of gentle.
5. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8. What example is used to show gentleness?
6. Turn back to Isaiah 40:11. Discuss how the words "arm", "bosom" (heart), and "lead" show gentleness.

7. Isaiah 40:11 is much like Psalm 23. Discuss how they are the same.

8. Discuss how being strong and being gentle describe the same kind of person.

9. How would things change in the life of a person who changes from being rough and selfish to being gentle?

Let's Sum It Up...

We must be like Jesus. This means that we must also be gentle. To become gentle requires that we ask the Holy Spirit to make us that way. Very few people are gentle by birth.

We must be gentle in order to show what it is like to be Jesus' ambassador here on earth.

Jesus never asks something of us without promising to enrich our lives by it.

For Your Prayer List...

Dear Lord, please turn me into a gentle person so that I can show what it means to have You in my heart. Lord, I need to be much more gentle to my brothers and sisters, to my dad and mom as well. Remove sarcasm from me, for by being sarcastic I hurt the feelings of others. Stop me from being mouthy to my parents and teachers. Show me how rich my life will be when I receive and use the gifts of the Spirit.

Lesson 12

What About Self-Control?

Debbie and her friends always hung around together and did things as a group. Although they were very close to each other, they differed greatly. Debbie was tallish and blond. She often had a big smile, and yet she had a fierce temper to deal with. Beth was the giggle-puss, and if she had a problem, it was that she was somewhat overweight and could not resist snacking. People said that Susan had a tongue like a razorblade. She could cut anybody with her words. Janice was the bratty one of the group. She was always right, even when she was dead wrong.

Yet basically they were a bunch of great kids. They were fun to be with. You could count on them. They were faithful and true. Yet each of them had a problem: self-control. Each girl knew that the problem needed to be overcome and struggled with the lack of self-control that she showed. Janice was the one who might try to shrug it off. "Nobody's perfect," she would say. Still, she often wished that she could show that she was basically a gentle person.

The Holy Spirit wants us to receive the gift of self-control. We know why: see Matthew 5:48.

Scripture Reading: 2 Peter 1:3-11

Let's Discuss It...

1. The Bible passage that we've just read isn't an easy one, is it? It speaks of perfection in Christ (see verse 8). Notice also that self-control is used in combination with other qualities (see verses 5,6, and 7).

2. For what reason, say the apostles, do we need self-control?

3. In our story, what's wrong with Janice saying, "Nobody's perfect"?

4. Everybody needs self-control. What problems do you have without it?

10. Why is self-control a gift of the Spirit?

Let's Sum It Up...

If we lack self-control, we are inclined to give in to thoughts, words, and actions that are contrary to the will of God. Showing a lack of self-control hinders us from showing that the love of Jesus is in our hearts (see Matthew 10:33).

For Your Prayer List...

It's amazing how many people need your prayers. It's not only the sick ones or the lonely, and not only the preachers and the missionaries.

Your good friends also need your prayers. You must also pray for the Lord to give them the power of self-control.

Of course, you need to ask this also for yourself, so that you may become a true follower of Jesus.

Lesson 13 Crucifying Your Old Self

I can well imagine the faces some of you girls are making. What a title for this lesson! Can't we think of something a little bit more cheerful and more up-to-date?

Of course, we could. No big deal. Yet there's something unique about the title to this lesson. It came from the Bible. You and I, we must crucify our old self (or our flesh).

That needs some explaining, of course.

You know what crucifixion is all about. Personally, I think that it is a very cruel type of punishment. When I picture myself hanging on a cross, the shivers run down my spine. It must be terrible to suffer in this manner.

Romans crucified people to get rid of them. It was also the price criminals had to pay for their evil deeds.

The Bible says that we must crucify our old self. In other words, we must kill our old self because of its sinfulness.

The why and how of doing this may make us think of who we really are.

Have a blessed discussion!

Scripture Reading: Galatians 5:16-24

Let's Discuss It...

1. What is meant with "flesh" in the Bible? See Galatians 5:24.
2. In Romans 6:6 we read that our old self was crucified with Christ. What does this mean?
3. Look up Galatians 2:20. Ask your counselor to explain how we can live and yet "no longer live".
4. Study and discuss Galatians 6:14.
5. Look up 1 Corinthians 2:14. Which words describe a person who possesses the "old self"?
6. What would you say this person is?

7. Look up 2 Peter 1:9. Which two adjectives describe the sinful-self person?

8. Discuss the beliefs of the unrenewed person.

9. We tend to love our old self. Because of it, we do not easily want to crucify it. What gives us the power to crucify it?

Let's Sum It Up...

The Bible says that we were received and born in sin (see Job 25:4). This means that we are born with the old or sinful self. Having such a sinful self, we cannot receive salvation unless we are born again (see John 3:7) and receive the strength to overcome our old self. We know that the power to overcome is the Lord's gift. We may and must pray for this gift.

For Your Prayer List...

Just the other day the man who wrote these lessons met with a member of the Kingdom Seekers. The girl did not know that the man was the writer. Otherwise, she would not have told him that she felt the club evenings were dull.

"What would you do to improve it?" he asked.

"The meetings are too serious. We want some fun, you know," said the girl.

This girl was honest, but wrong. Certainly, we may have time for fun, but we **MUST** take time to be busy with the will of God for our lives. The devil does not want us to hear about our need for a new self and he does not want us to be born again.

In our prayer we must ask the Lord to show us how important it is to discuss what His will for us is all about.

Lesson 14

Let's Walk by the Spirit

In Genesis 5:24 we read that Enoch walked with God. When I was a little fellow, I thought that Enoch and the Lord went for long walks every once in a while. I did not know that in Biblical language "to walk with" a person means "to live with" that person in such a manner that it looked as if the two were always together. You can live that close to a person only when you have nothing to hide, when you can be perfectly honest and have nothing to be ashamed of.

In today's lesson we are told that we must walk by the Spirit. To walk "with" is not exactly the same as to walk "by", but the meaning is close. To walk by the Spirit means to be charged and energized by the Spirit. That's almost the same as an automobile. It runs by the power provided by gasoline.

To say it in everyday language: the Bible says that we must live a life that is energized by the Holy Spirit. Let's see what this means.

Scripture Reading: Romans 8:1-8

Let's Discuss It...

1. Consider Romans 6:4. What is the meaning of the word "walk"?

2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-7 and discuss the following
 - a. In verse 1, what is "the tent"?

 - b. In verse 1, what is "a building"?

 - c. in verse 7, what does "we walk by faith, not by sight" mean?

3. How do the words in question 2 compare with Romans 8:1-8? In what ways are they the same?

4. Can you explain the meaning of 1 John 1:7?

5. Consider 3 John 1:4. Who are the children? In your own words, what is the old apostle's greatest joy?

6. What is the purpose of our lives? Take turns reading the following verses:

Psalm 34:3	Psalm 35:27
Psalm 40:16	Psalm 70:4
Luke 1:46	Acts 10:44-46

7. Walking by the Spirit is the result of two responses of our hearts:

- a. See Luke 10:27
- b. See Acts 5:29

Let's Sum It Up...

Walking by the Spirit is living the Christian life. You and I must do so in love and obedience so that through our lives the Lord must be praised and magnified.

For Your Prayer List...

Lord, give me Your Spirit so that I may really love you and make your Name great. There is so much sorrow and darkness in the lives of people. Grant me the power to let my life make the difference.

Create in me the desire to truly study Your Word so that I may be instructed and equipped to make Your Name great and to serve others.

Lesson 15

Living the Christian Life

The beautiful song "Living for Jesus" truly tells us what living the Christian life is all about. The chorus sums it up when it says, "My life I give, henceforth to live, O Christ for Thee alone."

You know, life begins with birth. The Christian life begins with being born again and that is what Jesus discussed with Nicodemus (John 3). Following rebirth we give ourselves to Jesus, as the song puts it. This giving includes "yielding allegiance" and "striving to please Him in all that I do."

This is the last lesson of this booklet. The lessons were not perfect, but every girl who participated with her heart "heard" something: the love that the Lord has for us and the love that we owe Him.

It is fitting to end our studies with asking what the Christian life is all about.

Scripture Reading: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Let's Discuss It...

1. Living the Christian life requires that we do something special. See Romans 10:9-10.

2. See Matthew 10:32-33. What requirement is given by Jesus and what guarantee follows it?

3. The song "Living for Jesus" says "Striving to please Him in all that I do." Does this also include doing the things I do not necessarily like (such as homework, doing the dishes, or looking after a baby brother)?

4. In the same song, what does "yielding allegiance" mean? How is it done?

5. In question #1 we discussed confessing. Read Philippians 2:9-11 and discuss the meaning of verse 11.

6. Explain Colossians 3:2 and tell what it has to do with living the Christian life.

7. Look up Galatians 2:20. This is a beautiful and encouraging verse. What does it tell you?

8. Discuss 2 Timothy 3:14-15. What wisdom do the Scriptures give you?

Let's Sum It Up...

Living the Christian life begins with giving yourself to Jesus. It is a life in which not you, but Jesus is the most important in your life. It is a life of surrender and sacrifice. It is also a life of happiness and fulfillment.

For Your Prayer List...

Pray much for yourself. Ask the Lord to give you a new heart to let you live the Christian life. When you ask for these, you do not need to ask for a happy and fulfilled life. You will have it, and you will thankfully admit that you are the happiest person in the world.