

## Lesson 34 - The Character of Peace

1. What is the third item listed when one has the fruit of the Spirit? **Galatians 5:22**

**EGW:** "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Abundant provision has been made that all who desire to live a godly life may have grace and strength through Jesus, our divine Redeemer. The Christian's life is not to be one of burdens and cares, although the cross must be lifted and the burdens borne; for the servants of God are to draw peace and strength from the Source of their strength, and in so doing they will find life full of happiness and peace. {RH, May 5, 1891 par. 5}

2. What are we to have our feet shod with if we have on the whole armor of God? **Ephesians 6:15, Romans 10:15, Luke 1:79**

**EGW:** "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all,"--having obeyed the instruction given by the Lord,"--"to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace." Let the peace of Christ rule in the heart and express itself in words and works of praise and thanksgiving. Christlike words and deeds are the fruits which the Saviour loves to see in His followers. There is no excuse for dearth in the soul. The peace of Christ, which passeth understanding, is provided for all. {ST, July 11, 1900 par. 11}

3. How serious is the lack of peace as a character attribute? **Hebrews 12:14**

**EGW:** The lesson book, the Bible, contains the instruction of the character they must have, the moral excellence of character which must be cultivated, which God and heaven require. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure. Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." {FE 385.1}

Besetting sins must be battled with, and overcome. Objectionable traits of character, whether

hereditary or cultivated, should be taken up separately, and compared with the great rule of righteousness; and in the light reflected from the word of God, they should be firmly resisted and overcome, through the strength of Christ. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." {RH, August 21, 1888 par. 16}

4. What are we to do with peace? **1 Peter 3:11**

**EGW:** That which brings sickness of body and mind to nearly all is dissatisfied feelings and discontented repinings. They have not God, they have not the hope which reaches to that within the veil, which is as an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. All who possess this hope will purify themselves even as He is pure. Such are free from restless longings, repinings, and discontent; they are not continually looking for evil and brooding over borrowed trouble. But we see many who are having a time of trouble beforehand; anxiety is stamped upon every feature; they seem to find no consolation, but have a continual fearful looking for of some dreadful evil. {1T 566.1}

Such dishonor God, and bring the religion of Christ into disrepute. They have not true love for God, nor for their companions and children. Their affections have become morbid. But vain amusements will never correct the minds of such. They need the transforming influence of the Spirit of God in order to be happy. They need to be benefited by the mediation of Christ, in order to realize consolation, divine and substantial. "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Those who have an experimental knowledge of this scripture are truly happy. They consider the approbation of Heaven of more worth than any earthly amusement; Christ in them the hope of glory will be health to the body and strength to the soul. {1T 566.2}

5. How much effort are we to exert in seeking the character of peace? **2 Peter 3:14**

**EGW:** "Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." 2 Peter 3:14. This is the standard for which every Christian must strive, not in his own natural ability, but through the grace given him of Jesus Christ. Let us wrestle for the mastery over every sin, and be able to check every impatient, fretful expression. {OHC 235.6}

6. What type of heart helps develop the character of peace? **2 Timothy 2:22**

**EGW:** Of all things that are sought, cherished, and cultivated, there is nothing so valuable in the sight of God as a pure heart, a disposition imbued with thankfulness and peace. {AH 425.5}

7. What type of mind is necessary to develop peace? **Romans 8:6**

**EGW:** The genuine receiver of truth is a doer of the word, and not a hearer only. As the truth is brought into the life, the whole character is changed. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." The truly converted soul will become gentle and condescending. His character will be marked with simplicity. He will be spiritually-minded. Self-exaltation will cease. His affections have entered a new channel. He loves Jesus with the whole heart, and he loves his brethren as the purchase of the blood of Christ. Here is the fruit that will certainly appear in the renewed heart. {RH, October 19, 1886 par. 2}

8. What do we need from Heaven to develop peace? **James 3:17**

**EGW:** Let all who are connected with the institution as helpers bear in mind the words of Inspiration: "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." When you pass by one who is in need of your sympathy, of your kindly acts, and give them not, but turn to the forward ones and bestow upon them your favors, remember that Jesus is insulted in the person of His afflicted ones. He says, "I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was . . . naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not." And when the surprised inquiry comes, When saw we Thee thus? the answer, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these [who were afflicted and needed your sympathy], ye did it not to Me." "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." They that are rich need not your favors, but they that are poor. The bruised and wounded, the lame of the flock, are among us, and these test the character of those who claim to be children of God. {MM 146.2}

9. Everyone seems to be seeking peace, but when people are carnally minded, what type of peace are we not to receive? **John 14:27**

**EGW:** Shortly before His crucifixion Christ had bequeathed to His disciples a legacy of peace. "Peace I leave with you," He said, "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let

not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27. This peace is not the peace that comes through conformity to the world. Christ never purchased peace by compromise with evil. The peace that Christ left His disciples is internal rather than external and was ever to remain with His witnesses through strife and contention. {AA 84.1}

10. What is peace to do to our hearts? **Colossians 3:15**

**EGW:** It is the day of God's preparation, and every day you need to look carefully to your hearts, and study the lessons, the life, and character of Christ, that you may in no case misrepresent your dear Saviour and lead souls into false paths. Learn to practice the lessons of Christ, learn to follow his example in kindness and courtesy, in uplifting those with whom you associate to what is high and holy. "And above all these things put on charity [love], which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." {RH, January 2, 1894 par. 6}

11. According to 2 Corinthians 3:18, we are to behold the glory or character of God as our example and as a result, we would be changed into that character. With that said, what do we need to control if we are going to develop the character of peace? **Jeremiah 29:11, 2 Corinthians 10:5**

**EGW:** "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another." Many are deceiving their own souls, because, while they assent to the truth, they fail to become sanctified through the truth. To have a right religious experience it is essential not only to have an intelligent idea as to what is the theory of truth, but the heart and mind must be trained, and the habits must be in harmony with the expressed will of God. The word, the requirements of God, must be studied; for if we weave into our experience incorrect principles, we shall cherish false ideas as to what constitutes a Christian, and shall not be found obeying the voice of God. We cannot spiritually discern the character of God, or accept of Jesus Christ by faith, unless our life and character are marked by purity, by the casting down of imaginations, and of every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and by bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. {ST, December 25, 1893 par. 1}

12. What else are we to behold that will help develop a peaceable character? **Proverbs 3:1, Psalms 119:165**

**EGW:** The very same Jesus, who, veiled in the cloudy pillar, led the Hebrew hosts, is our leader. He

who gave wise and righteous and good laws to Israel, has spoken to us as verily as to them. Our prosperity and happiness depends upon our unwavering obedience to the law of God. Finite wisdom could not improve one precept of that holy law. Not one of those ten precepts can be broken without disloyalty to the God of Heaven. To keep every jot and tittle of the law is essential for our own happiness, and for the happiness of all connected with us. "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." Yet finite man will present to the people this holy, just, and good law as a yoke of bondage,--a yoke which man cannot bear! It is the transgressor that can see no beauty in the law of God. {ST, March 3, 1881 par. 7}

13. What is the fruit of sowing peace? **James 3:18, Hebrews 12:11**

**EGW:** This is our great need today in every church in our land. For "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). That which was objectionable in the character is purified from the soul by the love of Jesus. All selfishness is expelled, all envy, all evil-speaking, is rooted out, and a radical transformation is wrought in the heart. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22, 23). "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (James 3:18). {YRP 289.4}

14. When peace as a character attributed is developed, where did it actually come from? **Romans 15:13, 2 Thessalonians 3:16, Psalms 29:11**

**EGW:** Those who have been baptized can claim the help of the three great Worthies of heaven to keep them from falling, and to reveal through them a character that is after the divine similitude. This is what we claim to be --followers of Jesus. We must be molded and fashioned in accordance with the divine pattern; and if you have lost your Christlikeness, my brethren and sisters, you can never, never come into communion with God again until you are reconverted and rebaptized. You want to repent and to be rebaptized, and to come into the love and communion and harmony of Christ. Then you will have spiritual discernment which will enable you to see those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. There is enough to contemplate regarding heavenly things, to fill every heart and mind, every congregation that is in the land, with rejoicing and praise and thanksgiving to God. {1SAT 366.1}

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." If this were your condition, sinners would be converted. {1SAT 366.2}

15. When receiving the peace from God, what affect does it have upon us wholly? **1 Thessalonians 5:23**

**EGW:** True sanctification is a Bible doctrine. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Thessalonian church, declares, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." And he prays, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." [1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:23.] The Bible clearly teaches what sanctification is, and how it is to be attained. The Saviour prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth." [John 17:17, 19.] And Paul teaches that believers are to be "sanctified by the Holy Ghost." [Romans 15:16.] What is the work of the Holy Spirit? Jesus told his disciples, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." [John 16:13.] And the psalmist says, "Thy law is the truth." By the Word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in his law. And since the law of God is "holy, and just, and good," a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says, "I have kept my Father's commandments." "I do always those things that please him." [John 15:10; 8:29.] The followers of Christ are to become like him,—by the grace of God, to form characters in harmony with the principles of his holy law. This is Bible sanctification. {GC88 469.1}

16. When we look to activities, what we say, and everything else in life that works towards peace, what is the end result to be? **Romans 14:19**

**EGW:** We have great changes to make before we reach perfection. God calls for complete self-surrender. We must guard diligently our lips, lest they speak guile. We must be strict with ourselves, that we bring not false principles into our dealings with others, and lead souls from the safe path. We must work the works of God. Adhere to correct principles, whatever the cost to yourself. In appeals and warnings let your light shine forth to others. Economize your pence that you may have pounds with which to help the cause of truth. Keep your tables free from many pictures and ornaments, which are as nothing in comparison with the Word of God. Let your holy example lead the sympathies of your friends heavenward: "for he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written. The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Jesus Christ: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." {RH, June 6, 1907 par. 9}

17. Though we are to try our best to live the character of peace towards everyone, what realistic qualification tells us that not everyone will appreciate our choices or lifestyle? **Romans 12:18, John 16:33, Matthew 10:13**

**EGW:** Paul writes to the Romans, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." But there is a point beyond which it is impossible to maintain union and harmony without the sacrifice of principle. Separation then becomes an absolute duty. The laws of nations should be respected when they do not conflict with the laws of God. But when there is collision between them, every true disciple of Christ will say, as did the apostle Peter when commanded to speak no more in the name of Jesus, "We ought to obey God rather than men." {ST, November 8, 1899 par. 14}

18. Those that have a peaceable character and try to help others to develop one as well, what shall such people, known as peacemakers, really be called? **Matthew 5:9**

**EGW:** And "blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." The spirit of peace is evidence of their connection with heaven. The sweet savor of Christ surrounds them. The fragrance of the life, the loveliness of the character, reveal to the world the fact that they are children of God. Men take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus. "Everyone that loveth is born of God." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His;" but "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." 1 John 4:7; Romans 8:9, 14. {MB 28.2}

19. What is needed on our lips as well as what is to not be on our lips in order to develop peace as a character trait? **Malachi 2:6, Psalms 34:13-14**

**EGW:** Trial will come to you. Thus the Lord polishes the roughness from your character. Do not murmur. You make the trial harder by repining. Honor God by cheerful submission. Patiently endure the pressure. Even though a wrong is done you, keep the love of God in the heart. "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry." {MYP 97.2}

20. What type of man results in having peace? **Psalms 37:37**

**EGW:** God ever commends obedience. For their obedience Enoch was translated to heaven, and Noah was saved from the flood that deluged the earth. "Behold," writes the psalmist. "the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine." "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off." {ST, February 11, 1897 par. 14}