

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.
The Tree of Life from the week ending 07/24/05
What it means to be initiated into the secret of the mystery. Part 20.
The fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness

Gal 5:22-23, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

We have seen the first two parts of the fruit: *Love*, a reference to impersonal unconditional love. Next is *joy*, a reference to inner happiness. The third part of the fruit is the Greek noun *eirene*, translated peace, tranquility, health, and prosperity. This word connotes two types of prosperity: inner peace with God and overt prosperity and blessing. This is the type of peace that our Lord promised His disciples in Joh 14:27, *"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."* This type of peace or inner tranquility delivers a person from anxiety, fears and worries. Joh 16:33, *"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."* If you have the fruit of the Spirit you will be at peace with others, Rom 12:18, *If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.* Peace refers to the tranquil state of the soul being assured of salvation, and being content, Rom 8:6, *For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.* This word *Eirene* also refers to materialistic prosperity (Luk 19:42, Heb 7:2), and spiritual prosperity which means having maximum awareness of life. This means that you have a zest for life and treasure every moment of it, whether in adversity or prosperity, Pro 8:18, *Riches and honor are with Me [doctrine], enduring wealth and virtue [righteousness].* Psa 23:5-6, *You have prepared for me a table in the presence of my enemies. You have anointed my head with oil. My cup [of blessing] is overflowing. Only prosperity and grace pursue me all the days of my life [escrow blessings for time], and I will remain in the house of the Lord forever [escrow blessings for eternity].*

The word *eirene* or peace also refers to a state of tranquility of soul, something very few individuals enjoy (Phi 4:6-7). The peace of God will give you mental stability, a key issue in the spiritual life. Having mental stability is the ability to think doctrine and have divine viewpoint under pressure. It is the ability to accurately apply metabolized doctrine in time of testing, and it is insulation against Christian psychosis, neurosis, and psychopathic tendencies.

Biblical peace or prosperity is based upon receiving the power and the strength that God has provided. This eliminates the struggle that results from believers trying to please God with their human power, Psa 29:11, *The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace.* True inner peace, which results in overt prosperity, comes from one's P.M.A. of Bible doctrine, Psa 85:10, *Lovingkindness [grace] and truth [doctrine] have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* This peace comes from understanding that you are perfectly righteous in the eyes of God (Pro 3:1-3, Pro 3:13-18). We are told that there is a path to this peace in Rom 3:17, *And the path of peace have they not known.* This inner peace and overt prosperity cannot be realized apart from understanding the new spiritual species and how to live as a new creature in Christ (Gal 6:15-16). This peace has its origin in the *knowledge* of God and the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Isa 9:6, our Lord is called the Prince of Peace or the Prince of inner peace and overt prosperity, and in Rom 15:33, God is called the God of peace.

We are also told not to be overly concerned with Satan and the kingdom of darkness, Rom 16:20, *The God of peace [inner peace and overt prosperity] will soon crush Satan under your feet.* 2Co 13:11 says, *Finally brethren, rejoice [be filled with joy or the happiness of God], be made complete [reach spiritual maturity], be comforted [through the Comforter, God the Holy Spirit], be like-minded [thinking divine viewpoint], live in peace [inner peace and overt prosperity]; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*

Our peace and prosperity with God is contingent upon the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom 5:1, *Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (also see Eph 2:14-19)*. When this principle is understood, the capacity for blessing and prosperity is given to every believer. This is why we have such passages as Rom 2:10, *but glory and honor and peace [inner peace and overt prosperity] to every man who does good [produces divine good], to the Jew first and also to the Greek*. Inner peace is a result of the ministry of God the Holy Spirit controlling the soul of the believer and producing His Fruit (Gal 5:22, Rom 15:13). It is based upon a system of thinking, Col 3:15, *And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts*. God's peace is given in different measures to different believers depending upon their intake of doctrine, (1Pe 1:2, Rom 14:17). The Apostle Paul told Timothy that *eirene* must be pursued, 2Ti 2:22, *Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love {and} peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart*. Paul makes this final statement to us concerning the peace of God, Phi 4:9, *The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace [inner peace and overt prosperity] shall be with you*.

The fourth part of the fruit of the Spirit is the Greek noun *makrothumia* meaning patience and longsuffering. The patience and longsuffering of God is related to His lovingkindness and truth (Psa 86:15). It is because the Lord is filled with lovingkindness and truth that He can be so patient with each and every one of us. Patience and longsuffering is related to the compassion of the Lord (Psa 103:8), and believers who have it will also be very compassionate. It is related to the power or omnipotence of God, Nah 1:3, *The Lord is slow to anger [patient and longsuffering] and great in power*. It is related to the principle of repentance, Rom 2:4, *Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?* A believer who has the patience and longsuffering of God will be very sensitive and compassionate to those who are guilty and need to repent. The patience and longsuffering of God is related to the Lord's tolerance and endurance with us, 1Ti 1:16, *And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life*. This passage is a picture of our Lord's perfect patience toward the wicked sinner.

Patience is a very important virtue for all of us. It is developed and produced by God the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, Col 1:11-12, *Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart [right lobe] of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience*; Patience and longsuffering is thinking, not emotion. A patient person will be slow to anger, Pro 14:29, *He who is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who is quick-tempered exalts folly*. Patience with others will also help us resolve and reconcile differences, Pro 15:18, *A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger pacifies contention*. Patience is a virtue which gives the believer fantastic strength under pressure (Pro 16:32). Patience allows us to be discrete and overlook the sins of others, Pro 19:11, *A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression*. Patience allows us to rest in the Lord and let Him handle any unfair or unjust treatment, Psa 37:7, *Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who carries out wicked schemes*. Patience gives us the strength and power to handle undeserved suffering and maltreatment and bring glory to the Lord (1Pe 2:19-23).

Pastors are told that they must have extreme patience with members of their congregation, 2Ti 4:2, *Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction*. Patience is needed by the Pastor because doctrine can be taught accurately for years, and people will still reject it. This can be a source of discouragement to any man who is in the ministry. Patience is needed concerning the promises of God, Heb 6:12, *That you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises*. Heb 6:15, *And thus, having patiently waited, he [Abraham] obtained the promise*. Patience is also needed after you have done all that you are suppose to do, and things in your life have still not changed, Heb 10:36, *For you have need of patience, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised*. Patience also allows us to put up with each other as we continue to grow in the grace and

knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Eph 4:2, *with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love*. Each part of the fruit of the Spirit is contrary to the Old Sin Nature (O.S.N.). The cure is not stopping the manifestations of the O.S.N. but a substitution of the Spirit's fruit which God imparts. There is no growth of human patience but rather the patience of God coming forward. The long-suffering patience of God knows no bounds.

The fifth part of the fruit of the Spirit is Greek noun *chrestotes*, which means kindness, graciousness, generosity, and sensitivity to others. It refers to operating in grace orientation which is the believer's recognition of all that God has freely given. It is the basis of gratitude to God who has given His Unique Son for us, and now freely gives us all things, Rom 8:32, *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?* The gracious believer who operates in grace orientation realizes Jam 1:17, *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow*. The grace oriented believer also expresses gratitude to the Father, Col 1:12, *Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light*. The grace oriented believer then is very gracious toward others, and they appreciate that there is no condemnation in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:1; 1Jo 3:20-21). Therefore grace-oriented believers do not condemn, judge, criticize or malign others; they are quick to listen, to edify, but slow to anger. This is because *chrestotes* or *graciousness* develops the characteristic of tolerance and a live-and-let-live attitude (Rom 14). Grace-oriented believers recognize that sins were not imputed to the believer, but the righteousness of both God the Father and Christ *were* imputed to the believer. Therefore being gracious and operating in grace orientation, this type of believer does not assign sins to others. Toward the unsaved, grace oriented believers have the ministry of reconciliation (2Co 5:18-21). To those believers who have failed, grace oriented believers have a ministry of restoration as taught in Gal 6:1-5.

The model passage which exemplifies our Lord's graciousness and grace orientation is the case of the woman caught in adultery. Joh 8:3-11, *And the scribes and the Pharisees brought or arrested a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the midst, [the scribes and the Pharisees arrested this woman and seized her violently and forced her to stand before the crowd] they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?" And they were saying this, testing Him, in order that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground. [they actually kept on repeating this and they persisted in testing Him because they wanted a basis for accusing Him] But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her. And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And when they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones or the leaders, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst. And straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" And she said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more [in this area]."*

The scribes and the Pharisees were officers of the Jewish Supreme court called the Sanhedrin who were both lawyers and the religious leaders of the land. They epitomize religious self-righteousness and those under the influence of arrogance, comparable to the Christian activists of today. This woman is indicative of all the believers in the world who are victims of being judged and condemned by the self-righteous. The scribes and Pharisees symbolize those who judge and make accusations against others, and therefore they follow Satan, Rev 12:10 *"for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night."* In Joh 8:4, *they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act."* The Hebrew word *Rabbi* means *teacher*. They say this in sarcasm and rejection of Christ. Ironically, they are quoting to the humanity of Christ what the deity of Christ had dictated to Moses when He gave them the Law. Note the four categories of punishment that the Law demanded: Deu 22:22-27 *If a man is found lying or having sex with a married woman, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel. If there is a girl who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city and has sex with her, then you shall bring them both out to*

the gate of that city and you shall stone them to death; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because he has violated his neighbor's wife. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you. But if in the field the man finds the girl who is engaged, and the man forces her to have sex and lies with her, then only the man who lies with her shall die. Notice that the man is always emphasized; however, in Joh 8, the officers did not bring the guilty man before our Lord. The man is just as guilty, if not more so, as the initiator. These judges of the Sanhedrin have violated the Law by indicting the woman and not the man, and are guilty of the sins of arrogance, which are far worse than anything the woman has done.

Here is a group of religious leaders bringing a woman who has been caught in sin, to have her charged and condemned by the Lord. Verse 6 tells us the motivation of these men, *And they were saying this, testing him, in order that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground.* We don't know what He wrote; perhaps He was writing sins on the ground and then looking at the very ones who were committing those sins. What our Lord wrote is not important; He just seemed to ignore them. TLJC could not condemn the woman without condoning the evils of religious activism. They want the Lord to say she is guilty, so they can bring a blasphemy charge against Him and stone both of them at the same time. In verse 7, as they continued asking, notice what the Lord said, *But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up and He said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."*

This illustration depicts two types of believers standing before TLJC. We have a sinner who knows she is sinful, knows she has failed, and is guilty. She stands before the Lord openly and honestly. Then there is the other group of individuals who consider themselves to be righteous and beyond reproach. They suppressed their guilt and covered it up with overt righteousness and morality. These scribes and Pharisees can appear righteous before men; however in the eyes of TLJC they are the guilty party. Our Lord did something very interesting to them that really illustrated His grace orientation. With his infinite wisdom He was about to awaken the guilt in them as He blotted out the guilt of the woman. Both parties are guilty before God, but the one who recognized her guilt had her guilt blotted out by TLJC. The ones who tried to cover up their guilt had their guilt revealed when they met the Master. Here is a woman who was just caught in the very act of adultery, and the Lord doesn't even mention the sin to her. He was being gracious and operating in grace orientation as in 1Pe 4:8, *Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.* To the contrary, the scribes and Pharisees were trying to cause strife as is described in Pro 10:12, *Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all transgressions.* Believers who are gracious and operating in grace orientation live by such principles as Pro 17:9 *He who covers a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends.*

In verse 7 our Lord made a statement that caused the guilt in each one of them to surface, *"he who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."* Our Lord always isolated Himself from religious activism; He had no intention of condoning their evil and joining their activism against the woman. When our Lord wrote on the ground, it was simply an act of divorcing or isolating Himself from them. The Lord could not condemn the woman without condoning the greater evil and sinfulness of religious activism. He does not condone her sin of adultery nor their greater sins of legalism or activism. Grace and activism are mutually exclusive. Our Lord spoke to present the higher issue related to the spiritual life and its objective, which is to avoid activism, civil disobedience, and crusading. Fulfilling the PPOG for the Church is far greater than any system of whitewashing the devil's world. Religious activism is always manifested by the use of the arrogance skills (self-justification, self-deception, self-absorption) to justify its cause. The religious activists sought to destroy our Lord's ministry. The mandate of the Word of God during the Church-age is to use the spiritual skills to execute the PPOG and not to enter into Christian activism (2Pe 3:18).

Notice she called Him Lord, Joh 8:10-11, *And straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" And she said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more [in this category]."* She was a believer and recognized Jesus as her God and Savior, but the arrogant officers of the court only called him *teacher*. For the positive believer, God's grace policy is a greater deterrent than the condemnation of legalism.

People respond to grace, but react to legalism. The grace policy of our Lord provides a far greater self-motivation to resist temptation than the fear and guilt function of the emotional complex of sins. The Lord loves to take an individual who has been plagued by guilt all his life and make that individual one of the greatest disciples of all time. This means that personal guilt can be turned into incredible blessings. This divine conviction brings us to the understanding of our need for Christ to work in our lives as opposed to our own works and coverings. There is not a thing we could ever do that would deliver us from the wretchedness of our old sin nature. Therefore, the issue is no longer sin; the issue is our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. One by one the accusers went out conscience stricken until TLJC is alone with the woman. It is her time to be alone with the Lord. *Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?"* She stood there and waited for the verdict. The scribes and Pharisees would not accept their own guilt so they pointed the finger toward her. It's interesting that the accusers went away feeling guilty, and the woman, who was guilty, went away being forgiven. The woman didn't earn or deserve to have her guilt removed, but it was. God blesses us not because we deserve it but because He desires to. Individuals who live in their own self righteousness, who rejoice in the iniquity of others, and who compare themselves with others always end up condemned in the end. Once you begin to judge others and blame others for your present condition you will end up with even more guilt than you started with.

As a believer, the best thing to do is admit your own helplessness, and confess it to the Lord, and Lord will in turn say, "**Where are your accusers?**"