

**Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life**

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

**Biblical Separation**

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christians life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, "No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms." On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: "We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men's Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men's Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point."<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren "peace doctrine" has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – "Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Romans 12:18 – "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. 'But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – "Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – "Live in peace with one another."

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., "Peace," *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Vol 2 (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively that we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.

**Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life**

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

**Biblical Separation**

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christians life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, “No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms.” On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: “We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men’s Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men’s Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point.”<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren “peace doctrine” has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Romans 12:18 – “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. ‘But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – “Live in peace with one another.”

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Vol 2 (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively that we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.

**Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life**

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

**Biblical Separation**

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christians life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, “No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms.” On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: “We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men’s Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men’s Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point.”<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren “peace doctrine” has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Romans 12:18 – “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. ‘But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – “Live in peace with one another.”

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Vol 2 (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively than we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_ ?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.

**Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life**

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

**Biblical Separation**

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christians life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, “No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms.” On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: “We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men’s Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men’s Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point.”<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren “peace doctrine” has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Romans 12:18 – “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. ‘But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – “Live in peace with one another.”

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Vol 2 (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively that we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.

## Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

### Biblical Separation

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christians life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, “No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms.” On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: “We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men’s Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men’s Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point.”<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren “peace doctrine” has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Romans 12:18 – “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. ‘But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – “Live in peace with one another.”

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Vol 2 (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively that we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.

**Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life**

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

**Biblical Separation**

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christians life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, “No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms.” On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: “We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men’s Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men’s Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point.”<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren “peace doctrine” has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Romans 12:18 – “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. ‘But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – “Live in peace with one another.”

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Vol 2 (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively that we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.

**Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life**

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

**Biblical Separation**

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christians life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, “No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms.” On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: “We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men’s Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men’s Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point.”<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren “peace doctrine” has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Romans 12:18 – “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. ‘But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – “Live in peace with one another.”

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Vol 2 (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively than we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.

**Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life**

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

**Biblical Separation**

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christian life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, "No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms." On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: "We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men's Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men's Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point."<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren "peace doctrine" has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – "Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Romans 12:18 – "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. 'But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – "Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – "Live in peace with one another."

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., "Peace," *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Vol 2 (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively than we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.

**Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life**

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

**Biblical Separation**

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christians life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, “No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms.” On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: “We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men’s Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men’s Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point.”<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren “peace doctrine” has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

Romans 12:18 – “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. ‘But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – “Live in peace with one another.”

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Vol 2 (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively that we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.

**Evidence: What the Bible Says about the Christian Life**

*Note: The material in this segment follows the arrangement of topics in The Statement of Faith of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Paragraph 8, "The Christian Life." The entire Statement of Faith will be examined in depth in a later segment of this course.*

**Biblical Separation**

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-16; 2:9-12; and 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:1-10.

"We believe in THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: a life of righteousness, good works, and separation unto God from the evil ways of the world...."

Two hundred years after Martin Luther led Germany in a spiritual reformation, bringing Christians back to the Bible and to the fundamentals of Christian faith, German believers were doing a much better job of basing their beliefs on Scripture. But in 1700, Philip Spener and a growing number of his friends were becoming dissatisfied with a nation and a church that preached the need for pure doctrine but ignored the need for pure living. Christianity was growing cold and fat and drunk and indifferent. So Spener and his friends organized some home Bible studies, and people began to see that genuine Christianity must include not only a holy respect for Scripture, but also a holy manner of life. Those German Christians became known as Pietists, and out of their influence came many groups of believers, varying somewhat in their specific beliefs, but all insisting that the Christians life is to be characterized by holy living – separation unto God from the evil ways of an evil world. True Christians are – must be – a different sort of people in at least three ways.

1. A Christian is to be separated by his speech.

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:12 – "Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe."

Titus 2:7-8 – "In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us."

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:36 – “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

A Christian is different from the rest of the world. He doesn't gossip, he doesn't whine, he doesn't tear down with his criticism, he doesn't use profanity, he is never excused for cursing, swearing, coarse jesting, or even shouting in anger.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Matthew 5:37 – “Let your ‘yes’ mean ‘yes,’ and your ‘no’ mean ‘no.’ Anything else beyond these is of evil.”

James 5:12 – “Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’; so that you may not fall under judgment.”

Practical implications:

- A Christian never lies.
- A Christian shouldn't have to swear to tell the truth.
- A Christian shouldn't take a vow of secrecy, or swear that he will keep a secret.

- His words are \_\_\_\_\_

Read James 3:1-12.

2. A Christian is to be separated by his manner of dress.

Romans 12:1-2 – “I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing

of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 – “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

- Male Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 – “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:5 – “Let your moderation (or forbearance, or conservative attitude) be known to all men.”

- Female Christians

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 22:5 (see above)

-- Dress that is \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:9-10 – “Likewise, let the women adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3-4 – “And let not your adornment be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.”

And the question that is coming up in the church today, as female dress continues its slide away from modesty is this: Is a female responsible if her immodest dress causes a male to lust? Consider these two passages:

Matthew 5:27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Romans 14:13, 15, 20-21

13 Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

15 If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.

So the question in the Christian life is not what I have personal freedom to do, but rather that I have the freedom to choose not to cause my brother/sister to stumble, in my demonstration of love to them.

3. A Christian is separated by the way he seeks entertainment.

1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:1-2 and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:19-20 (above); Colossians 3:5 – “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

-- Food

Deuteronomy 21:20 – “And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear of it and fear.”

Proverbs 23:21 – “The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians – “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food.”

-- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine

Ephesians 5:18 – “Do not get drunk with wine.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:3 – “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.”

-- Sensuality and sexualism

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:18 – “Flee immorality! Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

Ephesians 4:19 – “And they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”

Proverbs 27:20 – “Just as hell is never satisfied, nor are the eyes of a man ever satisfied.”

- In the use of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Four qualities that ought to be true of every real Christian:

-- He concentrates on the \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.”

-- He focuses on \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:1-3 – “If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

-- He memorizes \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

-- He consciously resists \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2:11 – “In order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

James 4:7 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8-9 – “Be of sober spirit; be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith....”

### **Peace-Making**

#### 1. Introductory Comments

As a boy, my heroes were always cowboys – gunfighters, actually. John Wayne, James Arness, Roy Rogers, Gene Autrey, Wyatt Earp, etc., etc. I never thought about it at the time, but when I first heard the concept of “turning the other cheek,” it was an idea that absolutely cut against the grain of the programming of my young mind.

Part of being an American is, of course, the right to keep and bear arms, the right to “stand your ground,” the right to stick up for yourself when attacked, and (nationally) the duty to protect and defend American lives, property, and friends from foreign aggression. Every July 4<sup>th</sup> we celebrate America’s independence and the revolution that brought us that independence. In fact, I have always considered that the best sort of hero was a Revolutionary War hero. Imagine my shock, then, to discover that during the Revolutionary War, the Brethren refused to fight against the British.

*During the American Revolutionary War, Brethren encountered much hostility and hardship because of their peace stand. Many Brethren also had loyalist attitudes toward the British king that gave added significance, in the eyes of sympathizers of the revolution, to their refusal to bear arms. A Moravian bishop, John Frederick Reichel, wrote, "No Dunker, no Quaker took up arms." On Nov. 7, 1775, some Mennonite and Brethren leaders submitted a remarkable petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The central statement of their position read: "We have dedicated ourselves to serve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preservation of Men's Lives, but we find to Freedom in giving, or doing, or assisting in any Thing by which Men's Lives are destroyed or hurt. We beg the Patience of all those who believe we err in this Point."<sup>1</sup>*

While historically the emphasis on the Brethren "peace doctrine" has focused on implications for military service, Scriptures cited are more general in application.

Mark 9:50 – "Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Romans 12:18 – "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. 'But if your enemy is hungry, feed him and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:11 – "Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:13b – "Live in peace with one another."

*In the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, the peace position [relating to military service] is held by only a small minority of the membership. The early years of the church as a separate body were under the shadow of World War II, a circumstance that worked against the peace stand. Important also were ecumenical relations with denominations that accepted the promilitary perspective characteristic of much of American society. Some in the church, especially older pastors and denominational leaders, continued to teach nonresistance and the commandment against killing. Combined with an emphasis on obedience to and support of the state, this peace*

---

<sup>1</sup>Aukerman, Dale H., "Peace," *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2* (Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), p. 999.

*teaching has usually pointed toward noncombatant service in the armed forces as the most appropriate response to conscription. Some ordained ministers [have] served as military chaplains.<sup>2</sup>*

Against this backdrop, here are some ideas to consider.

## 2. Nonresistance defined

- The Bible's statements

-- We are to love \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:27 – “Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.”

Romans 12:20 (quoting Proverbs 25:21-22) – “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.”

Romans 13:8 – “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

-- We are to give \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:17-19 – “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as I depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God...”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:9 – “Not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

-- We are to do \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 6:10 – “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

---

<sup>2</sup> Aukerman, p. 1000.

-- We are to pursue \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 14:19 – “So then let us pursue the things that make for peace and the building up of one another.”

-- We are not to resist \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:38-42 (and Luke 6:27-29) – “...Do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go on mile, go with him two.”

-- We are to let \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 12:19-21 (see above)

-- We are to remain \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:18 – “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”

-- We are to follow \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

-- We are to settle \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:15-17 – “And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private....”

Galatians 6:1 – “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:1-11 – “Does anyone of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?”

-- We are to expect \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident: ...enmities, strife, ...disputes, dissensions, factions....”

-- We are to anticipate \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16, 22-23 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.... But the fruit of the Spirit is....”

Ephesians 4:31-5:2 – “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us....”

-- We are to wait \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 20:11-15 – “...and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Summary of the Bible’s teaching on nonresistance

-- Basis of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

-- Essence of nonresistance: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Nonresistance applied

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_

- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- No carnal strife \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a pacifist if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a noncombatant if:
  - You are motivated by \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted to \_\_\_\_\_
- It's OK to be a combatant if:
  - You are motivated to \_\_\_\_\_
  - You aren't tempted by \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Concluding remarks

There are a lot of reasons why we live in a violent world today. One of the contributing factors to the violence is the philosophy that people must fight for what is rightfully theirs. But we followers of Christ must approach the injustices of life in a different way. When we do, it will be obvious to the world that we're different. They may not understand or appreciate that sometimes. But when you mold your lifestyle a certain way and you know that God appreciates it, that's all that really counts.

I wish that as a boy I could have learned more quickly that, if Tommy knocks me down and steals my ice cream cone, I might punch Tommy in the nose and I'll regain my ice cream cone and my dignity – but I may lose Tommy. That's why Christians must be different. We're not here to assert our own personal dignity or stand up for our own personal rights or demand our own person share of the pie. We're here to point men and women to the Savior.

An enemy may take unfair advantage of me. He may hurt me. He may even kill me. But if I have spoken to him and behaved lovingly toward him as my Master would have, then

he'll never in his life be able to forget that this victim had Jesus and was therefore different.

### **Exhibiting the Fruit of the Spirit**

#### 1. Introductory comments

Galatians 5:22-23 -- "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Some of us memorized these verses in childhood. We have quoted other Scriptures on which the concept of "fruit-bearing" is based. We think of ourselves as fruit-bearing Christians. But from time to time it is essential to push aside the leaves and to see if there is proof of fruit on the branches.

In Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus cursed a fig tree that was in full leaf, but which bore no fruit. Among the lessons of that story is this lesson: "If you broadcast that you're a fig tree, you'd better be producing some figs."

If the Christian life is a life that exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, what does it mean?

#### 2. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

- The Bible-based definition

-- "Fruit" shows everyone what kind of person \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:18-20 -- "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits."

-- "Fruit of the Spirit" shows everyone who is \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:18 -- "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."

- The Bible-based description (Galatians 5:22-23)

- Love: \_\_\_\_\_ concern for the well-being of another, with no thought for your own well-being or reward.
- Joy: \_\_\_\_\_ even in the midst of sorrow, because you know that God is in complete control.”
- Peace: The ability to remain \_\_\_\_\_ under pressure, because you sense God’s personal presence.
- Patience: The ability to \_\_\_\_\_ even when things don’t change as rapidly as you would like.
- Gentleness: “Doing something \_\_\_\_\_ for someone, which is not necessarily expensive or expected.
- Goodness: Taking your stand on the side of good; being \_\_\_\_\_.
- Faithfulness: The quality of being completely \_\_\_\_\_.
- Meekness: Putting \_\_\_\_\_ before your own.
- Self-control: Holding yourself \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. How do I get the fruit of the Spirit?

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

If you have personally received Christ, then you have his Spirit living in you (John 3:3; Romans 8:9).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ with the Spirit.

Surrender every thought, every word, every action to him (Ephesians 5:18; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 10:5).

- Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Spirit.

Before fruit appears, the plant must be cultivated. Spiritual fruit results from spiritual growth (Galatians 5:16).

#### 4. Why should I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

- Fruit is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_

If we do not display genuine Christ-like virtues, there is no way to prove that we are truly born again.

- Fruit is noticed by \_\_\_\_\_

One of our highest priorities in life is to attracting the people in our world to Christ. How will we get them to notice him? As they rustle the leaves on the branches of our lives, if they find fruit, they will know that only God could have produced it in us.

- Fruit demonstrates \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:16 – “I chose you so that you could go and bear fruit, and so that your fruit should remain.”

He knew us before the foundation of the world, and he chose us. He drew us to himself. He saved us. He remade us. Why? So that we could go forth and reproduce ourselves, so that the entire universe could see what a miracle God can work in the life of someone who is simply yielded to him. And so that this fruit of ours – these virtues and the changed lives they produce – should last forever.

### **Prayer**

#### 1. Introductory comments

The longer I am a Christian, the less equipped I feel to expound on the doctrine of prayer. I’m not an expert; but I can take you by the hand and lead you where I have been. I can plant you in a place where you can see what I have seen. Perhaps when we are finished with the discussion to follow, none of us will be experts. But I hope we’ll know more about prayer than we knew before. And I hope we’ll be able to talk to God more effectively that we did before.

The Scriptures address four major questions regarding prayer.

#### 2. What things must be in place before I begin to pray?

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:11 – “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask him.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

John 14:14-15 – “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

James 5:16 – “Confess you sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Mark 11:25 – “And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

Matthew 5:23 -- "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your offering.”

-- Am I \_\_\_\_\_?

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:7 – “You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

- I should check to be certain that I am \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 – “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”

Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

James 4:2 – “...You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 5:15 – “...and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.”

### 3. For what will God look and listen as I bow in prayer?

- Holy reverence for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2 – “Hallowed by thy name.” (“May your name be regarded as holy!”)

The Bible constantly refers to prayer as an act of bowing before God, prostrating oneself before the Creator, falling on one’s knees or even on one’s face before God. The position we take as we pray may not be the most important thing to consider, but we must keep this in mind: If we went to see the governor of the state to plead for some urgent need, how would we appear in his presence? We probably wouldn’t slouch!

- Deep gratitude for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:6 – “...with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Colossians 4:2 – “Pray with a constant attitude of thanksgiving.”

This implies that we thank God for what he has already done for us, and we thank him in advance for the way he will answer our prayer this time.

- Selfless concern for God’s \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14 – “This is the confidence which we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

How can we possibly know the will of God? We may not know everything God has in mind for a certain person or a specific situation, but there are some areas of God’s will that we can know just by reading the Word.

For example, we know that “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:9). So we can pray with confidence for an unsaved friend, knowing that God desires that person to be saved even more than we want it. We know according to 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 4:3 that “this is the will of God for you: your sanctification.” Praying in the will of God simply means wanting the same things that God wants.

- Awareness of God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Wanting God’s will and knowing God’s will are two different things. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Pray at all times in the Spirit.” Jude 29 says the same thing. Lots of verses speak of praying “in Jesus’ name.” What does that mean? Basically it has the same effect as praying in the Spirit. It suggests that we ask the heavenly Father for something precisely as Jesus would request it. It means that we become so familiar with the thinking of God that we know enough to ask him to do what he already intends to do. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:16 is happy to inform us that “we have the mind of Christ.” Apparently it is possible for us to be so in tune with God that we may perceive what God wants to accomplish in a specific situation. If this is true, it is all the more tragic that so we so rarely become close enough to God to experience that confidence.

- Intimate, conversational approach to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:7-8 – “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition, as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

I observe two extremes in people’s prayers. First there is the person whose prayer comes straight out of the unabridged dictionary: “O ineffable, inexorable, and infinite deity, we come before Thee as ignominious and inconsequential creatures....” Then there is the person who prays, “Hey, Jesus! How’s it going up there? Just wanted to hang with ya for a second!”

Somewhere there must be a balance. Our Father wants us to feel at ease in his presence, and yet we must never lose the proper sense of awe before the Creator.

- Fervent, sincere longing for God's \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is serious business. When God looks into our hearts to see what we're thinking as we talk with him, he checks to see if we are taking the conversation lightly or seriously. Matthew 7:21 speaks of "prayer and fasting," as though a Christian ought to consider prayer so important that he lets it take the place of food once in a while. Ephesians 6:18 piles up words to impress us with this idea: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at all times...." And 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:7 says this: "The end of all things is at hand; therefore be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer."

- Oneness with God's \_\_\_\_\_

Christians often pray in groups. When we do, we should be like the early believers in Acts 1:14. "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer."

- A resolve to be \_\_\_\_\_

In Luke 11, Jesus tells the parable of a man who goes next door in the middle of the night and knocks incessantly until his sleepy neighbor rises and gives him a loaf of bread, just to make him go away. The point of the story is this: Never give up praying! God loves us more than the neighbor does, so God is infinitely more likely to give what we ask if we keep praying for it.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17 – "Pray without ceasing."

#### 4. For whom or what should I pray?

- \_\_\_\_\_

James 5:16 – "Pray for one another."

Ephesians 6:18 – "Be on the alert with all prayer and petition for all the saints."

A fellow believer will never hear a sweeter sound than the sound of his/her own name as you mention it in prayer to the heavenly Father. It is a tremendous encouragement to know that someone cares enough to talk to God about us; or even to hear someone say that they have been praying or will pray for us.

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

If we pray for our enemies, three things will happen: (1) God will bless our enemies. (2) Our friends will think we are strange (and that’s fine, because we Christians are supposed to be different). (3) We won’t be able to continue to feel bitterness toward our enemies. It’s very difficult to dislike someone for whom you are asking God’s blessing.

- \_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:2 – “Pray to God on behalf of kings.” We may assume that it means presidents, governors, legislators, and mayors, too. “And for all who are in authority over you.” That means the workplace and the home and the church. Whoever has a position of responsibility for our welfare or our work, we ought to be praying for that person.

- \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Thessalonians 3:1 – “Brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified.” A prayer for Paul was a prayer for the unsaved, because that was Paul’s mission.

How often have we sat in a church prayer meeting where the person up front asked, “For whom should we be praying?” – then sat in awkward silence, unable to think of even one person in our sphere of influence for whom we have been begging God to save?

- \_\_\_\_\_

Many years ago we had unexpected guests at our church’s midweek prayer meeting: a family of missionaries who came to thank us for our regular support. I was ashamed when I realized that, if they had not appeared that night, we would have forgotten to pray for them in an hour dedicated to prayer.

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:25 – “Brethren, pray for us.”

Hebrew 13:18 – “Pray for us, for we want to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.”

Matthew 9:38 – “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritually: 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:16 – “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin that could cost him his life, ask and God will spare the man’s life on your behalf.”

Physically: James 5:14 – “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual needs: Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation.” Luke 11:13 – “... your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.”

Physical needs: Matthew 6:11 – “Give us this day our daily bread.” James 5:13 – “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.”

- \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 7:7f. – “Ask and it shall be given....”

Matthew 18:19 – “If two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.”

John 15:7 – “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you may ask what you wish, and it shall be done for you.”

John 16:23 – “If you shall ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name.”

Ephesians 3:20 – “(He) is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:22 – “Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments.”

1<sup>st</sup> John 5:15 – “If we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from him.”

Of course, these promises are tempered with the prerequisites for effective prayer that we discussed earlier. All the same, it is overwhelming when we line up all of these Scriptures back to back and see that God has every intention of meeting the needs and desires of the children he loves!

## 6. Conclusion

We didn't need a doctrinal statement or a textbook or a teacher to tell us that the Christian life is supposed to be a life of prayer. What we do need are a few hushed and holy moments to contemplate the biblical material on this topic, and to address the really important questions: “Is *my* life a life of prayer? Do I pray in the manner that has been described to me?”

## Resources

Aukerman, Dale H. “Peace,” *The Brethren Encyclopedia, Vol 2*. Philadelphia: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983, p. 999.

Bounds, E. M. *Power Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962.

Buzzard, Lynn R., and Eck, Laurence. *Tell It to the Church: A Biblical Approach to Resolving Conflict Out of Court*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1985.

Etling, Harold. *Our Heritage: Brethren Beliefs and Practices*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

French, Ivan. *The Principles and Practice of Prayer*. Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1985.

Hoyt, Herman A. *Then Would My Servants Fight*. Winona Lake, IN: The Brethren Missionary Herald Co., 1956.

Rinker, Rosalind. *Communicating Love Through Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1980.

Strauss, Lehman. *Sense and Nonsense in Prayer*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974.

Thirtle, James W. *In Jesus Name, Amen!* Leesburg, FL: The Great Commission Prayer League, 1977.

**Assignments for Next Segment (“The Doctrine of the Kingdom”)**

1. I suggest that you obtain and read as much as possible of Alva J. McClain’s *The Greatness of the Kingdom*.
2. Outline what you read and be prepared to discuss it in class.