

**Missionary Families of Christ**  
**FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

This course is part of the formation program in MFC. It is available to MFC members starting on their second year in MFC. It is an optional course for members and household leaders, but is a required course for unit and chapter leaders.

**GOALS OF THE SIX TALKS**

1. To give MFC members a better understanding of the meaning of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.
2. To help MFC members grow in Christian character and in becoming more and more conformed to the image and likeness of God.

**TOPICS OF THE TALKS**

1. The image of God
2. Love and discipline
3. Meekness and aggressiveness
4. Joy and sorrow
5. Faithfulness and self-control
6. Patience and perseverance

**CONTENTS**

For each of the topics, the following are provided:

1. Expanded outline
2. Handout for participants

**SCHEDULE**

This course may be given in one day, or in two separate half-days, or over 3 nights (2 talks each), or finally over 6 sessions (one talk each). The course may be given by the MFC Pastoral Formation Office and/or by the respective chapters or areas.

A suggested one-day schedule is as follows:

8:00 am	Arrival/Registration	1:00 pm	Praise time
8:45	Worship	1:15	Talk #4
9:05	Course Introduction	2:00	Break
9:15	Talk #1	2:15	Talk #5
10:00	Break	3:00	Break
10:15	Talk #2	3:15	Talk #6
11:00	Break	4:00	Open Forum
11:15	Talk #3	5:00	Closing Prayer
12:00 nn	Lunch/Fellowship		

## **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

### **Talk No. 1 : THE IMAGE OF GOD**

#### Expanded Outline

##### A. Introduction

1. The call to us in MFC is to be holy as God is holy, to be Christ-like, to be filled with the Holy Spirit.
2. More and more we ought to manifest the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. Gal 5:22-23.
  - a) “Fruit,” not “fruits.” Singular, not plural. We are to exhibit all in our life.
  - b) The fruit of the Spirit is a life conformed to the character of Jesus.
  - c) Thus learning how to grow in the fruit of the Spirit means learning more about what God is like.
3. God’s original intent was that we be just like Him. Gn 1:26-27.

##### B. The Concept of Sonship

1. Sonship had a specific meaning in Jesus’ culture that we might miss.
  - a) A son was cared for by the mother until age 5-7.
  - b) Then he went, not to school, but to the direct care of the father, whose job it was to raise him up to be a man.
    - \* taught him the Law, a trade, basic life skills, Godly character; found him a wife.
  - c) The son was the father’s heir: everything the father had was his.
  - d) The son represented the father, succeeded to his position, carried on his name.
  - e) The son became sort of a “replica” of the father; there was “identity” between them such that when you related to one you related to the other.
2. Sonship in Adam
  - a) Lk 3:23-38. Genealogy of Jesus (read v.38).
    - \* Adam was God’s son. Not biological descent, but the total relationship of sonship.
    - \* God related to Adam as a father related to his son.
      - taught him the law (Gn. 2:16-17).
      - established him in an occupation (Gn 1:26b)
      - got him a wife (Gn 2:22).
  - b) Adam’s sonship gives us some clues as to what God had in mind for us.
    - \* Gn 1:26-28.
      - “image and likeness” = shares God’s nature and character.

- “dominion” = shares God’s role and responsibility.

\* “Adam” = specific person (Gn 2:18) or entire human race (Gn 1:26).

- The story of Adam is not just of an individual, but of the entire human race.

- Thus, “God created Adam as His son” = “God created human race as His son”

\* The human race was to have a sonship relationship with God, and ultimately to become just like Him.

c) But man turned away, and forfeited his sonship.

\* God needed a way to restore us to His original purpose for us.

\* God’s way was Jesus.

3. Sonship in Jesus.

a) Jesus is the new Adam. Rom 5:14-17; 1 Cor 15:45,47-49.

\* God decides to re-create the human race to counter Adam’s fall and achieve His original purpose. He does it the same way: through one man who begins a new race.

\* Just as God made the whole human race to be His son through Adam, so in Jesus God takes to Himself the entire body of Christ as His son.

b) Jesus is truly God’s Son.

\* image/likeness (Heb 1:3a; Col 1:15)

\* heir (Heb 1:2)

\* seated at right hand (Heb 1:3b)

\* faithful over God’s house as a son (Heb 3:6a)

c) We regain our sonship in Christ.

\* Where Adam failed, Jesus did it right: thus created a new human race that fulfills God’s purpose.

\* Gal 3:26-27 -- Sons of God through faith.

\* Gal 4:4-7 -- Adopted as sons, heirs; given Spirit to live as Jesus.

4. Note: The term “sonship” is used because it is faithful to the biblical metaphor, but it refers to a relationship available to both men and women.

C. God’s Purpose for Our Lives Now

1. To make us mature sons and daughters.

a) We are God’s sons and daughters, but are still babies. We need to grow up spiritually.

- \* Gal 4:19. “Until Christ be formed in you” -- a process.
- \* An enduring relationship.
  - We confuse “son/daughter” with “little child.”
  - In Jewish culture, sonship was an identity and a relationship that remained lifelong.

b) How does growth to maturity take place?

- \* Col 3:9-10, 12-13.
  - “old self” (old nature) vs “new man” (new nature). The creation of a new human race.
  - We trade in our old humanity for the new humanity offered us in Christ.
- \* An active process.
  - Mt 5:43-45,48 – “Do this so that you may be sons”
  - Though in one sense, we already are sons and daughters, we still need to become sons and daughters in another sense by learning to act like our Father and reflect His character.

2. To make us spiritual men and women.

a) 1 Cor 3:1-3.

- \* Corinthians already have the Holy Spirit, but are still not “spiritual.”
- \* To be “spiritual” is not to manifest the gifts of the Spirit, but to manifest the fruit of the Spirit.
- \* True spirituality consists in living as God’s sons and daughters, reflecting the character of Jesus.

b) Mt 7:21-23.

- \* True spirituality consists not in displays of charismatic activity, but in a life of holiness.

c) Gal 5:19-23.

- \* Paul contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit.
- \* Refers not to feelings but to characteristic ways of behaving.

3. Thus the fruit of the Spirit is:

- a) What grows in us as a result of the Spirit’s presence.
- b) The character traits of God expressed in our lives.
- c) A life conformed to the image of Jesus.

## D. Four Principles of Spiritual Growth

- \* “Fruit” implies a process of growth. The fruit of the Spirit doesn’t arrive full-grown when we are baptized in the Spirit, but grows as we live in the Spirit.
- \* “Spiritual growth” means growth in character, not just in gifts or religious experiences. It means coming to a point where people see Jesus in us.

### 1. The “New Life” Principle

a) 1 Pt 1:23. We are born anew through the word of God.

- \* Spiritual growth does not result mainly from our effort. We feed, bathe, clothe human children, but they grow because the “human life principle” is in them. Without that, the other things we do would have no effect.
- \* It’s a matter of the “seed.” If you start with a puppy you won’t wind up with a bear/deer/human no matter how you raise it.
- \* We are born of “spiritual seed,” the life of God. We cultivate and nurture our spiritual growth, but it would have no effect if God’s life weren’t in us from the outset.

b) To grow spiritually: Have God’s life within you.

### 2. The “Communion with God” Principle

a) 2 Cor 3:18. Behold God’s glory; changed by degrees.

- \* We grow as we behold God.
  - Kids are like their parents partly due to genetics, but also because they live in their parents’ presence.
  - The more we are in God’s presence, the more we become like Him.
- \* We come into God’s presence through prayer, scripture, corporate worship, household meetings, fellowship with brethren in MFC.

b) To grow spiritually: dwell in God’s presence.

### 3. The “Imitation of Christ” Principle

a) Eph 5:1-2. Be imitators of God; walk in love.

- \* We all grow and develop via imitation.
  - As we imitate Jesus, we become more like him.

- We imitate not by being infinite or omnipotent, being messiah, being a carpenter, etc. We imitate by walking in love, by taking on God's character, His love, His joy, His peace.

b) To grow spiritually: Imitate Jesus and the Father.

#### 4. The "Discipline" Principle

a) Heb 12:5-11. Chastised as sons.

- \* God's hand is on our lives to train us (disciple/discipline us).
  - He works in the circumstances of our daily lives.
- \* God also entrusts it to others who are over us and around us.
  - Fraternal correction in MFC.

b) To grow spiritually: embrace God's training and discipline.

#### E. Conclusion

1. God has bought us to new life in Christ and to MFC in order to accomplish His original plan for us.
2. Let us learn about the fruit of the Spirit in the coming talks, and begin more and more to grow in the character of God.

## **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

### **TALK No. 1 : THE IMAGE OF GOD**

#### Participant's handout

1. God's call to us is to be holy as He is holy, to be Christ-like, to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We ought to manifest the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. Gal 5:22-23.
2. God's original intent was that we be just like Him. Gn 1:26-27.
3. In Adam, the human race was to have a sonship relationship with God. But man turned away and forfeited his sonship.
4. Jesus is the new Adam. Rom 5:14-17; 1 Cor 15:45,47-49. We regain our sonship in Christ. Gal 3:26-27; Gal 4:4-7.
5. God's purpose for our lives now:
  - a) To make us mature sons and daughters. Col 3:9-10, 12-13.
  - b) To make us spiritual men and women. 1 Cor 3:1-3.
6. To be spiritual is not just to manifest the gifts of the Spirit but to manifest the fruit of the Spirit. Mt 7:21-23.
7. Four principles of spiritual growth:
  - a) The "new life" principle. 1 Pt 1:23.
    - \* To grow spiritually: have God's life within you.
  - b) The "communion with God" principle.
    - \* 2 Cor 3:18. We grow as we behold God, as we are in His presence. Importance of prayer, scripture, corporate worship, household meetings, fellowship in MFC.
    - \* To grow spiritually: dwell in God's presence.
  - c) The "imitation of Christ" principle. Eph 5:1-2.
    - \* To grow spiritually: imitate Jesus and the Father.
  - d) The "discipline" principle. Heb 12:5-11.
    - \* To grow spiritually: embrace God's training and discipline.

## **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

### **TALK No. 2 : LOVE AND DISCIPLINE**

#### Expanded Outline

##### A. Introduction

1. Paul's list of the fruit of the Spirit begins with "love."
  - a) Love is the preeminent Christian virtue. 1 Cor 13:1-3,13.
  - b) Love is the trait that most characterizes God.
2. This talk will explain together three character traits in Gal 5:22 -- love, kindness and goodness.

##### B. God's Revelation of His Love and Goodness: Ex 32-34 (golden calf).

1. God's forgiveness -- Exodus 32.
  - a) A quick summary: While Moses is away on Mount Sinai, Aaron and the people reject Yahweh and make themselves an idol, a golden calf. In anger, Moses threw down and broke the tablets of the Ten commandments.
  - b) What we need to appreciate is God's response.
    - \* God forgives the sin of the golden calf, despite his anger and the people's (not unreasonable!) expectation of being wiped out. Those most responsible were punished, but God did not destroy them as a nation.
    - \* God's forgiveness seems routine to us, but not to them: they had, after all, seriously violated the covenant.
      - The "gods" of the other nations would have wiped them out for a similar infraction, but this God shows Himself different.
2. God's favor -- Exodus 33.
  - a) v.1-3: God answers Moses' prayer of intercession by renewing His promises and sending them on again to take possession of the land. However, this time God refuses to go on with Israel, for their own sake: He knows His holiness and their sin won't mix.
  - b) v.12,15-16a: Moses is understandably upset: "If you're not with us, what's the use of our going on?"
  - c) v.13: Moses sees that if God's chosen people are not compatible with God, then the people must change: they must become more like God. But to do that, they must first

know what He is like. So Moses asks God to reveal Himself: “We need to know you in order to relate to you properly, so that you can go with us.”

d) v.17-23: “My holiness is too much for you to gaze upon, but I’ll make a way for you to catch a glimpse.”

### 3. God’s self-revelation -- Exodus 34.

a) Because of His loving nature, and in response to Moses’ prayer, God reveals Himself as a pledge of His enduring faithfulness.

b) v.5-10: The Lord reveals His ways, His glory, His goodness.

c) Central to all is love. God is saying: “I am a God of love; My nature is to be loving.”

## C. Six Biblical Words that Reflect God’s Love

### 1. Goodness

a) Ex 33:19. “I will make all my goodness pass before you.”

b) Goodness means having the good of others at heart. To be good involves acting and speaking in such a way that the highest good of these around us is our highest priority.

\* We can count on God to have our good at heart in everything He does.

c) Opposite of malice (desiring harm for others) and of selfishness or indifference toward others.

d) We too are to be “good,” to always act with the best interests of others at heart.

\* “Will this be for the other person’s good?”

\* Even though it may be difficult or painful.

### 2. Kindness

a) Ex 33:19. Same Hebrew word “tub” is translated by two Greek words: In English, “goodness” and “kindness.”

\* Very similar in meaning to goodness.

b) Kindness means doing good to others, loving them by putting ourselves at their service.

c) Goodness describes our motive in relating to others; kindness describes the things we do as a result of that motive.

3. Mercy, compassion.

a) Ex 34:6. "The Lord, a God [who is] merciful ...."

b) To be merciful is to be personally moved by another's need.

c) God loves us in just that way.

\* Ps 103:13. As a parent is moved to care for his child (same word translated here as "pity").

\* His love is not merely dutiful or mechanical, but warm and affectionate.

4. Grace, generosity, favor.

a) Ex 34:6. "The Lord, a God [who is] gracious..."

b) This is loving others even though they do not deserve it and have no "right" to it. Love that is a free and undeserved gift.

\* Ps 51:1 -- God pardons "according to his mercy."

\* Ps 86:1-7 -- God answers prayer because he is "gracious."

c) We need to grow in learning how to naturally give of ourselves.

5. Steadfast love.

a) Ex 34:6-7. "... abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation."

b) Hebrew "chesed": "loving kindness," "constant love," "loyalty," "committed love," "loyal care."

\* Often coupled with "faithfulness" (more in Talk 5).

\* Especially connected to covenant relationship, loyalty.

c) This is what God is like in relationships: when He has committed Himself, you can count on His love and care.

\* 2 Tm 2:13.

d) This is also what we are to be like in our relationships. Indeed it is the basis of our covenant relationship with one another in MFC.

6. Agape.

a) This is the word Paul uses in Gal 5:22.

- \* This summarizes all we have said about God's love.
- b) Agape is the kind of love that motivated God to make the ultimate sacrifice in Christ: become man, suffer, die for us.
  - \* An unselfish love, given with no expectation of return.
  - \* Eph 2:4-9. Note "mercy," "great love," "immeasurable riches of grace in kindness," "for by grace you have been saved."
- c) The foundation of all God's action is His loving nature. This is also to be true of us as we grow in the Spirit.
  - \* Our love should be unconditional. Lk 6:27-36.
  - \* Our love derives not from what we see in the other person, but from the kind of person God has made us to be.
  - \* Our love must not be a stern, unpleasant duty, but something joyful.

#### D. God's Firmness

##### 1. God is loving, but He is also firm.

- a) God is not indulgent or "soft-hearted" in the sense of being unconcerned about how we respond to His love.
- b) There are limits to what God allows, and discipline is an important part of how He relates to us.
  - \* Thus love and discipline go together.

##### 2. Limits

- a) Ex 34:7b. The same passage that reveals His love and kindness speaks of judgment!
- b) God's love and God's justice exist together.
  - \* There are no limits to God's love, but there are limits to what He allows us to do and still be in relationship with Him.
  - \* Because of our sinful condition, God knows that an "anything goes" approach will lead to actions on our part that will block the very thing He wants: a love relationship with us.
  - \* Thus it is precisely an act of love on God's part to set limits.

### 3. Discipline.

#### a) Heb 12:5-10. God's fatherly discipline of His children.

- \* Not just punishment, but also teaching, training, correcting.
  - The root word is "disciple."
  - Discipline = everything a master does for his disciple to raise him up to be like himself.
- \* His purpose is to bring us to righteousness, holiness (v.10).

#### b) We, like God, ought to love, but our love should also be tempered with a desire to help others grow in righteousness.

- \* Be generous, but don't just give money if what they most need is to grow in financial responsibility.
- \* Be forgiving, but don't just "let things pass" if what they need is to overcome a weakness or right a wrong.
- \* Be gracious, but don't let a child play with something that will harm him.

#### c) How do we reconcile love and discipline?

- \* We cannot love too much, give too much, be too affectionate. But we can love, give, show affection in unhelpful ways.
  - Love without discipline is "sloppy agape."
- \* Requires wisdom to combine love and discipline properly in various relationships and situations.

### E. Conclusion: 1 John 4:7-11

1. Our love shows we are born of God and share His nature (v.7).
2. God's grace is free, but not cheap. It cost God the life of His son (v.10).
3. We too are called to lay down our lives in love (v.11).

## **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

### **TALK No. 2 : LOVE AND DISCIPLINE**

#### Participant's handout

1. Love is the preeminent Christian virtue. 1 Cor 13:1-3,13. Love is the trait that most characterizes God.
2. God's revelation of His love and goodness: Exodus 32-34.
  - a) Ex 32. God forgives the sin of the golden calf.
  - b) Ex 33. God shows His favor to His people by answering Moses' prayer of intercession and renewing His promises to them.
  - c) Ex 34. God reveals Himself as a pledge of His enduring faithfulness.
3. Six Biblical words that reflect God's love:
  - a) Goodness. Ex 33:19.
    - \* Means having the good of others at heart.
    - \* The opposite of malice (desiring harm for others) and of selfishness or indifference toward others.
  - b) Kindness. Ex 33:19.
    - \* Means doing good to others, putting ourselves at their service.
    - \* Goodness describes our motive in relating to others, while kindness describes the things we do as a result.
  - c) Mercy, compassion. Ex 34:6.
    - \* Means being personally moved by another's need.
  - d) Grace, generosity, favor. Ex 34:6.
    - \* Means loving others even though they do not deserve it
  - e) Steadfast love. Ex 34:6-7.
    - \* Means loving kindness, constant love, loyalty, committed love, loyal care.
  - f) Agape.
    - \* The kind of love that motivated God to make the ultimate sacrifice in Christ.
    - \* An unselfish love, given with no expectation of return.
    - \* An unconditional love. Lk 6:27-36.
4. God is loving, but He is also firm. There are limits to what God allows, and discipline is an important part of how He relates to us.
  - a) Ex 34:7b. The same passage that reveals God's love and kindness also speaks of judgment.
  - b) God's love and God's justice exist together.
5. Heb 12:5-10. God's fatherly discipline of His children.
  - a) Not just punishment, but teaching, training, correction.
  - b) The root word is "disciple".
  - c) God's purpose is to bring us to holiness.
6. 1 John 4:7-11.

**FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**  
**TALK No. 3 : MEEKNESS AND AGGRESSIVENESS**

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction

1. Meekness is a quality very much misunderstood. In modern culture, it has come to mean “weakness,” being spineless or timid.
2. In fact, meekness has to do with strength. It is “strength under control.”

B. The Great Reversal – God’s Ideal vs. the World’s Ideal of Greatness.

1. Mt 18:1-4.
  - a) Modern interpretation: we are to imitate a child’s simplicity, innocence, trust, etc.
    - \* But children are also stubborn, rebellious, selfish, etc.
  - b) We are to imitate, not the qualities of a child, but the position of a child as understood in society at that time: the lowest position, the position of a servant.
2. Phil 2:3-9.
  - a) We are usually taught, “look out for Number One,” “Have it your way,” “Nobody tells me what to do.”
  - b) But Jesus willingly takes the role of a servant (literally “slave”).
  - c) We are to imitate Jesus in becoming servants, looking to the interests of others.

C. Meekness and Humility

1. “Meekness” comes from Hebrew “anavah” = “Lowliness.”
  - a) Refers to both:
    - \* Objective condition: belonging to the lowest social class.
    - \* Way of behaving: as a servant; the way the “lowly” would relate to those above him in the social order.
  - b) “Anavah” translated by two Greek words, in turn by two English words: humility (Phil 2:3) and meekness (Gal 5:23).
    - \* Humility.
      - To consciously consider ourselves the servant of others.
      - Not to think ourselves worthless, but to count others as deserving of our service.

- \* Meekness.
  - Meekness is not weakness. It is not being a pushover, or a doormat. Meekness is the inner quality of relating as a servant.
  - Mt 11:29. Jesus says he is “humble of heart.” But Jesus is anything but a pushover.

## 2. Some aspects of being meek.

### a) Respectful.

- \* Sir 4:8 – “To the poor man lend an ear, and return his greeting courteously” (“in meekness”). Respectful to all, not just to those whose positions demand it.
- \* Ti 3:2 – “Show perfect courtesy toward all men.” I.e., even those outside the Christian community.
- \* Opposite: arrogance.
  - hot arrogance -- challenging, insolent, abusive.
  - cold arrogance -- aloof, indifferent, “cool.”

### b) Teachable. Jas 1:21.

- \* Eager to lay hold of the truth.
- \* Can consider other points of view.
- \* Not opinionated or rigid in insisting on one's own understanding of things.

### c) Obedient. Phil 2:8.

- \* Does what the master instructs.
- \* Seeks to meet the master's needs, not his own.
- \* Even when in a position of authority, the meek person is a servant.

### d) Non-defensive.

- \* Not personally hostile in the face of abuse or attack.
- \* Nm 12:1-8. We might tend to fight back; Moses lets God handle it.
- \* 2 Tm 2:25. We do correct opponents (stand up for the truth), but we do it with gentleness (meekness).

### e) Leading as a servant.

- \* Not power-hungry.
- \* Not out to glorify self at others' expense.
- \* Mt 11:29. Jesus is describing himself as a master over his disciples (there is definite authority), but unlike those in the world, he will not “lord it over.” He will teach, discipline, correct as a servant.

- \* Meekness is not just for subordinates: it is emphatically for those in authority as well.
3. The source of meekness: Brokenness.
    - a) Meekness is not our innate response. Something needs to happen inside us to enable us to respond in meekness: we need to be “broken.”
    - b) Two senses of brokenness:
      - \* A broken man -- crushed, dispirited, lost will to fight, has given up on life.
      - \* A broken horse -- preserving and channeling strength and vigor.
    - c) Two things that need to be broken:
      - \* Self-will.
        - not insisting on our own way, preferences.
        - able to surrender our will to the Lord and to others when appropriate.
        - surfaces especially when we are crossed or criticized.
        - important in small matters as well as in large.
      - \* Wildness.
        - not pushed around by impulse, fear, anger.
        - able to ask "How would the Lord's servant respond?" and act accordingly.

#### D. Meekness and Zeal

1. Mt 21:1-13 -- The Triumphal Entry (Palm Sunday).
  - a) Jesus comes as a meek king (v.5), yet he is bold and aggressive (v.12).
    - \* Jn 2:17 – “Zeal for your house consumes me.”
  - b) Zeal is not mere enthusiasm, but aggressive dedication to accomplishing God’s purposes.
  - c) Having a “one-track heart.”
2. 2 Cor 10:1-2; 1 Cor 4:21. Paul’s behavior will be determined by how the Corinthians respond. Sometimes he may be aggressive, sometimes gentle. But meekness (servanthood) underlies all.
3. Three questions to help us decide on the appropriate response:
  - a) Whose rights/claims/preferences are at stake?

- \* if ours, lean to submissiveness.
- \* if God's, lean to aggressiveness.

b) Are we in authority?

- \* if yes (e.g. in our own home), lean to aggressiveness.
- \* If no, lean to submissiveness.

c) What will be most helpful? What will best serve the Lord and the people involved?

- \* Requires wisdom and experience.

#### E. Conclusion

1. We are to be strong, aggressively dedicated Christians whose strength is channeled into serving others.
2. Whether gentle or aggressive, we are at all times servants, modeled on Jesus.

## **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

### **TALK No. 3 : MEEKNESS AND AGGRESSIVENESS**

#### Participant's handout

1. Meekness is not weakness, but actually strength under control.
2. God's ideal vs the world's ideal of greatness:
  - a) Mt 18:1-4. We are to imitate the position of a child as understood in society at that time: the lowest position, that of a servant.
  - b) Phil 2:3-9. Jesus' posture as a servant.
3. Meekness and humility.
  - a) Hebrew "anavah" = lowliness.  
= humility (Phil 2:3) and meekness (Gal 5:23).
  - b) Mt 11:29. Jesus is humble of heart, but is not weak.
4. Aspects of being meek:
  - a) Respectful. Sir 4:8; Ti 3:2.  
\* Opposite is arrogance.
  - b) Teachable. James 1:21.
  - c) Obedient. Phil 2:8
  - d) Non-defensive. Not personally hostile in the face of abuse or attack. Nm 12:1-8; 2 Tm 2:25.
  - e) Leading as a servant. Not power-hungry, or out to glorify self at others' expense. Mt 11:29.
5. The source of meekness: brokenness.  
Two things that need to be broken:
  - a) Self-will. Not insisting on our own way or preferences.  
Able to surrender our will to the Lord and to others when appropriate.
  - b) Wildness. Not pushed around by impulse, fear, anger.
6. Meekness and zeal.
  - a) Mt 21:1-13 Jesus comes as a meek king, yet is bold and aggressive.  
\* Zeal is not mere enthusiasm, but aggressive dedication to accomplishing God's purposes.
  - b) 2 Cor 10:1-2; 1 Cor 4:21. Paul's behavior may be gentle or aggressive, but meekness (servanthood) underlies all.

## **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

### **TALK No. 4 : JOY AND SORROW**

#### Expanded Outline

##### A. Introduction.

1. Phil 4:4. Joy is a fundamental characteristic of a Christian.
2. Joy, as well as sorrow, are appropriate human responses.
  - a) Jesus and the apostles responded to situations in an appropriate and fully human way.
    - \* For some, it is difficult to picture Jesus as a genuine, flesh-and-blood human being. Austere figure. Seldom smiles. “Holy,” detached, aloof.
    - \* But Jesus was indeed fully human. Gospels often show Jesus acting normal, i.e., displaying authentic human responses to typical human situations.
      - He rejoiced at good news. Success of 72 on mission. Lk 10:21. “Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit,” i.e., “jumped for joy.”
      - He experienced sorrow. Lk 19:41.
      - He was moved with pity. Mk 1:41.
      - He was angry. Mk 3:5.
      - He was deeply troubled. Jn 13:21.
      - Thus: joy, sorrow, compassion, anger. Jesus was truly human.
    - \* St. Paul expressed deep affection in his letters.
      - Phil 1:7-8
      - 2 Tm 1:3-4
  - b) Some common misunderstandings about emotional responses.
    - \* The Stoic Approach
      - “Christians should be above emotion.”
      - But Christianity is not opposed to human feelings.
      - Emotions are created by God. They can help us.
    - \* The Focus-on-Feelings Approach
      - Being introspective, controlled by emotions.
      - World view: Feelings = true identity. “You are what you feel.”
      - We tend to think that being a good Christian = feeling the right way, rather than doing the right thing.
  - c) Our goal: a redeemed human response.

- \* Avoid the two extremes.
- \* Experience the right emotion at the right time.
  - 1 Cor 13:6. We need to know what to rejoice in, what not to. Emotions play a part, but in the right way, at the right time, for the right reason.
  - Eccl 3:4. “A time to weep/laugh, mourn/dance.”
- \* Develop an authentic human response.
  - Distinguish between reaction and response.
  - God gave us emotions, wants them to work right, in a way that serves us.

## B. Sorrow, Grief, and Mourning

1. Sorrow is the appropriate response to pain or misfortune. It’s the opposite of joy.

a) Sorrow is not incompatible with being a Christian. Being a joyful Christian does not mean never being sorrowful.

b) In fact, Jesus expressed sorrow.

\* Jn 11:32-36. Jesus joins Mary, Martha and the others in weeping over Lazarus’ death—even though he no doubt knew he was going to raise Lazarus! Why? Because even the momentary triumph of death was evil, and because the loss of Lazarus brought sorrow to those around him.

\* Same with us: we know those who die in the Lord will rise again. But even though a funeral can thus be cause for celebration, mourning and grief still have an appropriate place.

\* Rom 12:15. Jesus did so. It is right for us to do the same.

2. Sorrow is the appropriate response to sin.

a) Ezra 9:1-7, 10:1,6. Ezra is moved to grief at the sin of God’s people. In this he shares in God’s response to sin.

b) Mourning for sin is not just “getting depressed,” and Ezra’s action is not just a tantrum. Rather, he is making use of his culture’s mourning customs to express his grief and repentance.

\* Having such concrete, active expression is helpful—something our culture is lacking.

## C. Joy

1. Joy is the appropriate response to something good.

2. Joy is not just a feeling, but an active response.
  - a) Lk 15:4-6. Parable of the lost sheep.
    - \* Not just an emotional response: “Let's all feel good,” or “feel happy with me.”
    - \* But an active response: “Let's have a party!”
  - b) Neh 8:9-12.
    - \* Rediscovery of book of the law.
      - Disobeyed for many years, thus remorse (v.9). Right reaction.
      - But Feast of Tabernacles. Supposed to celebrate. So told to do so (v.9-10,12)
      - Not just told to feel differently. But active rejoicing.
    - \* To rejoice was appropriate regardless of how they felt, regardless of any contrary reaction.
3. But joy that is the fruit of the Spirit is something more.
  - a) Not just an active response to a particular situation, but an abiding character trait, something that is to characterize us at all times.
  - b) St Paul was quite emphatic.
    - \* Phil 4:4, 1 Thes 5:16. Not just an isolated response, but an abiding trait.
    - \* Rom 12:12. Based on our hope of salvation.
  - c) According to James, even when undergoing difficulties.
    - \* Jas 1:2. Not because they are good in themselves, but because God uses them for good.
4. How can these be? What does it mean to be joyful at all times? If OK to grieve, how rejoice in all circumstances?
  - a) First, joy is not something we muster up. Rather, it comes from the work of the Holy Spirit.
    - \* Rom 14:17.
  - b) Beyond this, we can be people who always rejoice because we are people whose fundamental situation is good.

\* We are in Christ.  
We are restored to fellowship with God. We are His children.  
We are temples of the Holy Spirit.

\* Our joy is simply an unchanging response to these unchanging truths.

c) Even with trials, we can rejoice. Not because the trials are enjoyable, but because of what they produce in us.

#### D. Conclusion

1. Joy and sorrow are appropriate human responses. Sorrow for pain or misfortune. Joy for good fortune.
2. Joy is an active response, not just an emotional reaction. We can rejoice even when reaction is contrary.
3. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. An abiding character trait. Rejoice always. Because our fundamental situation is good.

## **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

### **TALK No. 4 : JOY AND SORROW**

#### Participant's handout

1. Joy, as well as sorrow, are appropriate human responses.
  - a) Jesus and the apostles responded to situations in fully human ways. Lk 10:21 (joy), Lk 19:41 (sorrow), Mk 1:41 (compassion), Mk 3:5 (anger), Jn 13:21 (troubled). Paul expressed deep affection. Phil 1:7-8, 2 Tm 1:3-4.
  - b) Two extremes to be avoided: the Stoic approach (be above emotion) and the focus-on-feelings approach (be controlled by emotion).
  
2. Our goal: a redeemed human response.
  - a) The right emotion at the right time. 1 Cor 13:6; Eccl 3:4.
  - b) An authentic human response.
    - \* Distinguish between reaction and response.
  
3. Sorrow, grief, mourning.
  - a) Sorrow is the appropriate response to pain or misfortune.
    - \* Jn 11:32-36. Rom 12:15.
  - b) Sorrow is the appropriate response to sin.
    - \* Ezra 9:1-7, 10:1,6.
  
4. Joy is the appropriate response to something good.
  - a) Not just a feeling, but an active response.
    - \* Lk 15:4-6.
    - \* Neh 8:9-12.
  
  - b) But joy that is a fruit of the Spirit is something more. It is not just as active response, but an abiding character trait.
    - \* Phil 4:4; 1 Thes 5:16. Something that characterizes us at all times.
    - \* Rom 12:12. Based on our hope of salvation.
    - \* Jas 1:2. Even when undergoing difficulties.
    - \* Rom 14:17. Comes from the work of the Holy Spirit.
  
5. We can rejoice always because we are people whose fundamental situation is good.
  - a) We are in Christ, are restored to fellowship with God, are temples of the Holy Spirit.
  - b) Our joy is simply an unchanging response to these unchanging truths.

**FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**  
**TALK No. 5 : FAITHFULNESS AND SELF-CONTROL**

Expanded Outline

**I. FAITHFULNESS**

A. Two Great Models of Faithfulness

1. God the Father is faithful.

a) Ps 89:1-2, Ps 52:6-9, 2 Thes 3:3.

b) God is a rock.

- \* solid, unchanging.
- \* reliable: you can “build” on Him.
- \* A protection, refuge.

2. God the Son is faithful.

a) Heb 3:1-2,5-6. “Faithful over God’s house as a son.”

- \* someone upon whom God can rely.

b) The most prized quality in a servant is faithfulness.

B. What does it mean for us to be faithful?

1. To be faithful is to be reliable.

Reliability is expressed in the following ways:

a) Dependability.

- \* We can be counted upon to fulfill responsibility.
  - Mt 24:45-47.
- \* You can give them something to do with the confidence that they will do it. This is the essence of a servant in MFC.

b) Honesty.

c) Integrity.

- \* Our word is good.
  - Like God’s promise to David. Ps 89:4-5,31-38.
  - Like God’s promise to Sarah. Heb 11:11.

- 2 Cor 1:15-20. Paul's faithfulness derived from that of God the Father and Jesus.
  - \* We should be thoughtful and responsible about making commitments, and utterly reliable in fulfilling them.
    - Service commitments: we do what we say we'll do.
    - Covenant agreements: the basis of marriage and family life.
    - Our covenant/commitment in MFC.
  - \* Especially revealed in little things.
  - \* Our reliability is not just in specific instances but all the time. It is not merely sporadic good behavior, but an enduring character trait.
2. To be faithful is to be loyal.
- a) Loyalty = faithfulness in relationships.
- \* Standing by someone in adversity, sickness.
  - \* Standing up for someone who is attacked or abused.
  - \* Loyalty is an element of a personal relationship. It is focused on the other person. It does not presume that the other person is perfect. It does mean you do not back off from the relationship because they have erred, or because the relationship has become difficult or embarrassing.
- b) 2 Tm 2:13. God is loyal to us beyond our deserving it.
- c) Rev 2:10-11,13. Loyalty is the martyr virtue.
- d) Loyalty to each other is especially important for us in MFC, so we can remain united for mission.

## II. SELF-CONTROL

- A. Self-Control = being in control of your self.
1. Master of your self, self-possessed.
  2. Being able to be answerable for your actions.
- B. Our Need for Self-Control.
1. We need self-control in specific areas.
    - a) Emotions.
      - \* Anger, fear, etc. - these are from God, but can begin to dominate us.

b) Natural desires.

- \* Food, drink, sleep, sex - these are good, but can become unruly.

c) Addictions.

- \* “A physical and/or psychological dependency on a drug or on some form of behavior that serves a drug-like function.”
- \* Alcohol, drugs, overeating, masturbation/use of pornography, gambling, smoking.

d) Hobbies and outside interests.

- \* These are important ingredients of human life, but we could go overboard.

e) Speech.

- \* Gossip, compulsive talking.

f) Media.

g) Curiosity.

- \* “Lust for knowledge.”

2. We need self-control as a general quality.

a) To help us be of maximum service to the Lord.

- \* 1 Cor 9:24-27. Like an athlete in training.
  - Without self-control, we can't win the prize no matter how good our intentions.
  - The athlete practices self-control not just in obviously related areas but “in all things.” It should be the same for us.

- \* Prv 16:32. Highlights the value of self-control.

b) Prv 25:28. Without self-control we are defenseless against the world/flesh/devil.

c) Self-control produces confidence and inner strength.

- \* Your behavior becomes predictable; you can trust yourself.

d) Self-Control is the virtue that makes the other virtues possible.

- \* E.g., hard to be faithful without self-control.

## C. How to Grow in Self-Control

1. Decide for it.
  - a) Get clear that you want it more than you want the fruit of the problem (“But I like to sleep in/eat chocolate /etc.”)
  - b) Overcoming a particular weakness requires a declaration of “limited war.”
2. Trust God for it.
  - a) Phil 4:13.
  - b) Not a will-power exercise, but letting God’s strength do it.
3. Live in an ordered environment.
  - a) Personal order is important. Chaotic circumstances put pressure on areas of weakness.
  - b) “Basic order spreads” -- getting schedule nailed down, tidying work space, etc., helps focus on other areas of disorder.
4. Map out a course of action and pursue it patiently.
  - a) like a general planning a military campaign.
  - b) “Crash programs usually crash” -- produces discouragement, guilt.
5. Guard your thoughts.
  - a) Don’t be undermined by past failure, familiarity with how tough it is.
  - b) Repent of “It’s no use,” etc.
6. Get help.
  - a) From our leaders and brethren in MFC.
  - b) They can help us sort things out, set priorities, map strategy; they can also give encouragement, reminders, etc.

## D. Limits to Restraint.

1. Self-control is not an end in itself.
  - a) We want it for what it brings us (ability to love and serve God and other people better),

not for its own sake.

b) We can go overboard: waking up without alarm clock, etc.

2. Some things shouldn't be restrained: love for God and others.

## **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

### **TALK No. 5 : FAITHFULNESS AND SELF-CONTROL**

#### Participant's outline

#### **FAITHFULNESS**

1. Two great models of faithfulness:
  - a) God the Father. Ps 89:1-2; Ps 62:6-9; 2 Thes 3:3.
  - b) God the Son. Heb 3:1-2,5-6.
  
2. The meaning of faithfulness:
  - a) To be reliable. This is expressed by:
    - \* Dependability. Can be counted on to fulfill responsibility. Mt 24:45-47.
    - \* Honesty
    - \* Integrity. Means our word is good.
      - Like God's promises to David. Ps 89:4-5, 31-38.
      - Like God's promise to Sarah. Heb 11:11.
  - b) To be loyal. Loyalty is faithfulness in relationships.
    - \* Standing by someone in adversity or sickness. Standing up for someone who is attacked or abused.
    - \* 2 Tm 2:13. God is loyal to us beyond our deserving it.
    - \* Rev 2:10-11,13. Loyalty is the "martyr" virtue.
    - \* Crucial for us in MFC in order to remain united for mission.

#### **SELF-CONTROL**

1. Self-control is being in control of yourself.
  - \* Master of your self; self-possessed.
  - \* Able to be answerable for your actions.
  
2. We need self-control in specific areas: emotions, natural desires, addictions, hobbies and outside interests, speech, media, curiosity.
  
3. We need self-control as a general quality. Prv 16:32.
  - a) 1 Cor 9:24-27. Like an athlete in training.
  - b) Prov 25:28. Without self-control, we are defenseless against the world/flesh/devil.
  - c) Self-control produces confidence and inner strength.
  - d) Self-control is the virtue that makes the other virtues possible.
  
4. How to grow in self-control:
  - a) Decide for it.
  - b) Trust God for it. Phil 4:13.
  - c) Live in an ordered environment.
  - d) Map out a course of action and pursue it patiently.
  - e) Guard your thoughts.
  - f) Get help.

**FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**  
**TALK No. 6 : PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE**

Expanded Outline

A. Introduction

1. Poster: “Lord, grant me patience .... and I need it right away!”
2. Patience and perseverance are common New Testament words, very similar in meaning (not opposites, as with some other talk titles). Both are qualities that have to do with situations when things don’t go our way (at least right away). Thus they are very helpful, since a lot of things don’t go our way!

**B. PATIENCE**

1. The meaning of the word.
  - a) Greek “makrothumia” = “great-tempered.”
    - \* Opposite of “short-tempered,” irritable, easily frustrated.
  - b) Hebrew word = “slow to anger.”
  - c) “Calm determination” -- the ability to not react in anger or frustration when things don’t go the way we want, but to keep at it until the right thing happens.
2. A quality of God’s love.
  - a) God is patient.
    - \* Ex 34:6 – “Slow to anger”
  - b) Jesus is patient.
    - \* 1 Tm 1:12-16. God sticks with Paul until He gets the right thing to happen.
  - c) God does the same with us: He desires to save us, and He pursues this purpose with “perfect patience.”
3. An active quality: Determination, not resignation.
  - a) We tend to see patience as passive: “putting up with it” when things go wrong; being resigned to it.
    - \* Webster defines it as “bearing pains or trials calmly and without complaint.”

However ....

b) 1 Mc 8:4. Tells how Romans, “by their plan and patience” conquered Spain. Typical military strategy of the day: lengthy sieges (5-10 years).

\* Patience is “The Warrior Virtue”

c) Jas 5:7-8. Farmer keeps working hard over long periods.

d) To be patient = to stick with something, to see it through.

4. A quality of our love.

a) 2 Tm 4:2. “Be unfailing in patience and in teaching.” 1 Thes 5:14. “Be patient with them all.”

b) Patience is an important component of loving people, especially helping them to grow and change.

\* Examples: childrearing; teaching; evangelization; pastoral care; intercession.

### **C. PERSEVERANCE**

1. The meaning of the word.

a) Greek “hupomone” = “holding on” or “keeping at it” in the face of opposition, trial, hardship, suffering.

b) Can be helpfully translated by two English words:

\* Perseverance -- conveys active aspect: “sticking with it.”

\* Endurance -- brings out the “holding on” aspect.

2. The need for perseverance: Heb 12:1-3.

a) Background: letter exhorting Christians to faithfulness in a time of persecution.

b) v.1: “Run with perseverance the race set before us.”

\* as in athletics – “You can’t win if you don’t finish.”

\* Often in Christian life we fail, not because we get defeated, but because we quit. We have to stay with it, even if it hurts, or we don’t feel like continuing, or we’re tired, or we want a change, etc.

c) v.2: “Looking to Jesus .... who .... endured the cross”

\* In his suffering on the cross, Jesus is the great example of perseverance/endurance.

d) v.3: “Weary,” “Fainthearted.” Two enemies of perseverance.

\* Weariness has to do with getting tired of hanging in there day in, day out.

\* Faintheartedness relates to lack of courage in facing significant obstacles.

\* We need perseverance/endurance to get through both.

3. The root of perseverance: Christian hope.

a) Rom 8:22-25. “Waiting for our hope with patience.”

b) Hope = active confidence.

\* Not just wishful thinking, not what you do when you know “there’s no hope.”

\* We know with assurance that the thing we cannot yet see is going to happen: God is going to triumph.

c) Heb 6:19. Hope is the “anchor of the soul.”

\* An anchor holds something firm despite surrounding circumstances. Thus does hope hold us steady so we can persevere.

4. The school of perseverance: trials.

a) Jas 1:2-4.

\* Testing, as we face it and endure it, makes us stronger and more able to endure.

\* We should welcome trials, not for their own sake, but for the opportunity they give us to grow.

b) Jas 1:12.

\* We should want to be “tested and proven” Christians.

5. The reward of perseverance.

a) Mark 13:13. Those who endure to the end will be saved.

## **CONCLUSION TO THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT COURSE**

A. Our goal: to be formed in Christian character.

- This is what makes us effective as Christians. It makes us useful to the Lord: we become a known quantity that has been tested and proven, that can be relied upon.

B. Character multiplies gift.

- Gifts are strengthened and made more effective by solid character.
- Even modest gifts can be very fruitful when character is strong. Conversely, even powerful gifts can be ineffective when character is weak.
- Misshapen character can make gifts work for bad instead of good (like multiplying by a negative number).

C. Christian character = a life formed in the image of Christ.

- Able to take the right course, not just the easy course.
- Able to respond when called upon, to obey, serve, be fruitful.
- Able to be used by God in pursuing the life and mission of MFC.

D. 2 Peter 1:3-11

**FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**  
**TALK No. 6 : PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE**

Participant's handout

1. Patience comes from the Greek “makrothumia,” meaning “great-tempered.” Opposite of “short-tempered.”
  - a) Hebrew word used means “slow to anger.”
  - b) “Calm determination.”
2. Patience is a quality of God's love.
  - a) God is patient. Ex 34:6.
  - b) Jesus is patient. 1 Tm 1:12-16.
3. Patience has to do with determination, not resignation.
  - a) It is “the warrior” virtue. 1 Mc 8:4.
  - b) Jas 5:7-8. The farmer's patience.
4. Patience is to be a quality of our love. 2 Tm 4:2; 1 Thes 5:14.
5. Perseverance comes from the Greek “hupomone,” meaning holding on or keeping at it in the face of opposition, trial, hardship, suffering. It is translated by two English words: perseverance and endurance.
6. The need for perseverance. Heb 12:1-3.  
Two enemies of perseverance: weariness and faintheartedness.
7. The root of perseverance is our Christian hope.
  - a) Rom 8:22-25.
  - b) Hope is not just wishful thinking, but active confidence.
  - c) Heb 6:19. Hope is the anchor of the soul.
8. The school of perseverance: trials.
  - a) Jas 1:2-4. Testing makes us stronger.  
We should welcome trials.
  - b) Jas 1:12.
9. The reward of perseverance: salvation. Mk 13:13.

(SG. Oct 7, 2019)