

LSR2, Session 8

Character

- Godly character is essential to handling godly authority and doing the works God's prepared for us to do.
- Gal 5:22-23, "22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control."
 - "fruit" (Gk, *karpos*): (1) fruit, produce from crop bearing plants and trees; (2) harvest, crop; (3) deed, activity, product of effort
- "love" (Gk, *agape*): (1) good will in thought & action; (2) preference for the benefit or welfare of someone else, even to the point of self-sacrifice
 - Gk, *agapeo* is the verb form
 - 1 Th 3:12 "May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you."
 - What does this say your agape can do?
 - degrees of agape
 - Jn 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."
 - Mt 5:46 "If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?"
 - Mt 22:37-39 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself."
 - 1 Co 16:14 "Do everything in love." How is this possible?
- "joy" (Gk, *chara*): gladness, state of rejoicing
 - *chara* is a sense of well-being regardless of circumstances
 - Rom 15:13 "May the God of hope fill you with great joy and peace ..."
 - According to this verse, where does our joy come from?
 - What does that reveal about our reaction to difficulties?
 - Rom 14:17 "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."
 - How essential is joy to God's kingdom?
- "peace" (Gk, *eirene*): (1) peace, harmony, tranquility; (2) freedom from worry
 - *eirene* may be expressed as rest & contentment
 - Rom 14:17 "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."
 - How essential is peace to God's kingdom?
 - Php 4:7 "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

- What does it mean for the peace of God to transcend all understanding?
- “patience” (Gk, *makrothymia*): self-restraint in the face of provocation, patient endurance of an offense
 - a tolerance of the intolerable
 - Col 1:11 “. . . being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience ...”
 - What is the source of patience and how should that affect our response to adversity?
 - Col 3:12 “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with . . . patience.”
 - Why does it say to “clothe” yourself with patience and what does that mean?
- Conclusion
 - As we put on the traits of God’s character, the fruit of the spirit, and allow him to make them traits of our character, we become increasingly like him.

Spiritual Development

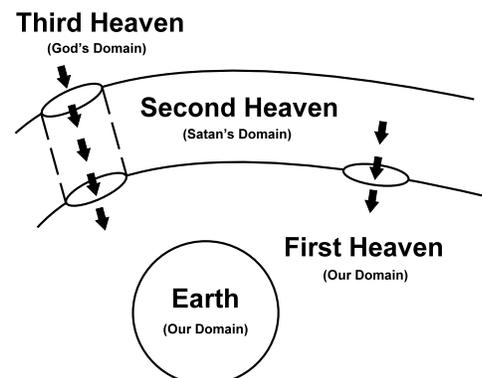
- Occultic & humanist meditation encourage you to make your mind go blank
 - problem: this compromises the defenses God built into you — discernment, judgment
- Biblical meditation involves meditating on the things of God, not shutting down your mind
- Meditate on scripture
 - Mt 13:19 (Parable of the Sower), “When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.”
 - “understand” (Gk, *syniemi*): to bring or set together; *et al*
 - involves considering, pondering, meditating
 - Mt 13:23 (Parable of the Sower), “But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”
 - considering, pondering, meditating what you read in scripture produces great benefit!
 - Meditate on a scripture that seems particularly meaningful or significant
 - recite the passage to yourself
 - use a Bible dictionary to investigate key words
 - read the context, look up related verses
 - ask God to give you insight
 - ponder it throughout the day
 - Reading and meditating on scripture is an intellectual activity

that feeds your spirit, submits your mind to your spirit

- Meditate on what God says to you
 - Ps 119: 147, “I have put my hope in your word.”
 - Ps 119:148, “My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises.”
 - includes prophecies, dreams, revelation, & journal entries — what God says directly to you
- Meditate on God — the Father, Son & Holy Spirit
 - Ps 63:6, “On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night.”
- Meditate on God’s works
 - Ps 77:12, “I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds.”
- Meditate on good things
 - Php 4:8, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.”
 - “think about” (Gk, *logizomai*): (1) reason about, ponder, think about; (2) keep mental record, bear in mind; *et al*
- Meditate on the spiritual realm, on heaven
 - Col 3:1-2, “¹ Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”
- Practical advice
 - at first, you’ll only be able to handle this a few minutes a day
 - develop a contemplative state: (1) physically relax, (2) focus your attention, (3) let things be, set aside problems & distractions, (4) stay connected, and (5) be alert to spontaneous flow (thoughts, images, impressions, sensations, etc)
 - key: use your imagination
- Conclusion
 - As we meditate on what God says to us — in the Bible, dreams, prophecies and dialog with him — his words will come alive in us and produce results beyond our imagination.

Spiritual Experiences

- Spiritual portals connect the heavens
 - a place of greater spiritual activity, such as interaction with God
 - can be large or very small, stationary or dynamic, permanent or temporary
- You & I will have greater access to 3rd heaven, including the things of God’s kingdom
- Also means you & I will have greater influence in 2nd heaven, where Satan’s kingdom exists



- Heb, *shaar*: (1) gate, door, set of doors; (2) floodgate, door that impedes movement of water; (3) entrance area; *et al*
 - Gen 28:17, “He was afraid and said, ‘How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.’”
 - “gate” is *shaar*; this is an opening to heaven, a spiritual portal
 - Ps 118:20, “This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter.”
 - also are references to “the gates of death”: Job 38:17; Ps 9:13; Ps 107:18; Isa 39:10
- Gk, *thura*: (1) door, gate; (2) entrance, portal, passage to something (literally or figuratively); (3) soon, at the door; (4) make possible, open the door
 - Jn 10:9, “I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved.”
 - Rev 4:1-2, “¹ After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.’ ² At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.”
 - “ a door standing open in heaven”: a portal; it allowed John to enter God’s presence in heaven
- Conclusion
 - We will see increased interaction between the physical and spiritual realms, causing major increases in wickedness among earth-dwellers and major increases in righteousness and works of God among true children of God.

Blessing

- The Lord bless you and build you up in the faith and make you mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Eph 4:12-13)

Daily Activities

- Meditate on one of the following fruit of the spirit. Ask Father to show you what it looks like on you and an example of how you’ll use it.

Love: (1) good will in thought & action; (2) preference for the benefit or welfare of someone else, even to the point of self-sacrifice (Jn 15:13)

Joy: gladness, state of rejoicing (Ro 15:13)

Peace: (1) peace, harmony, tranquility; (2) freedom from worry (Ro 8:6)

Patience: self-restraint in the face of provocation, patient endurance of an offense (Col 1:11)