

CHRISTIAN WORKER

“We are workers together with Him...” (2 Corinthians 6:1)

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FRUIT

Ross Haffner

My wife's grandfather is remembered in our family for being impatient with his garden. When a fruit tree or vegetable plant did not produce quickly enough he would, with much disdain, cut it down and plant another. Perhaps, given more time, the plants could have grown to produce fruit to his satisfaction. Just as the fruit tree is expected to produce, Jesus expects His disciples to live a life marked by personal growth and bringing others to God.

Jesus taught the apostles, “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). By extension, all Christians are a part of the “much fruit” they bore and subject to the same principle (John 15:8; Matt. 28:20). Christians are connected to the Savior and His purpose but must choose to abide in Him and His love, meditate upon and obey His word, and bear fruit (John 15:2, 8-9).

When we become Christians we should “bring forth fruit unto God” (Rom. 7:4). But there is still in us the potential to reap bad fruit (Gal. 6:8-9). Ungodly men are illustrated as trees without fruit that need to be pulled up by the roots (Jude 4, 12).

Becoming false teachers would result in us producing bad fruit (Matt. 7:15-20). Therefore, we must be careful that what we teach is consistent with the saving message of Christ so that we do not cause divisions and offenses (1 Tim. 4:16; Rom. 16:17).

Failing to repent of sins makes one unfruitful. John taught his hearers to bear “fruits worthy of repentance” else they were in danger of the ax “laid to the root of the trees” because “every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire” (Luke 3:8-9). The Pharisees and Sadducees were guilty of being proud and impenitent leaders so they became as useless to God as the chaff or a tree that refused to bear good fruit (Matt. 3:7-

12). God will not tolerate a vineyard that yields wild grapes (Isa. 5:1-7). Do not hold on to feelings of assurance on the day of Judgment if your life has not been changed to the point that you are producing fruit for the kingdom of God.

No Christian should feel like they are done working or growing. The fruit of the Spirit is offered in contrast to a wicked life that will separate us from the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-23). The Spirit produces fruit in our lives if we are led by the Spirit (Gal. 5:18). This only happens if we choose to walk in the Spirit, which would mean working on the qualities listed in the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16, 25). But “love, joy, peace,

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APRIL 2023

THE LANGUAGE OF SCRIPTURE II

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Cody Westbrook

A team of Swiss scientists recently reported a medical breakthrough that could potentially change lives throughout the world. The research group NeuroRestore has identified nerve groups impacted by paralysis and discovered a way to stimulate them back to life in order to restore the ability to walk. Early results are promising and it may be that their treatment plan soon finds its way to rehabilitation centers and hospitals all over the world.

Walking is a basic human function which we tend to take for granted until we can't do it anymore. The ability to move around freely has an affect on every aspect of life. Is it any wonder, then, that the Holy Spirit chose the concept of walking as a way to illustrate how Christians are to live?

Scripture often uses the word “walk” to denote a way of life. The Old Testament describes walking through the valley of the shadow of death (Ps. 23:4) as a picture of both great difficulty and facing the prospect of one's own demise. Israel was to walk before the Lord in truth (1 Kings 2:4). The blessed man does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly (Ps. 1:1) but rather walks in uprightness (Ps. 84:11). Abraham walked before God in perfection, or blamelessness (Gen. 17:1) and Enoch “walked with God” (Gen. 5:24), both standing as textbook examples of how God expects His children to live before Him. The New Testament uses the term in the same way. Christians are to walk in the footsteps of Abraham's faith (Rom. 4:12). We are to walk in the light (1 John 1:7) and walk according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:4). Perhaps the best study of the term is found in Ephesians where Paul uses it 6 times to describe the way Christians should live.

- Walk in good works (Eph. 2:10). Though it is true that we are saved by grace and not of works (Eph. 2:8-9), it is also true that we are created for the purpose of good works. We cannot earn or merit salvation (Rom. 4:4-5), but we must respond to God obediently (Jas. 2:24), and continue to serve Him obediently. The Christian life must

be characterized as being zealous of good works (Tit. 2:14), ready to do good works (Tit. 3:1), and maintaining good works (Tit. 3:14). Faith only is a false doctrine both before and after becoming a Christian.

- Walk worthy (Eph. 4:1). Christians must “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.” The idea of the language is “measuring up” or “coming into balance.” In other words, our demonstration much match our proclamation. If we claim to be a Christian then we had better live like one! The practicalities of this command are unpacked throughout the remainder of the book.
- Walk in newness (Eph. 4:17). Ephesians 4:17-24 is a section of great contrast. On one hand, the Gentiles live a life of vanity and alienation because their thinking has been darkened through ignorance and worldliness. On the other, God's people live a life of renewal because their thinking has been changed by the gospel of Jesus the Christ. The result is a life of righteousness and holiness. We must not “walk as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind.”
- Walk in love (Eph. 5:2). Ephesians 1:5 explains that we have been adopted into the family of God by Jesus Christ, Ephesians 5:1 tells us that as a consequence, we must bear the family resemblance. One way that we imitate our Heavenly Father is by walking in love. God displays His love for us in a multitude of ways, chief of which is the sacrifice of His Son (John 3:16). Love always seeks the best interest of its object, and our Father displays that perfectly, as does Christ, our Savior. Our lives must be characterized by the same sacrificial love seen in Him (John 13:34; 15:12; 17).
- Walk in light (Eph. 5:8). Throughout scripture, light and darkness serve as illustrations of good and evil. Because we walk in love and good works (Eph. 2:10; 5:2) striving to live according to the

gospel (Eph. 4:1) with a renewed way of thinking (Eph. 4:17), we must live as those who belong to the light (Eph. 5:8). God is light and has nothing to do with darkness (1 John 1:7-10). Likewise, those who belong to God have been transferred from darkness to light (Col. 1:13). And so we must strive to be as He is.

- Walk in wisdom (Eph. 5:15). To walk in wisdom is to walk with our eyes open. It is the idea of looking ahead to see challenges and opportunities (cf. Matt. 10:16). In context, Paul specifies redeeming the time and understanding the will of the Lord. That is, seizing opportunity when it presents itself and seeking what God wants in a situation instead of what we want.

If there were one passage to summarize the whole of the Christian walk, perhaps it would be 1 Peter 2:21, “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in His steps.” Jesus left us a perfect example of how to live. May God bless us as we strive to walk as He walked.

CW

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Daniel Garza

God is righteous. God does not conform to that standard, as if righteousness is an objective standard outside of Him. No! One of God’s distinguishing qualities is that He is intrinsically upright and just. Righteousness is a part of God’s very essence. Just as God is “holy-holy-holy,” He is righteous-righteous-righteous. He is perfect, just, faithful, righteous, and upright (Deu. 32:4). He is righteous, loves righteous deeds, and the upright shall behold His face (Ps. 11:7). He reigns from a throne of righteousness and justice and wields the same (Ps. 89:14; Heb. 1:8). From His throne He pronounces righteous statutes and ordinances as they are an extension of His nature (Ps. 119:137, 138, 142, 144, 172; Deu. 4:8). He is the source of righteousness.

God is immutable. He will always be true to His nature (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8). All God does conforms perfectly to what is right and just because righteousness and justness emanates from Him. Because God is righteous and just, His actions righteous and just. Yahweh is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works (Ps. 145:17). In His holiness, justice, and righteousness God must exact punishment on those who act contrary to His law (Isa. 5:16; Rom. 3:23; Hab. 1:13; Ps. 7:9-13; Rom. 2:5-6, 3:5, 6:23a; Eph. 2:1-3).

Because He is loving and gracious, sinners are saved (Ex. 34:6; 1 John 4:8-10; John 3:16; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4; Tit. 3:3-7; Eph. 2:5, 8). The holiness and justice of God must punish sin, but His righteousness will apply the punishment. It is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who...know not God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:6-8). Likewise, salvation from sin is God’s loving-grace, but His righteousness will provide His loving-grace (Rom. 1:16-17, 3:23-26; 2 Cor. 8:9; Tit. 2:11). The cross perfectly displays God’s righteousness to punish sin and save from it.

Free moral agents can act righteously. God’s law is the righteousness we must conform to. The ones that keep God’s law are righteous. In our relative righteousness we can express attitudes and behaviors of piety and good works and of trust and dependence upon God. It would be Israel’s righteousness if they kept God’s law (Deu. 6:25). Those who had God’s law in their heart knew righteousness. If a man is righteous and does what is just (lawful) and right... walks in [God’s] statutes, and keeps [His] rules by acting faithfully-he is righteous; he shall surely live... (Eze. 18:5, 9). Jesus teaches to hunger, thirst, and seek after righteousness. (Matt. 5:6, 6:33). Paul instructed to pursue and be slaves to righteousness (Rom. 6:18, 2 Tim. 2:22). Righteousness is something to be instructed in, not just to be thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17), but that the individual may be preserved in the day our Lord (Matt. 7:21-23). John catechized the church, teaching the practice of righteousness makes one righteous (1 John 3:7).

At the same time the OT and NT depicts humankind as lacking righteousness. The psalmist did not want God to judge him because no man living is righteous in His sight (Ps. 143:2). Solomon observed, Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins (Ecc. 7:20). Paul, in quoting the Old Testament said, There is none righteous, not even one (Rom. 3:10), for all sinned and fallen short of God’s glory (Rom. 3:23). If the Lord were to mark iniquities no one would be able to stand (Ps. 130:8). It has been aptly noted that because of this predicament we can only be saved by being accounted righteous (Rom. 4:1-12). This is only possible because of the righteousness of Christ and the result is our being righteous, justified, and innocent before God (Rom. 1:16-17; 3:22-26; Phil. 3:9; 2 Cor. 5:21). This imputed righteousness is through faith (Rom. 4:20-25, Gal. 3:26-27, Col. 2:11,12). We are made righteous by the righteousness of Christ, having obtained it by faith in Him and His blood (Rom. 3:23-26, Eph. 2:8-9). We too can be righteous absolutely, but only through Christ. And to be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that

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Fourth Quarter Class Schedule/April 2023 - July 2023



Chapel @ 8:30 AM / Lunch @ 11:50-1:00

Time	First Year	Time	Second Year
Monday			
9:00-9:50	1, 2 Kings - Matt Gibson	9:00-10:20	Minor Prophets - Clay Bond
10:00-10:50	Prov. Eccl. S of S - Trent Kennedy	10:30-11:50	Teaching Methods - Clay Bond
11:00-11:50	Apologetics - Matt Gibson		
1:00-1:50	GSP	1:00-1:50	GSP
2:00 - 2:50	Christ. & Pag. Phil - Steven Lloyd	2:00-2:50	1, 2, 3, John - Trent Kennedy
3:00-3:50	Job- Matt Gibson	3:00 - 3:50	Revelation - Steven Lloyd
Tuesday			
9:00-11:50	Acts 2 - Ronnie Scherffius	9:00-10:20	Personal Evangelism - Matt Gibson
		10:30-11:50	Preaching Practicum 2- Trent Kennedy
1:00-3:50	Christian Doctrine - Trent Kennedy	1:00-3:50	Restoration History - Ronnie Scherffius
Wednesday			
9:00-9:50	1, 2 Kings - Matt Gibson	9:00-10:20	Minor Prophets - Clay Bond
10:00-10:50	Prov. Eccl. S of S - Trent Kennedy	10:30-11:50	Teaching Methods - Clay Bond
11:00-11:50	Apologetics - Matt Gibson		
1:00-1:50	GSP	1:00-1:50	GSP
2:00 - 2:50	Christ. & Pag. Phil - Steven Lloyd	2:30-3:50	1, 2, 3, John - Trent Kennedy
3:00-3:50	Job- Matt Gibson	3:00 - 3:50	Revelation - Steven Lloyd
Thursday			
9:00-11:50	Messiahship - Wade Webster	9:00-10:20	Personal Evangelism - Matt Gibson
		10:30-11:50	Preaching Practicum 2- Trent Kennedy
1:00-3:50	Topical Preaching - Wade Webster	1:00-3:50	Ezekiel 2 - Steven Lloyd
Friday			
9:00-9:50	1, 2 Kings - Matt Gibson	9:00-11:50	Hebrews - Steven Lloyd
10:00-10:50	Prov. Eccl. S of S - Trent Kennedy		
11:00-11:50	Apologetics - Matt Gibson		
1:00-1:50	GSP	1:00-1:50	GSP
2:00 - 2:50	Christ. & Pag. Phil - Steven Lloyd	2:00-2:50	1, 2, 3, John - Trent Kennedy
3:00-3:50	Job - Matt Gibson	3:00-3:50	Revelation - Steven Lloyd

See Academic Calendar for Special Events

which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith... to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Phil. 3:9; Eph. 4:24).

CW

OBEY

Bryan R Braswell

To obey or be obedient are actions based upon belief. The association with belief, an active hearing of God's word, is to be noted in this study. The words from the Hebrew and Greek will prove this.

For example, in Genesis 3:8, 10, 17. "They [heard] the sound of the Lord... So he [Adam] said, 'I [heard] Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked... Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it.'" These three examples of the same Hebrew word *sama* translated "heard" or "heeded," in the context refer to their *disobedience* to God. The same word is translated "obey" 81 times and "obedient" 8 times in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Similarly in John 3:36, the Greek word *apitheo* translated *believe not*, can be translated disobey or disobedient. Acts 14:2 states that the Jews were "unbelieving," but we might say they were "disobedient" and stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren." This same word is translated in Hebrews 3:18 "*did not obey*." The application here is to the Israelites who were "unbelieving." They were disobedient and could not enter God's rest. In Hebrews 11:31, of Rahab the harlot, it translates this same word: "Rahab did not perish with those who *did not believe*..."

You can see the association and application of the language. To hear intelligently and believe to the act of obedience or being *disobedient* are both ideas implicit. A final passage demonstrates this very well. First Peter 2:7-8: "Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone, and a Stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. They stumble, being *disobedient* to the word, to which they also were appointed." Peter's passage illustrates this idea perfectly.

Consider 1 Samuel 15:22-23: "Has the Lord as great delight

in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king." This is the same word used in Genesis 3. It is used 1,165 times in the scripture and is most often translated "hear" (785 times). It always emphasizes hearing with attention, interest, to understand, and listen by giving heed. Another example in Ecclesiastes 9:17: "Words of the wise, spoken quietly, should be heard (obeyed) rather than the shout of a ruler of fools."

Samuel's rebuke of Saul is because he did not "trust and obey" God's instructions completely. Saul did not hear/heed with any serious attention to the wisdom of God. In 1 Samuel 15:14, Samuel questions: "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Samuel *heard* and had a precise understanding of Saul's disobedience.

King Saul was guilty of the same sin Jesus marked the scribes and Pharisees with: "...making the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophecy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.'" (Matt. 15:6-9; et al.). This always starts with inattention to the authority of God.

A final passage to consider is in John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep My commandments." The word "keep" is *tereo* in the Greek. It means "to attend to carefully, take care of, to guard, observe and to reserve as in undergoing something." I point this out because it is associated with obeying or "keeping" God's commands. Second Thessalonians 1:8, the word *hypakouo* is translated "obey," and is a reference to "obeying the gospel." The definition is "to listen or to harken." Obedience implies listening, hearing, and accurately taking the information and "obeying" or "heeding" the instruction. This is the same word used in reference to Jesus' authority over the winds and sea obeying Him when stilling the storm over the sea of Galilee (Cf., Matt 8:27; et al. Mark 1:27; 4:41; Luke 8:25; 17:6; Acts 6:7).

Romans 6:17 states: "But God be thanked that though you were the slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered." This is the same word used in 2 Thessalonians 1:8. To be obedient is based upon clearly hearing and understanding accurately God's authority, which will always lead to a great reward and blessings eternal. As with Adam and Eve, King Saul and Samuel, and the Christians in the first century, our obedience

to God's authority is necessary and beneficial. If we continue rooted and grounded in the faith, we will be blessed eternally!

CW

FLEE

DJ Stucky

Christianity is about becoming more like Jesus and following His path towards heaven. However, as we focus our lives on Christ, we must remain aware of the dangers that may threaten us along the way. God has revealed certain dangers that a Christian should run away from. The word translated as "flee" is the Greek word *pheugo* (φεύγω) which means to flee, take flight, or run away. In Acts 27:30, *pheugo* is used to describe escape from a shipwreck. Fleeing, therefore, is not reluctantly moving away. It is running for our lives from something that is full of danger. Here are three things that God tells us to run away from.

First, we must run away from religious error. The Bible says, "Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry" (1 Cor. 10:14 NKJV). Idolatry was the sin that plagued God's people in times past. Israel had taken religious ideas from the nations around them and tried to combine them with the Law of Moses. With this God was not pleased, and Israel was taken into captivity. In the first century, Gentile Christians struggled to leave their pagan ideas behind when they obeyed the gospel. The only solution is to tune out the noise of error and listen only to the words of truth.

Jesus once described His relationship with His followers as that of a shepherd and his sheep. One important aspect of this relationship is how the sheep respond to the voice of the shepherd. Jesus says, "And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers" (John 10:4-5 NKJV). When we hear a voice that does not match up to the voice of Christ, we should run from it. There are many voices competing for attention, whether reformed theology, Calvinism, or worldly philosophy. But if a voice does not match what Jesus has said or what has been inspired through the Holy Spirit, then we should ignore that voice and run the other way. Many have given their ear to the voices of other shepherds and are being tossed about by every wind of doctrine as a result (Eph. 4:14).

Second, we must run away from sexual immorality (1 Cor. 6:8). Since the beginning, mankind has struggled to

stay within the boundaries God has placed around sex. We can see how pervasive sex has become in media of all kinds. Regardless of how prevalent this immorality has become we still have the responsibility to flee from it. Practically speaking, this might mean placing a content filter on all of your internet capable devices, moving your home PC into a public space in your home, and limiting or eliminating private communication with certain people. The goal is to never put ourselves in a situation where our integrity can be compromised. Sex is a gift to be enjoyed, but only when we enjoy it as God has prescribed (Heb. 13:4).

Finally, we must run away from useless arguments. Paul often encouraged Timothy to avoid engaging in pointless debates (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3-11; 2 Tim. 2:16, 23). He sums up this attitude in his letter to Titus when he writes, "But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless" (Tit. 3:9). Apparently, there were people who got caught up in arguing about the minutiae of the law to the point where their discussions were doing more harm than good. While we should be diligent to correctly interpret God's word (2 Tim. 2:15), many people are far too willing to cause divisions based on inconsequential differences in understanding and personality. Rather than engaging in disputes that would cause division, Christians should flee from such empty debates.

Walking with Christ is a wonderful thing, but we must not be ignorant of the dangers that are on the way. God has shown us the obstacles to be wary of. We must therefore remain diligent and develop the strength to flee from danger as God has commanded.

CW

VICTORY

Parker Webster

Each and every day, we are faced with battles, trials and temptations. Some wars we engage in are against ourselves, others, or even circumstances around us. Many times, we can feel like we are losing our battles. Whether they be emotional, spiritual, or even moral battles we face, we can often feel vulnerable and desperate. The good news is that we have someone on our side who helps us in every battle that we face. We have someone who is "able to deliver" (Dan 3:17-18) and someone who "helps in time of need" (Ps. 34:15)

I constantly take challenges and comforts from book of Revelation. It is a book of signs and symbols, but it is also a book about victory. For the one who seems to be experiencing life failures and spiritual roadblocks, the book of Revelation is a great place to go. This final book of the New Testament chronicles the age-old struggle between good and evil. It is a story of a war with twists and turns, and even casualties. Yet, there is an overwhelming consolation that the author affords the reader—God’s people win!

In chapter 17, we are given an image of war, and we find our Lord and His followers victorious! John writes, "These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful" (Rev. 17:14).

Consider that this verse teaches us a problem—"These will wage war..." We will have difficulties and adversaries in this life. Paul would write of the war schemes the devil uses against us each day (Eph. 6); we must be prepared for this reality. We have to realize that these problems are not as easily avoided as we would like. Sometimes we will struggle to stand up for what is right when we are at work, school, or even at home. It can be so difficult when you feel the enemy surrounding and your demise rapidly approaching. If we ignore this reality we will be unprepared for life. The question is not "if" the devil will wage war against us, but "when!" Jesus prepared the Christian for this battle, saying, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). This problem is not faced alone, but by everyone who accepts Jesus as Lord (Matt. 5:10-12).

This verse also teaches us about our provider—"The Lamb... The Lord of Lords and the King of Kings." Jesus is described in three ways here. Notice that Jesus is a Lamb. An average student of the Old Testament would see the significance of this description from Isaiah 53. Our lord would be "...Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth" (Isa. 53:7). This shows us the willingness of our leader to go into battle and sacrifice even His own life. Second, Jesus is the Lord of Lords. This description shows us that He should be our only master. He sees what needs to be done, He provides what is necessary to complete the job, and He cares for His servants. Another description given here is the King of Kings. It shows Jesus's divine authority over all things. It is to show that He is the sovereign ruler over heaven and earth and here is no other like Him! We are not facing war alone—We have Jesus!

In final considerations, notice this verse teaches a promise—"The Lamb will overcome them." In the war that

wages against the Lamb, the Lord of Lords, and the King of Kings, He is victorious. The good news is that we get to share in his victory if we are faithful unto Him. Paul wrote, "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place" (2 Cor. 2:14). We must also recognize that we can be joined to that victory on certain contingencies. John says, "...and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."

Each battle you face in life will only become harder without the greatest power to exist in all the universe. We each need the protection of God, and we need our Savior, Jesus Christ. Holding this company, we can be assured that we will eventually overcome. With Jesus Christ, each war we face is a war we can win!

CW

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longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" are easier to list, and even memorize, than they are to implement consistently. Since "faith without works is dead" a Christian will constantly be working to examine himself for deficiencies and improve in producing the fruit of the Spirit (Jas. 2:26; Gal. 6:4). While a Christian should be convicted by the word of God in the areas he is lacking he would do well to remember that growth takes time and that he serves a patient and merciful God (Ps. 78:38; Rom. 2:4).

Because our salvation is impossible without God's redemptive work we recognize the need to reach out to the lost with the gospel (1 Pet. 1:17-19; Rom. 1:16). A Christian abiding in Christ wants to produce through evangelism to the glory of God (Luke 8:11-15). Sadly, some have "tasted that the Lord is gracious" but do not make any substantive efforts to bring a soul to Jesus (1 Pet. 2:3). God is the one who gives the increase but if your life is not spent planting and watering you will not be fruitful and therefore should not expect to receive a reward (1 Cor. 3:6-9).

Given more time, what fruit will you produce for God? You could choose an unproductive life, which is a choice to be rooted out when Jesus returns. But if you will abide in Christ and His word, repent of your sins, continue working to walk in the Spirit, and sow the seed you will be found fruitful.

CW



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From the Director's desk



Trent Kennedy
Assoc. Director
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The Southwest School of Bible Studies exists under the oversight of the Southwest church of Christ elders with the expressed purpose of educating people "to know Jesus and make Him known." In order to do this, God has blessed us with a wonderful full-time and part-time faculty, comfortable faculties, and a robust student body. More than 20 students have finished their third quarter and will begin their fourth quarter later this month. To put an exclamation point on this quarter, the students took to the streets of South Austin under the leadership of John Garza, one of the local ministers here, to meet neighbors, make contacts, and evangelize. These types of opportunities allow SWSBS students to participate in very practical, hands-on experiences. And, since the school is a part of the local congregation, it allows the students to work within the larger evangelism efforts of the local church.

We are excited to have John Baker, preacher of the Katy church of Christ, teaching a week-long seminar on the minister's spiritual life. We desire to give students an in-depth study of every verse of the English Bible, and we want them to have the practical teaching to see how the Scriptures apply to them (and to all of us!) in a very direct way.

This is the time of year when students are applying for next school year. With their application and acceptance comes preparations to raise support, move to Austin, and begin their studies. Are you interested in committing two years of your life to studying the Word of God? Do you know someone who is interested in knowing Jesus better and making him known throughout the world? SWSBS can certainly help you become a minister or a missionary. But, SWSBS can also help you grow to be a better elder or deacon or Bible class teacher or church worker. We are looking for faithful Christians to come be a part of our 2025 class which will begin their studies this August.

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