

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries
5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

Fruit of the Spirit
Lesson 2B
Attributes of God

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2 Peter 1:5 *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;* This passage from 2 Peter also teaches us that there are stages of Christian growth; This growth takes time. The Lord shows us this growth process so we do not become discouraged.

He begins with *giving all diligence*. It is such a blessing to know that God is reasonable and patient with us. The brand new, just saved babe in Christ, from the worst background, delivered from the deepest pit, is as able to begin this process as the person raised in a Christian home and carefully cultivated by parents and church leaders to live for Jesus.

Giving all diligence... Diligence does not require talent, skill, wealth, or opportunities. When God sees desire, He will bring His provision. The Lord begins with diligence because before we can know what to do or how to do it, we have to be willing. David did many shameful things in the energy of his flesh. These were intermingled with a great many noble deeds done for His God. The same could be said of Saul, his predecessor. What brought them to such very different ends? David was a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22). Though he often fell very far short of the mark, his desire was to please Jehovah.

The apostle Paul said in 1 Timothy 1:15 that he was the chief among sinners (present tense), yet in Philippians 3:14 *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*. The reason God could use such a sinner was largely due to his diligent pursuit of holiness.

Do we, like David and Paul, long to add to our faith? Is there a craving in our soul for virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity? We should be confident in our salvation and resting in the certain hope of eternal life, but we should not settle for less than the fullness of what the Lord desires for us.

Verse 5 states, *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue*. Are we content with being saved and learning the Bible, or do we want God to make us virtuous men and women? I do not want a wife who can quote the verses that show how a wife should act. I want a wife who does the things set forth in scripture. My children do not need a father who can rattle off twenty-two verses about raising kids. They need a dad who puts the word of God into practice. Our fellowship with other people should reflect the love of God in our hearts. We need people who manifest charity.

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You see, it is not knowledge but virtue that God wants to work in and through us.

Then we are told, *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge...* Many a zealous new convert views the Bible as a book filled with material for winning arguments. The Bible was written to make saved men and women like Jesus Christ. It is a blessed day when one learns that this knowledge of facts is vital in witnessing, in door to door work, or in public preaching, but the other ninety percent of your life is not about winning arguments with unbelievers. Knowledge is necessary, but it cannot be the end. What affects the head but not the heart does not produce spiritual fruit.

2 Peter 1:6 *And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;* Verse 6 says that after knowledge comes *temperance*. Many of the modern versions change the word to self-control. That is instant deceit resulting in perpetual defeat. The whole passage is given to prove that you cannot control yourself. Temperance is Holy Ghost control of unruly self. The Holy Spirit, through the word of God, will teach every believer how to bring any temperament under the Lord's governing power. Once temperance is attained, then there is *patience*. Why is temperance set before patience? Until you can learn to let the Spirit control your emotions, you are never going to be able to handle the fact that there are other people who cannot control theirs. Once we get a grip on our misconduct, that of others becomes easier to deal with. We need patience as we deal with the issues arising in our lives and as we interact with others.

Then to patience we are to add *godliness*. All of us would agree that there is a vast difference between knowing what God expects and acting that way. We would all admit that it is easier to learn what the Lord says about living than to learn to live like the Lord.

Pay careful attention to the truth in 2 Peter 1:7 Until God begins to manifest Himself in our lives, there will be no *brotherly kindness*. Only after we learn brotherly kindness can we walk in *charity*. Again, the modern translations erase truth and cripple spiritual growth by changing charity to love in 1 Corinthians 13 and elsewhere. Love misrepresents the truth of God. Charity in scripture is a heartfelt love for one's brothers and sisters in Christ. A lost mother loves her child. An unsaved man loves his wife. Without regeneration, a religious man loves his church. But only those with the Holy Spirit within may have charity one toward another.

We cannot linger on any of these points, but please notice the orderly progression. Each item in this list requires a more complete yielding of self to God's control than the one which comes before it. In this last couple of steps, we must learn to be kind before we can manifest charity.

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God put this great passage on growth in the Bible for several reasons. He does not want us to be discouraged when we realize that we are not a finished product (Philippians 1:6), but at the same time, He wants us to take a look at these passages and say, *"If God wants to do all this in my life before taking me to heaven, I need to get diligent."*

Let us now turn to 1 Corinthians 3. The Bible speaks clearly in regard to who is spiritual and who is carnal. 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*

What do you mean, God? Why are they carnal? What are the identifying traits? *...for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* According to the word of God, the evidence of carnality is the fact that in spite of all one has learned about the Bible, there is an inability to maintain relationships based on *brotherly kindness* and *charity*.

Here is a man in the flesh, on his way to hell, and he has no love for Christians. Here is a man who is now saved, on his way to heaven, and he has no love for Christians. The former man can only befriend those who agree with him. The same is true of the latter man. The first is a natural man. The second is a carnal man.

1 Corinthians 3:4, *For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?* The church at Corinth was carnal because they could get along with the brothers and sisters that agreed with them, but they could not get along with those who did not agree with them. If humility, grace, compassion, longsuffering, or forbearance were required, there would be no fellowship.

They were not said to be carnal because they lacked knowledge but because they had not allowed the Holy Spirit to help them grow spiritually while they grew intellectually.

Next let's look at Matthew 5. We are aware that the passage is written in a different dispensation, but the Bible teaches us that we can still learn from its truth. (1 Corinthians 10:11) The Lord of Glory says in Matthew 5:38, *Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.* That is the law of man. I will treat you the way you treated me. I will give back to you what I received from you. That is how carnal men live. I will be nice to you if you are nice to me. I will not pray for you if you do not pray for me. Anyone can live this way, with or without God.

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Christ Jesus continues, Matthew 5:39-42 ***But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.***

The teaching is a simple one. We are not called to live a life of retaliation, of getting even, but of treating others as Christ treats us. The natural man focuses on what was done to him by the unrighteous. The spiritual man is controlled by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus continues in verses Matthew 5:43-44 ***Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*** Doing good to people who are being mean to us requires the Holy Spirit's control.

Far too often we choose to abide in the flesh and grow bitter and hateful towards those we perceive to be mistreating us. God said the issue is not their conduct but our reaction thereunto. Were the Lord to remove from my life a person who is irritating me, there would be another to come along and fill the gap. I need for the Holy Spirit to have me. So Jesus said, ***and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.***

As soon as we humbly yield ourselves to His control, the first signs of fruit will appear on the branches of our lives. God knows when someone means business with Him and when they do not. The day you want to quit smoking, He will help you quit. As soon as you desire to speak without profanity or vulgarity, the Holy Spirit will strengthen you. God knows your heart. If you truly desire to be faithful to your spouse, a blessing to your church, a witness to your neighbor, or righteous in your conduct, He will help you.

God is in heaven as our Father. His Son is at His right hand to intercede for us. His Spirit lives within us to guide and control. The triune God waits to bless us, to mature us, to develop in us the divine nature. The Lord waits only for our consent.

His purpose is to make us like Christ (Romans 8:28-29). His Spirit will help us despite all our infirmities (Romans 8:26-27).

Galatians 5:22-25 says, ***But the fruit of the Spirit is present tense, right now: Love...Joy...Peace...Longsuffering...Gentleness...Goodness...Faith...Meekness...Temperance...against such there is no law*** Do we want this fruit to characterize our lives'? Nothing can prohibit or prevent the production of this fruit in our lives if we desire for ourselves what the Savior desires for us.

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And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. There is the issue. When we want the new life enough to allow the old one to be put to death, the Holy Spirit will work His wonders in us. *If we live in the Spirit.* And all saved people do. *Let us also walk in the Spirit.* The choice is ours. We do not have the power to produce the fruit. We do have the power to prevent it or to allow it. God will not change the world or others so that we do not need the Holy Spirit in order to live like Christ. He will change us so that that we may live like Christ. May the Lord lead us and guide us into this blessed truth.

Notes

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Lesson 2B - Attributes of God

Name _____

Note: (*) An asterisk indicates must include scripture with your answers.

1. What are the stages of Christian growth? *
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. What are some indications that a person is carnal? *
3. What is an important aspect about diligence?
4. What was the difference between Saul and David?
5. What comes after diligence? *
6. What is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? *
7. Why is the word "Love" a misrepresentation of Charity?
8. What happens in the modern versions when they change the word "temperance" to self-control?

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9. What are the two reasons God wants us to know about spiritual growth?
 - a.
 - b.
10. How can we be sure that the Church in Corinth was not carnal because they lacked knowledge? *
11. Now from what you have learned in this lesson, what reasons can you give to explain how most of the time you are carnal?
12. What is the definition of virtue?

True/false

- An eye for an eye still holds true today.
- We are the reason there is no fruit in our lives.
- Only those who are highly educated in scripture can walk in the spirit.
- When we really want a new life, we will put the old one to death.

In addition: Read 2 Peter 1:3-8



Scripture memorization, write out these verses on the back on this page or a separate piece of paper: Matthew 5:43-44; 2 Peter 1:4,5,6,7.
(Must be in KJV)

Any questions?