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# The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of  
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

and a warning against the deception in the last days  
foretold by Christ

**"Take heed that ye be not deceived"**

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THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW

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A BIBLE CLASS-  
REJOICE IN THE LARD ALWAYS

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

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## THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW

From the fifth chapter of the Book of John, we read of a man infirm for thirty-eight years, who lay by a pool in the sheep market in Jerusalem hoping for the miracle of healing. This certain pool was surrounded by a great throng of the ill and lame, who believed that:

“... an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water; whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.”  
John 5:4

This particular lame man had no one to help him into the “troubled waters”, so others always reached it before him. Jesus seeing him laying there helpless, knew that he had waited a long time, and asked him: “Wilt thou be made whole?”. With the power of the Spirit invested within Him, He cured this lame man with just a word, saying:

“...Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.  
And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.  
The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.  
He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.”  
John 5:6,8-11

The elders who witnessed this man walking, after seeing him infirm for thirty-eight years should have asked - by what power did this wonderful miracle occur? Instead they sought to punish his healer because this miracle was done on the Sabbath day - to them, an infraction of Moses' law.

Those steeped in the letter of the law, forbade any work to be done on the Sabbath day - even if it was an act of kindness or mercy that necessitated effort or work. Therefore, upon learning that the Lord Jesus healed on the Sabbath, they sought to kill Him. They were hypocrites in forbidding one from helping another on the Sabbath, yet sought to break the law which plainly taught, “Thou shalt not kill” (Exodus 20:13).

These scribes, elders and Pharisees - scholars of the law, must have wondered where Jesus obtained His knowledge of God's word, for He was not among them as a daily attendant at the temple. His knowledge and subsequent spiritual wisdom came from His parents, who would have schooled Him from a young boy, not only to see the spirit of love contained in the law, but of His vocation and duty as the Son of God. He was raised to know He was different from other boys and while as a young child would have responsibilities at home in helping Mary and Joseph, His greater

work was to learn the spirit and love within God's word, so that He might teach Israel to turn back to God. As their promised Messiah, He explained the charge given Him of His Father:

"I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." John 5:30

The Lord Jesus kept the "spirit" of the law by doing good and healing those suffering pain and infirmity under the bondage of their flesh, even on the Sabbath day. He was condemned by the elders for breaking the Sabbath by healing, yet they broke the letter of the law whenever they circumcised a child on the eighth day after its birth, if the eighth day fell on the Sabbath. Technically they broke the law in carrying out this commandment as set forth under the law of Moses.

"And be that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh as an everlasting covenant." Genesis 17:12-13

They did not use righteous judgment to discern the spirit of love contained within the law as did the Lord Jesus, who tried to teach them the difference between the letter and the spirit:

"Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?  
The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?  
Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.  
Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.  
If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?  
Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."  
John 7:19-24

These same teachings were in the law of Moses and the prophets, yet Israel shut their ears and closed their eyes to their message of love, preferring instead to follow the letter of the law and the traditions their elders had created - man-made rules and regulations which gave only the appearance of righteousness.

The prophet Zechariah was sent of God to preach the same message of walking in love and righteous judgment to Israel during his day:

These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates.

And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD.”  
Zechariah 8:16-17

God looked for the application of righteous judgment within the lives of those who knew His word as taught from the beginning - all comprised in the royal law of loving God and one's fellow man:

“And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother. And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.”  
Zechariah 7:8-10

This is what God looked for in His people, yet those of Israel at this time and the elders at the time of the Lord Jesus, did just the opposite, while embracing their own self-righteous traditions, which made them appear godly before the people and in their own eyes:

“But they refused to hearken and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear  
Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.”  
Zechariah 7:11-12

The spirit of that law as given by God through prophets like Zechariah, was the same as taught by the Lord Jesus. They were far from the spirit of love that the law was to teach them - looking instead upon the precepts set forth as rules and regulations to be upheld in the strictest sense - without love or mercy as was intended. When Jesus was asked what was the greatest commandment in the law (in an effort to entrap Him), He unwaveringly replied:

“...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.  
This is the first and great commandment.  
And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.  
On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”  
Matthew 22:37-40

Here is contained the “spirit” of the law which the Lord Jesus came to teach and witness to. He laid down His life as a sacrifice of love to His Father and His brethren - His love was the fulfillment of the law.

We too are given a work to witness of His love in our living - to not just our brethren and sisters but to all men as did He. By endeavoring in faith and obedience to do so, we can show our gratitude for the privilege of knowing His word and the hope of salvation offered through belief in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

M.C.S.

### THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The Lord Jesus often spoke in parables so that those who would not seek God could not understand the true spiritual meaning of the words. The parables were often concerning topics that every man had experience with but it was only those who sincerely sought God and had the Spirit working within them that could understand the spiritual significance of the words. Often times even the faithful, such as the disciples, needed to be guided by Jesus’ explanation to grasp the full meaning.

On this occasion Jesus spoke about a shepherd and his relationship with his sheep:

“VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.” John 10:1-5

Jesus emphasizes that only the shepherd will come in through the door of the sheepfold and the sheep will recognize the voice of their shepherd. When the shepherd calls the sheep by name he will guide them out, and he goes before them to show them the way. Jesus then has to explain the parable because it was not understood:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. John 10:7-11

Jesus explains that He is not only the door to the sheepfold but is also the shepherd. By Him His sheep may enter into the Hope that He makes possible. By Him His sheep may be saved. Jesus is the good shepherd because He gave his life for His sheep: those who follow Him and know His voice. His sheep are those who hear His words and follow His example as He leads them down the path of salvation. Jesus advises us to beware of the hireling, who seeks to lead the sheep:

“But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. John 10:12-14

A hireling is anyone who is supposed to guide the sheep in the absence of the good shepherd, but allows them to be scattered as trouble approaches. The hireling is not there because he loves the sheep but is there for his own gain. Jesus loves His sheep and gave His life to save His sheep and God loves Him for His sacrifice:

“As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again.

No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it up again.

This commandment have I received of my Father.

John 10:15-18

As a result of Jesus' sacrifice for His flock, some of which have not been brought into the fold yet, God essentially gave Jesus the power to take up His own life again. By giving the ultimate sacrifice, God gave Jesus the power to take His life back from death. By giving His own life Jesus received His own life back, eternally. If He sought to save His own life He would likely have lost it.

By the example of Jesus we see how a shepherd is to lead his flock but throughout the Bible, we see many examples of shepherds who turned out to be hirelings. Paul warns those in Ephesus of those very circumstances:

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.  
For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.  
Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Acts 20:28-30

Paul also speaks to his brethren of Ephesus about the work of the shepherds as they try to bring the flock to the fullness of the promises as is made possible by the Good Shepherd:

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;  
For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:  
Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:  
That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;  
But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-15

In the prophecy of Jeremiah we are reminded that a shepherd can lead astray the sheep:

“My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds hath caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place.  
All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.” Jeremiah 50:6-7

The sheep, too, have a responsibility to be diligent to seek the spirit of the shepherds so that they are not led away by a voice they think is a shepherd but is actually a hireling, who will abandon them. We test those spirits by continually seeking God and asking for his guidance. A sheep who is receptive to the guidance of God will not be allowed to be led

astray from the Hope that the Good Shepherd has made possible, as seen by Jesus' words:

“I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.” John 10:25-29

Those words of the Lord Jesus should comfort us with the knowledge that those who are called by God, respond to the call, and follow the Good Shepherd, cannot be removed out of that saving grasp. This places responsibility on us, the sheep, to continually listen for the voice of Jesus as He leads us to that mountain of God, the final resting place of His sheep.

EJM

## THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA

We have recently read in the record of John, of the Lord Jesus' encounter with a woman of Samaria, whom He met at Jacob's well:

“Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

(For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.” John 4:5-9

Who were the Samaritans that the Jews would have no dealings with them? We find from the scriptural evidence that they were comprised of a variety of different nations who occupied the northern portion of the Kingdom of Israel, vacated by the ten tribes when they were taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 720 BC. The ten tribes of Israel were split after the death of Solomon and given to Jeroboam while the remaining

two tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained with Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, with their capital being in Jerusalem.

Because of their idolatry, the Lord sent the king of Assyria against the ten tribes of Israel to take them into captivity. While the Israelites were taken away to Assyria, the king of Assyria repopulated their land with men from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath and Sepharvaim (II Kings 17:24). The Lord then sent lions among these heathen peoples because they, “feared not the LORD” (verse 25). The King of Assyria commanded that a priest be brought back to the land from those exiled to Assyria, to teach them of God’s ways. Even so along with this knowledge, the people still worshipped their own foreign gods, so was there a mix of Judaism and pagan beliefs among the Samaritans. Because the Samaritans were a mix of both Jewish and foreign peoples and their religious beliefs reflected the same, there were bitter feelings from the Jews dwelling in the rest of Israel against them - they despised the Samaritans and often would not enter their lands when travelling, unless absolutely necessary.

We can see a glimpse of this animosity by the Jews towards the Samaritans from Jesus’ disciples as recorded in Luke:

“And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.” Luke 9:51-56

The Lord Jesus’ rebuked their reactions, born from their long held animosity against the Samaritans, reminding them that He had come to save all that were lost, not just His fellow Jews. Therefore, unlike other Jews, He travelled through the Samaritan’s land,, attempting to heal the breach between all peoples.

We remember the scrutiny of a certain lawyer who questioned the Lord Jesus:

“And behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readeest thou?  
And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all  
thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with  
all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and  
thou shalt live.

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my  
neighbour? Luke 10:25-29

How trivial and narrow minded it was to pick apart the meaning of  
that one word, “neighbor”, in order to do the absolute minimum good  
towards another. In answer, the Lord Jesus went on to teach via parable,  
the meaning of true love to one’s neighbor - a teaching which has gone on  
to be called in our time, “the parable of the Good Samaritan

“...A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho (obviously  
a Jew), and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment,  
and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by  
chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he  
saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise a Levite, when he was the place, came and looked  
on him, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was:  
and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.

And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and  
wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn,  
and took care of him.

And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence,  
and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him;  
and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will  
repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him  
that fell among the thieves?

And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto  
him, Go, and do thou likewise.” Luke 10:30-37

Jesus used as examples in this parable, those most respected by the  
Jewish people - a priest and a Levite who chanced upon this wounded  
man. They were not unaware of him, hurt and lying for dead in the roadway,  
for they stopped and looked - but went on their way without helping. It  
was only the Samaritan man -one despised by the Jews, who showed not  
only mercy and compassion to tend his wounds, but spent of his own money,  
taking the wounded traveler to an inn and paid for his further care. He was  
the good neighbor - not the priest or the Levite, both well versed in God’s  
law and who should have known how to respond in love to another.

The Lord Jesus desired to change this hateful narrow thinking and replace it with a spirit of love, mercy and compassion as taught by the spirit of God's word.

With this background we can understand why the Samaritan woman was surprised that a Jew would ask a drink of water from her. The disciples when they came upon Jesus speaking with this woman, were of the typical aversion to speaking with Samaritans for it is said:

“And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?”  
John 4:27

The Lord Jesus, by His example was endeavoring to teach how they must cast off their prejudices in order to spread the gospel message to all men - the good news of the kingdom of God through the name of Jesus Christ.

Jesus told this woman drawing water at the well:

“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life  
The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”  
John 4:14,19-20

This was another difference between the Samaritans and Jews - not only that the Samaritans mixed their knowledge of the God of Israel with their pagan gods, but they also worshipped in Mount Gerizim while the Jews worshipped God at His temple in Jerusalem. However, Jesus in imparting the spirit of the truth went on to explain:

“...Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.  
Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.  
But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”  
John 4:21-24

Not only were the Samaritans lacking in the knowledge of God's word, but also the Jews who although they kept the law, they were far

from displaying the spirit of love which it contained in their living - they were as far away from God as the Samaritans.

Yet here was the promised Savior speaking face to face to one not of Israel and offering to her His Father's word - the water of life:

“The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ:  
when he is come, he will tell us all things.  
Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.”John 4:25-26

What a marvelous revelation He offered in revealing Himself as the Messiah. So many times through His ministry we find he hid this knowledge from those who questioned whether, he was the Christ.

“the woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men.  
Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.”  
John 4:28-30

His words stirred her, as well as revealing who He really was - the Messiah! In her excitement she left her water pot at the well and ran into the city to spread the wonderful news of her encounter with the Christ. Her experience and obvious sensitivity to His words made an impression upon others in her city for we are told:

“And many of the Samaritan of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.  
So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.  
And many more believed because of his own word;  
And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.” John 4:39-42

This was a valuable example to His disciples of what their work must be - to preach the gospel among all people, and not to be selective according to their own thinking or prejudices but to open God's word to all.

Only through belief in the Lord Jesus can we too drink of that living water of the spirit, if we endeavor to walk in faith after His example.

M.C.S.

**A BIBLE CLASS**

**“Rejoice in the Lord alway”  
Philippians 4:4**

These are Paul’s words written to his brethren in Philippi while he was imprisoned in Rome:

“All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar’s household.”  
Verse 22.

He had been cast into prison for teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, but even in the midst of his own personal suffering, he reached out to help his brethren.

This word “rejoice” in our verse under consideration, means to be glad or to be grateful, a feeling often felt as some need is filled or promised. The Lord Jesus spoke of how His people’s needs would be filled when he returns:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their’s is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.”  
Matthew 5:3-6,11.

We do not consider being poor, mourning, hungry or persecuted reasons to feel blessed or happy as the word means. The spiritual mind learns to recognize such circumstances as necessary steps toward finding the blessing which is to come and therefore a cause for rejoicing as Jesus exhorted:

“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”  
Matthew 5:12.

When the Apostles were beaten for preaching of the Lord Jesus and told by the elders to stop they:

“...departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”  
Acts 5:41-41.

No doubt the cause for their rejoicing was the memory of Jesus' earlier words that suffering persecution for His name would result in ultimate great blessing.

As the Lord Jesus exhorted His disciples to rejoice, so did Paul to his Philippian brethren. They were to rejoice not in fleshly accomplishments, but in spiritual matters, looking beyond present afflictions to the bigger picture, the end result promised if they remained faithful. Paul, like the other Apostles, did suffer shame for the name of Christ, and was at that moment in prison because he had refused to stop his gospel ministry. It takes a special mind to rejoice in troubled times, a loving and accepting mind that can see beyond temporary affliction to the hope that one's name may be found written in the Book of Life when the Lord Jesus returns, ensuring all tears and sorrows to be forgotten.

In exhorting his brethren to rejoice always. Paul goes on to speak of the need to conform to the example of the Lord Jesus moving in His determination, thus joined in His one fellowship:

“Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:”

Philippians 2:2-5.

If we allow ourselves to become cast down and depressed, we will be unable to perceive and show that gladness that can only come as the carnal mind is humbled. Paul loved his brethren and called them “my joy and crown”. In love he labored to strengthen them for the trials he knew would come.

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.’ Verse 7.

Only where there is a rejoicing together looking to the end of God's purpose, can there be peace—an individual peace of mind, a peace felt between brethren and sisters who are of one mind in fellowship with each other and with God and His Son. The close bond between Paul and his Philippian brethren is illustrated in his letter to them;

“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy  
For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;  
Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a

good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.”  
Philippians 1:3-7.

This word “partaker” is comprised of two words, with and fellowship, and emphasizes the unity between Paul and his brethren—those joined together in the same hope. This grace of God is also mentioned by Paul in writing to his Ephesian brethren.

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:”  
Ephesians 2:4-6.

It is the gift of God that, “by grace ye are saved”. This grace is not something that can be earned, but is only granted because of His mercy toward those who strive to serve Him. Today, few people are privileged to know that grace because they know not Christ as a man and victor over His sin nature, but instead look upon Him as a god, incapable of sin and so denying His suffering and great sacrifice. John reminds us of God’s mercy in the Lord Jesus, the vessel of His grace:

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”  
“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”  
John 1:14,17.

When the seventy apostles returned from preaching the Word of God, they were full of rejoicing at the response to their preaching:

“...Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, ... Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.”  
Luke 10:17-20.

Trials and temptations are not easy to endure, but we can joy in measure now If we can recognize God’s hand at work to help us look to the end rejoicing promised to the faithful when we pray that our names may be eternally written in heaven. Let us therefore be glad Brethren and Sisters and “Rejoice in the Lord always”.

## FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

We read in Luke of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. To think upon the circumstances of that crucifixion, the ultimate trial for any man, serves to help us remember that time and to value the Lord Jesus' sacrifice.

We see in Jesus' last hours His determined effort to perfectly display the fruit of the Spirit which was required by God. Perhaps we can be helped as we examine Jesus upon that cross and see that spiritual fruit He valued and so provide a lesson for us today. Likewise to regard His example during this ordeal, can serve to help us in the far less painful tests we face in our everyday living.

When we turn to Galatians 5:22 we have defined there the fruit of the Spirit:

“But the fruit of the Spirit Is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: ...”

It is interesting to note that not one or two, but all of these attributes are the fruit of the Spirit, or qualities that God looks for in those who would hope to be His. Let us examine them one by one and be taught by the example of the Lord Jesus upon that cross.

### LOVE:

How did Jesus display love at Calvary? We know it was In God's purpose that a Messiah would come who would be bruised in the heel, but would overcome and destroy the serpent nature within Him. How well we can understand the immensity of overcoming one's flesh. It was the love that Jesus had for His Father that helped him secure this victory. It was a love so great that it transcended any pain or trial, even death. In John 15:13 we read of this love in Jesus' words:

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

The Lord Jesus upon that cross displayed that great love spoken of in John by giving His life and His living to His Father. In so doing He laid His life down for all those who would hope In the promise of everlasting life now made possible through His death. As we contemplate the magnitude

of Jesus' love we must strive to reflect that love in our living, which can then enable us to overcome through Christ's sacrifice.

**JOY:**

Going to Hebrews 12:2, we see the value of joy that enabled the Lord Jesus to overcome:

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

“The joy that was set before him”—was the joy of the hope that Jesus perceived was held out to Him. If only He could endure the pain and suffering of the cross, He had the hope of one day sitting at God's right hand. To reveal that joy was difficult. Paul tells us again in Hebrews 12:3:

“For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds”.

How easily we can faint, grow tired of the struggle, but if we can remember these words of Paul in relationship to the Lord Jesus, it will help to minimize the current trial we are enduring, and help us to grow in the joy of the One who suffered so much more.

**PEACE:**

Jesus we know is called the Prince of Peace and how rightly He has earned that title. We remember the great power that He had from God, a power He could have used as He hung upon that cross, to destroy those who reviled Him. We remember the cruel taunts thrown in His face:

“... He saved others; let him save himself, if he be the Christ, the chosen of God.” (Luke 23:35).

“... If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.” (Luke 23:37).

“And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.” (Luke 23:39).

All these jeers were designed to take away peace, create havoc, yet He displayed a perfect peace, proven when He said, “Father, forgive them;

for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34). Looking to the words of Paul in reference to peace in Hebrews 12:14 we find how critically important it is to:

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

Jesus’ whole desire was indeed to “see the Lord” and without that peace there was no hope.

Jesus knew that even if He failed once there was no returning, for His mission as the Messiah would not permit it. Because Jesus obtained the victory we are exhorted by Paul in Philippians 4:6-7.

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

If we can exercise this restraint in not giving overthought for anything but rather seek the peace of God through prayer and thanksgiving as Jesus did, we can have the true peace of God to help us overcome in our living.

### **LONGSUFFERING:**

We have only to think upon the pain and agony of crucifixion to see how longsuffering the Lord Jesus was. To be a child of God requires patience as the Father molds and shapes His children to the pattern He requires. In John 4:34 we see that Jesus recognised the requirement of endurance as He said:

“My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”

Jesus revealed a determination to finish the work, a work which required an enormous amount of patient longsuffering in order to put down His flesh. His determination is an example to us to make a continual struggle to finish the work given to us. In this context Jesus’ words in Luke 21:19, “In your patience possess ye your souls”, take on significant meaning.

**GENTLENESS:**

When we think of gentleness we think of one who displays kindness. When we go to John 19:25-27 we see an example of the gentleness that Jesus displayed even as He hung upon that cross:

“When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.”

Jesus was speaking from the cross, no doubt in great pain and suffering, yet in all this He thought of His mother, her sorrow and the needs that would lie ahead for her with Him gone. What perfect gentleness and care to think of others rather than ourselves, especially as Jesus did in a time of great distress. This display of kindness obviously effected John, who was called “the beloved disciple”, for we know he did take her into his own home to care for her. How powerfully Jesus’ example speaks to us of the care and concern we must have for each other. As we think of others it can help us to put down our self pity and display true gentleness.

**GOODNESS:**

The overall aspect of goodness we know is the opposite of evil and speaks of the separation between light and darkness. This brings to mind the words of Paul in Ephesians 5:6-9.

“Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord:

walk as children of light:

(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)”

To fully separate good and evil is not to partake of any wrongdoing. Jesus we know through His probation revealed this perfectly. He clearly showed to those who could perceive, the goodness within the word of God, particularly as He hung upon that cross to fulfill all righteousness. Through the death of His flesh nature, Jesus showed perfectly the overcoming of evil with good and left us a most unmistakeable example.

**FAITH:**

In the 23rd chapter of Luke the 48th verse, we see Jesus' faith as He cried:

“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the spirit.”

He had faith right to the end. He valued the word of God and believed that in overcoming there would be a resurrection from the dead. In this hope Jesus gave His life into God's hand in perfect faith. In Psalms 31:4-5 David speaks in the spirit of Christ in similar words saying:

“Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength.  
Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou has redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.”

David said “thou has redeemed me”, there was no doubt in his mind, nor was there in Jesus'. We too must show the same faith and belief as we struggle to overcome.

**MEEKNESS:**

In Matthew 11:29 we read Jesus' words exhorting us to:

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

Jesus in speaking these words was teaching us what our spirits must be like—meek and lowly, as His was. How perfectly His meek spirit shone forth from the cross as He gave no leeway to His flesh but rather put it down at all cost. We must recognise that meekness is not weakness but on the contrary a display of inner strength and conviction. How powerful is the quality of meekness that it can control the flesh!

**TEMPERANCE:**

The word temperance means self-restraint, and Jesus clearly showed the ability to control His flesh during his lifetime and especially in His last hours from the cross. In I Peter 2:21-25 we read:

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:  
Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered,  
he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth  
righteously:  
Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that  
we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose  
stripes ye were healed.

Revealed in these words is the example left us of the Lord. Jesus, that when He could have avoided suffering by using His great power, He instead controlled Himself and submitted to God. As we recognise our ability to be helped through Christ's temperance, must we not respond in self-restraint to truly follow in His steps?

Can we be helped as we look to the fruits of the Spirit as outlined in Galatians and see them exemplified so perfectly by the Lord Jesus from the cross? We can if we keep them in mind and struggle to apply these specific aspects of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance in our living. How? The following words of Paul help:

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest; that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”  
(Hebrews 4:14-16).

Our profession is the revealing of the fruit of the Spirit that Jesus displayed for our help. Let us take them to heart and reveal a true confidence to approach unto God and His throne.

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