

S T U D Y G U I D E

Developing Christian Character

R.C. Sproul



Ligonier Connect

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Introduction

The Christian life is not easy. It engages us in a spiritual battle of cosmic proportions. In this course, Dr. Sproul examines our three chief foes in this battle: the world, the flesh, and the devil. This will help us understand why Christian growth is not easy, but is a complex, lifelong process.

This study guide is a companion to the Ligonier Connect course and is designed to help you make the most of the learning experience. For each lesson in the course, there is a corresponding lesson in this guide. Here is what you will find in each lesson:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS	<p>The questions are the guided discussion component of the lesson that are intended to help you process, and organize what you are learning.</p> <p>How to use: Reflect on individually or discuss in a group the questions in the order in which they appear in the lesson.</p>
REVIEW QUIZ	<p>The review quiz is a set of six multiple-choice questions that appears at the end of each lesson.</p> <p>How to use: Use each quiz to check your comprehension and memory of the major points covered in each lecture. It will be most beneficial to your learning if you take a lesson's quiz either sometime between lessons or just before you begin the next lesson in the study guide.</p>
ANSWER KEY	<p>The answer key provides answers and explanations to the multiple-choice questions in the review quiz.</p> <p>How to use: Use the answer key to check your own answers or when you do not know the answer. Note: Do not give in too quickly; struggling for a few moments to recall an answer reinforces it in your mind.</p>

Study Schedules

The following table suggests four plans for working through the course and this companion study guide. Whether you are studying on your own or with a group, these schedules should help you plan your study path.

	Extended 14-Week Plan	Standard 12-Week Plan	Abbreviated 6-Week Plan	Intensive 4-Week Plan	
Week	Lesson				
1	*	1	1 & 2	1–3	
2	1	2	3 & 4	4–6	
3	2	3	5 & 6	7–9	
4	3	4	7 & 8	10–12	
5	4	5	9 & 10		
6	5	6	11 & 12		
7	6	7			
8	7	8			
9	8	9			
10	9	10			
11	10	11			
12	11	12			
13	12				
14	*				

* For these weeks, rather than completing lessons, spend your time discussing and praying about your learning goals for the study (the first week) and the most valuable takeaways from the study (the last week).

The Struggle for Spiritual Growth

INTRODUCTION

The Christian life is not easy. It engages us in a spiritual battle of cosmic proportions. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul examines our three chief foes in this battle: the world, the flesh, and the devil. This will help us understand why Christian growth is not easy, but is a complex, lifelong process.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Dr. Sproul said that God wills our struggle with the fallen world for our good. In what way is this struggle good for us?
2. How does Satan hinder spiritual growth? Should we blame him for all hindrances to our spiritual growth?
3. Many believers begin their Christian life assuming that growth will be easy. Did you assume the same thing? How has the experience of the Christian life challenged those assumptions?
4. According to Dr. Sproul, why does the Christian still struggle even though Christ has redeemed him? When will this finally come to an end?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. What analogy was used for spiritual growth in the Christian life?
 - a. Growing daisies
 - b. Growing apple trees
 - c. Growing a business
 - d. Growing roses

2. Who said, “The three principle obstacles to Christian growth are the world, the flesh, and the devil”?
 - a. John Calvin
 - b. Augustine
 - c. Martin Luther
 - d. John Knox
3. When is the Christian completely cleansed of his sinful nature?
 - a. At conversion
 - b. At justification
 - c. At baptism
 - d. At glorification
4. One of the marks of Christian growth is an increasing awareness of what?
 - a. Sin
 - b. Righteousness
 - c. Open-mindedness
 - d. Politics
5. What is one evidence of our struggle against the flesh that we experience in relationships?
 - a. Harmony
 - b. Love
 - c. Conflict
 - d. Ambivalence
6. What is the biggest enemy of our own spiritual growth?
 - a. Ourselves
 - b. Worldly entertainment
 - c. Other sinful people
 - d. Legalism

Answer Key—The Struggle for Spiritual Growth

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 1

1. **D.**

Dr. Sproul used his hobby of growing roses as an analogy for spiritual growth in the Christian life. Growing roses is not easy, as insects, bacteria, and other pests can harm them and ruin all the work involved in planting them. Dr. Sproul said the Christian life is much like this, requiring daily attention to ensure that growth happens properly.

2. **C.**

Though each of these men agreed with this thoroughly biblical account, Dr. Sproul quoted Luther to support the reality of a Christian's warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

3. **D.**

The Christian is declared righteous by God when he is justified and the works of Christ are imputed to him, but his sinful nature is not completely put to death in this life. When the Christian is glorified on the last day, his sinful nature, however, will be put to death, never to return again.

4. **A.**

One of the marks of Christian growth is an increasing awareness of sin, both in ourselves and in others. As a result, the struggle with sin that believers experience can make it seem as if little progression is being made. This increasing awareness of sin serves to remind us that our battle with sin is, indeed, a battle.

5. **C.**

Sin often manifests itself through conflict in interpersonal relationships. Pride, anger, hostility, and other sins cause conflict and can be destructive to our relationships with friends, family, and others. These things also erode unity within the body of Christ.

6. **A.**

The biggest enemy in the Christian's spiritual life is his own sin. There is a constant warfare between the old man and the new man, between the Spirit and the flesh. When a Christian is converted to Christ, he is not instantly cleansed of the desire to sin, which will persist until he is glorified on the last day.

2

The Goal of Spiritual Growth

INTRODUCTION

The amount of effort we put into our Christian growth will be wasted unless we are working toward clear goals. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul examines the ultimate purpose of the Christian life—to be holy as God is holy. Having this as a clear goal directs and focuses our spiritual growth.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you see evidence today that people try to “create” God in their own image? Explain.
2. How did fellowship with God change Moses after he came down from Mount Sinai? How does your fellowship with God change you?
3. Second Corinthians 3:18 tells us that as we behold the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, we are being transformed into His image. How do we behold His glory? When will we behold the fullness of His glory?
4. The chief purposes for which you were created are to pursue a life of holiness, to reflect God’s character, and to glorify God. Discuss what each of these means in practical terms. How do they relate to each other?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. A necessary step in making dreams become reality is to translate them into which of the following?
 - a. Written form
 - b. Ideas
 - c. Goals

- d. Propositions
- 2. What is the goal for which man was created?
 - a. Holiness
 - b. Happiness
 - c. Death
 - d. Self-realization
- 3. The highest goal and greatest hope of the Christian is the “beatific vision,” which is to see which of the following?
 - a. Infinity
 - b. World peace
 - c. God’s face
 - d. Love throughout the world
- 4. What is the significance of God resting on the seventh day of creation?
 - a. His work in creating the universe had tired Him.
 - b. He had already reached the pinnacle of creation on the sixth day.
 - c. The goal of creation is Sabbath rest.
 - d. We should only rest on the seventh day of the week.
- 5. After the fall, the image of God was affected in which of the following ways?
 - a. It was distorted.
 - b. It was unaffected.
 - c. It was renewed.
 - d. It was erased.
- 6. God is “wholly other” and completely unlike us in every way.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Answer Key—The Goal of Spiritual Growth

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 2

1. **C.**

A necessary step in making dreams and wishes become reality is to turn them into concrete goals. Once something has been made into a goal, one can make progress towards it. Setting goals is important in the Christian life as one strives to glorify God.

2. **A.**

The Westminster Confession of Faith says that the chief end, or goal, of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. This is done as someone grows in holiness by reflecting the image of God and striving to obey the law of God. While no Christian will achieve perfect obedience, believers will be fully conformed to the image of Christ, who is perfectly holy, on the last day.

3. **C.**

The highest goal and greatest hope in the Christian life is to see the face of God. Moses was only allowed to see the backside of God on Mount Sinai, and the people of Israel insisted that he wear a veil to cover his face afterward because even the residual effect it had on his appearance was too much for them. No sinful man can see God and live, but once believers are glorified and purified of sin, they will see Him face-to-face (Rev. 22:4).

4. **C.**

The seventh day reveals the goal of creation, namely, Sabbath rest. Ultimately, this refers to Christians being consecrated—or being made perfectly holy—so that they might be made fit to dwell in the presence of the Lord. It is only through Christ alone that we can be made holy in this manner and dwell in the house of the Lord in perfect Sabbath rest forever.

5. **A.**

After the fall, the image of God in man was not erased completely, but neither was it left unaffected. While man still reflects the character of his Creator and possesses certain faculties that set him apart, he does so in a distorted way. Man still mirrors God to His creation but fails to carry out his calling like he ought and uses his faculties in ways that dishonor the God whom he is imaging.

6. **B.**

Karl Barth taught that God is “wholly other” and completely unlike us. This is not true, as we were made in the image of God and are able to communicate with one another about God in an analogous way. That we can understand God’s revelation

to us, even though we cannot understand Him comprehensively, proves that there is some reference point between God and us.

3

The Priorities of Righteousness

INTRODUCTION

As Christians, we must take care that our lives speak well of Him whose name we bear. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul explores our responsibilities as representatives of Jesus Christ. The number-one priority of our lives is to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” As a result of this lesson, we should be better prepared to glorify God in the practice of righteousness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Romans 2:24, Paul warns that hypocritical behavior can cause others to blaspheme the name of God. When Christians misrepresent Christ, what problems arise? How does this affect your sense of responsibility as one who bears the name of Christ?
2. What is the difference between righteousness and self-righteousness?
3. In what ways can you “be Christ” to those around you?
4. Restate the Ten Commandments, not as negative prohibitions, but as positive admonitions. What do they say about everyday priorities and behavior patterns?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. What did Martin Luther say that every Christian is called to be to his neighbor?
 - a. Christ
 - b. Responsive
 - c. An evangelist
 - d. Generous

2. Which of the following terms refers to God's inner being?
 - a. *Righteousness*
 - b. *Glory*
 - c. *Holiness*
 - d. *Grace*
3. What is the primary way in which the Christian glorifies God?
 - a. Praying and fasting
 - b. Having an extensive knowledge of the Bible
 - c. Espousing orthodox theology
 - d. Practicing righteousness
4. What is righteousness in the Christian life?
 - a. Obedience to God's commandments
 - b. Committing less sin than others around us
 - c. Loving those who love us
 - d. Praying and reading the Bible every day without fail
5. Who did Jesus say that our righteousness must exceed if we are to enter the kingdom of heaven?
 - a. God
 - b. Himself
 - c. Unbelievers
 - d. The scribes and Pharisees
6. What does the word *Pharisee* mean?
 - a. Self-righteous
 - b. Truthful
 - c. Set apart
 - d. Powerful

Answer Key—The Priorities of Righteousness

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 3

1. **A.**

Luther said that every Christian is called to “be Christ” to his neighbor. This means that the life of the Christian should conform to the will of God so that people can see the reflected glory of Christ in his life, just as the people of Israel saw the glory of God reflected on Moses’s face when he came down from Mount Sinai.

2. **B.**

When used in reference to God, the term glory refers to His inner being. It does not refer to the external works of God, but the glory of God Himself. In other words, God’s glory is about who He is and not what He does.

3. **D.**

While the glory of God references who He is, the Christian must do something to reflect this glory to others in his own life, namely, practicing and growing in righteousness. As a person becomes more and more like Christ, he reflects more of Christ to the world.

4. **A.**

The goal of the Christian life is righteousness. Righteousness is ultimately determined by God’s character, which is defined for us in His commandments. We grow in righteousness as we know God, love God, and strive to obey His law as a result.

5. **D.**

Jesus said that for someone to enter the kingdom of heaven, his righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus taught that those who are justified will have a real, though imperfect, righteousness (Matt. 7:18). This happens as they are made into the image of Christ and is the fruit of their justification.

6. **C.**

As the Jewish nation moved towards secularism, the Pharisees emerged and dedicated themselves to the pursuit of righteousness and holiness. The word Pharisee means “set apart one,” as a reflection of their goal.

4

The Assurance of Salvation - Part 1

INTRODUCTION

Many people blindly assume that they are at peace with God. How can one who thinks he is saved be sure that he is, in fact, saved? In this lesson and the next, Dr. Sproul examines this vital foundation for spiritual growth—assurance of salvation. The purpose of these lessons is to enable us to distinguish between genuine assurance and false assurance and to help us deal with doubts about our salvation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Dr. Sproul said that his first step in seeking assurance of salvation was to check his performance. Have you found this an effective route to assurance? Why or why not?
2. What are the differences between justification and sanctification? Why is this important?
3. In your own words, explain the difference between the Roman Catholic and Protestant views of justification and sanctification. Under which of these systems of belief is one more likely to gain assurance of salvation?
4. Dr. Sproul described a moment in his life when he was very aware of himself and afraid he wasn't saved. Have you ever struggled with assurance of salvation? Did your struggle with it go away? If so, how?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. A believer is just and yet, at the same time, a sinner.
 - a. True
 - b. False

2. What is “the article upon which the church stands or falls”?
 - a. Regeneration
 - b. Justification
 - c. Sanctification
 - d. Glorification
3. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that which of the following precedes justification?
 - a. Sanctification
 - b. Glorification
 - c. Death
 - d. Adoption
4. Which of the following was mentioned in the lesson as a source of false assurance of salvation?
 - a. The belief that everyone goes to heaven
 - b. A faulty understanding of the terms of salvation
 - c. An exaggerated sense of one’s own righteousness
 - d. All of the above
5. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that assurance of salvation comes through baptism.
 - a. True
 - b. False
6. According to Dr. Sproul, the dominant doctrine of justification in our culture today is justification by:
 - a. Faith alone
 - b. Death
 - c. Works
 - d. Faith and works

Answer Key—The Assurance of Salvation -

Part 1

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 4

1. **A.**

Martin Luther said that every believer in this life is simul iustus et peccator, or “at the same time just and sinner.” This means that Christians are righteous before God because of Christ’s work but still sinful in themselves. While believers are still sinful in both thought and action in this life, they stand justified before God on account of Christ’s righteousness on their behalf.

2. **B.**

Luther called justification by faith alone “the doctrine upon which the church stands or falls.” Luther understood that splitting up the church over secondary matters would be a monstrous evil, but a doctrine like justification is no secondary issue. Rather, this doctrine is central to the church and what it means to be a Christian.

3. **A.**

The Reformation protested the basic idea that justification rests on our own sanctification and good works. Justification in the Roman Catholic system ultimately rests on a Christian’s sanctification because the justifying grace of baptism can be lost when someone commits a mortal sin, yet it can be regained through the sacrament of penance.

4. **D.**

There are many sources of a false assurance. One may seek to be saved only out of fear of punishment rather than a true desire for God, believe he is saved by performance, or even believe he is righteous enough for heaven in himself. Understanding that salvation is by grace alone and through faith alone, however, is required to have true assurance of salvation.

5. **B.**

Roman Catholic doctrine teaches that assurance of salvation is never truly possible since one can lose his justification by committing a mortal sin. While baptism confers justification, this is only temporary such that baptism cannot be a sign of assurance. One must go through the sacrament of penance in order to return to a state of grace after committing a mortal sin, but sin can be easily committed again.

6. **B.**

The dominant doctrine of justification today is justification by death. The com-

mon idea is that everybody goes to heaven, so when someone dies he will be saved regardless of what he believes or what he has done. John 3:18 contradicts this way of thinking, as it says that whoever does not believe in the Son of God is condemned already.

5

The Assurance of Salvation - Part 2

INTRODUCTION

If we evaluate ourselves by our own standard of righteousness, we will mistakenly think we are fit for heaven. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul shows that God's law sets a standard so high that no one can keep it through his own efforts. Once this delusion is removed, we can find genuine assurance by trusting Christ alone for our salvation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can redeemed people prefer to sin rather than obey the One who died for them?
2. Does anyone love Christ perfectly? If someone loves Him at all, how will it manifest in his or her life?
3. How does looking to the cross rather than at our sin bring assurance? How does looking to the promises of God assure us of our salvation?
4. Name some right and wrong motives for attending church. Why do you attend church?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. The rich young ruler is an example of what type of person?
 - a. One who understands what God's law requires and believes he has obeyed it
 - b. One who does not understand the requirements of God's law
 - c. One who does not care what God's law requires
 - d. One who understands the requirements of God's law and knows he has not obeyed it

2. Which theologian was so unsettled over his guilt that he was at the confessional for hours each day?
 - a. Augustine
 - b. Martin Luther
 - c. John Calvin
 - d. Thomas Aquinas
3. How did Dr. Sproul describe those who think they have attained the holiness that God requires?
 - a. Underestimated
 - b. Proven
 - c. Deluded
 - d. Holy
4. What reason did Dr. Sproul give for teaching that attending church does not save?
 - a. Church attendance is inconsequential.
 - b. The church is an unimportant institution.
 - c. The church is a servant, not a mediator.
 - d. Church attendance is only part of the equation for salvation.
5. Dr. Sproul said that to gain assurance of our salvation, we must not ask if we love Christ perfectly, but if we love Him:
 - a. Enough
 - b. Most of the time
 - c. Like a family member
 - d. At all
6. What movement says that someone can achieve holiness in this life through a special act of grace?
 - a. The perfectionist movement
 - b. The Anabaptist movement
 - c. The Socinian movement
 - d. The semi-Pelagian movement

Answer Key—The Assurance of Salvation -

Part 2

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 5

1. **B.**

The rich young ruler thought he knew what the law of God required, but he did not really understand its requirements. He believed that he had perfectly kept the law and was deserving of eternal life, while in reality he had broken the first commandment by making earthly possessions his god.

2. **B.**

Unlike the rich young ruler, Luther was overtly aware of his own sinfulness. Most people try to suppress their guilt and separate themselves from it, but Luther kept it before him.

3. **C.**

Dr. Sproul described anyone who believes he has attained the holiness that God requires as deluded. The requirements of the law of God are impossible for a fallen person to keep, even if that person has been redeemed. Scripture teaches that breaking the law at one point incurs the guilt of breaking the law at every point (James 2:10) and that one who says he is without sin deceives himself (1 John 1:8).

4. **C.**

Dr. Sproul explained that one should not look to his own church attendance or service in the church to assure him of salvation. The church cannot save because it is not a mediator between God and man. Rather, it is a servant to the only true Mediator, Jesus Christ.

5. **D.**

Dr. Sproul made the point that one should examine whether he loves Jesus at all for assurance of salvation. It is impossible for a natural man to genuinely love Jesus, so any love for Him reveals a regenerate heart.

6. **A.**

The perfectionist movement teaches that someone can achieve perfection in this life through a special act of grace poured out in a second baptism of the Holy Spirit. While there are many Scriptures that deny the legitimacy of such a doctrine, Dr. Sproul appealed to Romans 7 to show how even the Apostle Paul struggled with sinfulness after his conversion.

6

The Indwelling Power of Love

INTRODUCTION

In 1 Corinthians 13:1, Paul writes, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.” He goes on to describe the characteristics of agape—the Christlike love that indwells every believer. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul begins a study of the fruit of the Spirit with an examination of love—the foundation on which all the other fruit rests.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the signs of love in the life of a Christian? What Scriptures come to mind when thinking about this question?
2. Explain how a ministry might fail on account of lack of love.
3. The power of love that indwells the believer can be either augmented or diminished. What weakens the power of love in our lives? What strengthens it?
4. What is the proper relationship between the fruit of the Spirit and the use of the gifts of the Spirit?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. According to Dr. Sproul, which of the following works of the Spirit are underemphasized?
 - a. Gifts
 - b. Fruit
 - c. Regeneration
 - d. Indwelling

2. The foundational gift and fruit of the Spirit is which of the following?
 - a. Prophecy
 - b. Tongues
 - c. Joy
 - d. Love
3. The manifestation of the spiritual gifts apart from love adds up to which of the following?
 - a. Futility
 - b. Hatred
 - c. Ignorance
 - d. Division
4. Contemporary culture views love as something that happens to you, but the Bible speaks of love in what terms?
 - a. Ambiguous
 - b. Active
 - c. Definite
 - d. Passive
5. It is impossible for a person to have which kind of love unless the Holy Spirit dwells in him?
 - a. *Phileo*
 - b. *Eros*
 - c. *Agape*
 - d. All of the above
6. What do theologians call indwelling *agape* love?
 - a. *Habitus*
 - b. *Vox Dei*
 - c. *Homousios*
 - d. *Iustitia spiritualis*

Answer Key—The Indwelling Power of Love

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 6

1. **B.**

According to Dr. Sproul, the gifts of the Spirit are emphasized more than they should be in the evangelical community, whereas there is a lack of emphasis on the fruit of the Spirit. It is easy to become preoccupied with the gifts of the Spirit to the neglect of the fruit of the Spirit, but there ought to be a balance. Further, if there is an accent to be detected in Scripture, it is on the development of the fruit of the Spirit.

2. **D.**

The foundational gift and fruit of the Holy Spirit is love. It is greater than all the other gifts and the cause of all the other fruit of the Spirit, as Paul makes clear in 1 Corinthians 13.

3. **A.**

Paul says that the gifts apart from love are nothing but a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal (1 Cor. 13:1). Without love, the gifts add up to futility, a useless striving after the wind.

4. **B.**

Culture often uses phrases like “falling in love,” which imply that love is something that passively happens. Scripture, however, defines love in active terms. It does not just include feelings but also activity.

5. **C.**

Agape love is not ordinary love, but divinely-infused love. The Holy Spirit enables this love to work in the Christian, which is the basis of the fruit of the Spirit described in 1 Corinthians 13. This love cannot exist in the natural man but only in the redeemed man by the work of the Holy Spirit.

6. **A.**

Theologians refer to indwelling agape love as a habitus. It is not a habit in the sense of something we do which becomes part of a routine but refers to the habitation of love within a person. This infusion of love from the Holy Spirit can increase or decrease throughout a person’s life, but it is always there and cannot be lost.

The Practice of Love

INTRODUCTION

The financier J.P. Morgan once observed, “A man usually has two reasons for doing something: one that sounds good and the real one.” This tendency to mistrust others’ motives is at the heart of our alienation from others. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul examines how we as Christians can counteract this tendency by practicing “the judgment of charity.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Jesus said that if someone sins against you, discuss it with him first. Do most Christians follow this rule? How might following this rule solve many of the problems that come from misjudging the motives of others?
2. *Agape* love inclines your heart to desire justice tempered with mercy toward others, thus mirroring God’s love. How is God’s justice tempered with mercy in His dealings with you?
3. When you love others, how does it affect the way you talk to them and about them?
4. Proverbs 15:1 says, “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” Have you seen the truth of this principle in your own life? If you have, how so?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. What does love incline the heart to desire for one’s neighbor?
 - a. Judgment
 - b. Vengeance

- c. Justice
- d. Acceptance

2. Who said, “An envious, malicious, cold, and hard-hearted Christian is the greatest absurdity and contradiction”?
 - a. Augustine
 - b. Thomas à Kempis
 - c. Jonathan Edwards
 - d. George Whitefield
3. What does the presence of love restrain the power of ?
 - a. Guilt
 - b. Temptation
 - c. Bitterness
 - d. Sadness
4. A Christian can increase the power of indwelling love by practicing a judgment of which of the following?
 - a. Charity
 - b. Discernment
 - c. Righteousness
 - d. Peace
5. What did Dr. Sproul describe as “worst-case analysis”?
 - a. Being too trusting
 - b. Thinking of the worst thing you can do to someone who has hurt you
 - c. Practicing discernment when it comes to others
 - d. Attributing the worst of motives to others
6. Attributing the best of all possible motives to sinful actions is something we normally reserve for ourselves.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Answer Key—The Practice of Love

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 7

1. **C.**

Love inclines the heart to do justice towards one's neighbor. It does not want to cheat or defraud one's neighbor, but rather to seek his good. This kind of justice inclined by love is a justice tempered with mercy.

2. **C.**

Jonathan Edwards wrote in Charity and Its Fruits that an unloving Christian is a contradiction. This does not mean that Christians will never struggle with resentment, but it does mean that Christians must be aware of its destructive power to eliminate love. Rather than revel in this kind of behavior, Christians must seek to fight against it.

3. **C.**

The presence of love in the heart restrains the power of bitterness towards others. Bitterness is the root of sins such as slander and gossip, which can do great harm to others who are made in the image of God. Genuine love causes us to desire the best for others rather than being bitter towards them.

4. **A.**

The Christian can increase the power of indwelling love by using a judgment of charity. This skill can be developed through the practice of giving others the benefit of the doubt. Social interactions always involve an evaluation of others, and practicing a judgment of charity is one practical way the Christian can love his neighbor.

5. **D.**

“Worst-case analysis” attributes the worst possible motives to others in social interactions. This involves trying to read other people’s hearts when they hurt us, something that people cannot do with perfect accuracy. Because believers ought to practice a judgment of charity, we should not always assume the worst about people’s motives, but instead give them the benefit of the doubt.

6. **A.**

As sinful human beings, we are often naturally inclined to attribute the best possible motives to ourselves. When we hurt others, it is much easier for us to think that we have simply made a mistake. Recognizing this can help us be more charitable to others.

8

Joy and Peace

INTRODUCTION

While instructing a group of seminary students on the subject of sermon delivery, Charles H. Spurgeon said, “When you speak of heaven, let your face light up with a heavenly gleam. Let your eyes shine with reflected glory. And when you speak of hell—well, then your usual face will do.” Spurgeon’s wit strikes at the heart of an all-too-common problem among believers—a lack of joy. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul examines the character of true joy and its source in Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the inseparable relationship between peace and joy as fruit of the Spirit?
2. If a fellow Christian lost his sense of joy because of some tragedy, how could you help him rediscover the deep, abiding joy of Christ?
3. Paul’s command to believers in Romans 12:18 concedes that it is not always possible to live at peace with others. Why not?
4. Should we seek peace with others at all costs? How does Christian peace differ from worldly peace?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. The structure of the passage in Galatians 5 on the fruit of the Spirit can be described in which of the following ways?
 - a. Random
 - b. Without consequence
 - c. Descending order of importance
 - d. Flowing out of love

2. John Calvin defined joy as a disposition toward what?
 - a. Frivolity
 - b. Peace
 - c. Happiness
 - d. Cheerfulness
3. What is the Christian's joy grounded in?
 - a. The victory of Christ
 - b. The greatness of the church
 - c. Their quality of life
 - d. Their good works
4. In Scripture, “peace” is often used as a synonym for which of the following words?
 - a. *Love*
 - b. *Salvation*
 - c. *Joy*
 - d. *Self-control*
5. What Luther defines as “carnal peace” is not motivated by love, but by what?
 - a. A common goal
 - b. Cowardice
 - c. Hope
 - d. Survival
6. The peace that the Christian possesses is greater than the peace of the world because it has a different source.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Answer Key—Joy and Peace

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 8

1. **D.**

In Galatians 5, Paul puts love first in the list of the fruit of the Spirit. This order does not reveal a random collection of loosely connected virtues, but it communicates that love is the foundation from which all the other fruit flows.

2. **D.**

Calvin defined joy as a disposition towards cheerfulness. As the Holy Spirit indwells the believer, He begins to shape the Christian's personality by the presence of agape in the soul. This working of the Spirit enables the Christian to have a cheerful disposition and a joy that is grounded in truth.

3. **A.**

The Christian's joy is grounded in the victory of Christ, who has overcome the world (John 16:33). Because of this, the believer does not need to manufacture a superficial happiness. Rather, the Christian's joy is grounded in the objective work of Christ, and the Spirit enables him to have joy even in the midst of dire circumstances.

4. **B.**

In Scripture, “peace” is often used as a synonym for the word salvation. It represents the reconciliation between men in both relationships with God and with one another. Mankind estranged themselves from God through sin, but peace is made through the mediation of Christ, who brings salvation.

5. **B.**

Luther described “carnal peace” as that which is motivated by cowardice. Rather than being honorable, this kind of peace reveals a readiness to compromise in the wrong places. It is a false peace which betrays a desire to avoid conflict and seeks to appease others rather than to love others.

6. **A.**

The peace that the Christian possesses comes from God through the mediation of Christ. Because Christ is the source of this peace rather than the uncertain foundation of peace that comes from the world, the Christian's peace is greater than the peace of the world.

9

Longsuffering and Kindness

INTRODUCTION

Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, was once reminded by a friend of how someone had hurt her years before. “Don’t you remember the wrong done to you?” the friend asked. “No,” Clara replied, “I distinctly remember forgetting that.” This ability to “forgive and forget” is rooted in the fruit of the Spirit discussed in this lesson: patience and kindness. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul explains how these biblical concepts are rooted in the character of God and how we can practice them in our pursuit of spiritual growth.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. You’ve probably heard the phrase “Don’t get mad, get even.” How is vengeance exalted and legitimized in our culture?
2. How is it possible for you to recognize that false accusations for the sake of Christ are a blessing?
3. Think of a kind act you have witnessed or heard about. What was it about the act, the person who did it, or the way it was done that made it kind? How can we consistently incorporate these qualities in what we do for others?
4. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul gave an example of a time he was overly eager to correct someone’s petty mistake. Why is it easy for us to be quick to find fault or correct small mistakes? What steps can believers take to grow in this area?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. Patience is the ability to endure what over a period of time?
 - a. Patiently

- b. Boredom
- c. Pain
- d. Gossip

2. How is the Hebrew word *hesed* often translated?
 - a. “Steadfast love”
 - b. “Kindness”
 - c. “Patience”
 - d. “Justice”
3. What reason did Jonathan Edwards give for refusing to defend himself against false charges?
 - a. He felt that he didn’t need to be defended.
 - b. He preferred God’s vindication over his own.
 - c. A lawyer was going to defend him instead.
 - d. He thought defending himself would make no difference in the outcome.
4. Justice, vindication, and revenge are practically the same things.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. According to Dr. Sproul, a serious problem for Christian growth is which of the following?
 - a. Pettiness
 - b. Alcohol
 - c. Tolerance
 - d. Discipline
6. Which fruit of the Spirit did Dr. Sproul link to overcoming pettiness?
 - a. Joy
 - b. Peace
 - c. Kindness
 - d. Faithfulness

Answer Key—Longsuffering and Kindness

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 9

1. **C.**

Patience is the ability to endure pain over time. Certain things that are delayed for a long time can cause pain in the life of the believer, which is why it is so closely connected to the idea of longsuffering.

2. **A.**

The Hebrew word hesed is often translated in Scripture as “steadfast love.” While love in human relationships is often subject to change based on actions or circumstances, God’s love is not subject to change. Rather, His love is consistent, permanent, and sure.

3. **B.**

While pastoring in Northampton, Massachusetts during the Great Awakening, Jonathan Edwards had his character unjustly slandered by a man in his town. The rumors that this man started began to spread, but Edwards refused to speak in his own defense. Instead, he said that he preferred God’s vindication over his own.

4. **B.**

Justice, revenge, and vindication are not synonymous, though they are related. Justice occurs when there is a right and proportional balance between sin and punishment or virtue and reward. Vindication happens when someone innocent is cleared against false accusations. Revenge may appear similar to justice, but it is done with a desire to pay back a wound that was given rather than out of righteousness.

5. **A.**

Dr. Sproul explained that pettiness, or nitpicking over little things, is a major problem for Christian growth. Pettiness is a sign of immaturity and is often motivated by unnecessarily making oneself out to be superior at the expense of someone else.

6. **C.**

Dr. Sproul linked kindness to overcoming pettiness. Kindness, as a fruit of the Spirit, is a result of first being an object of God’s kindness. It allows a person to cover over sins and preserve another’s reputation.

10

Goodness and Faith

INTRODUCTION

Simple, childlike faith, although commanded by Christ, is often something we have difficulty with when we encounter the pressures and responsibilities of adulthood. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul looks at the biblical definitions of faith and goodness and explores the ways in which we may practice these virtues in our relationships with God and others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Dr. Sproul said, “One thing sadly lacking in the Christian community today is a deep appreciation for aesthetics.” Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. Bach composed his music as an apologetic for the existence of God. Can excellence in the arts or other occupations defend the truth of Christianity today? If so, how?
3. What are some implications of goodness as a fruit of the Spirit in developing an appreciation for excellence in the arts, our work, and our relationships with one another? Give specific examples.
4. With the fruit of goodness comes a new appreciation for what is good, true, and beautiful. Have you experienced this as a Christian? Give examples in any or all three of these areas.

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. To be genuinely good, a good deed must be motivated by what?
 - a. Love for humanity
 - b. A desire to please God

- c. The hope of heavenly rewards
- d. Self-denial

2. According to Scripture, who does good apart from God Himself?
 - a. No one
 - b. All
 - c. Many
 - d. Few
3. Which theologian pointed out that the fruit of goodness carries with it a new ability to appreciate excellence?
 - a. John Calvin
 - b. Martin Luther
 - c. Jonathan Edwards
 - d. Augustine
4. What is the basic meaning of the biblical word for faith?
 - a. Trust
 - b. Credulity
 - c. Love
 - d. Assent
5. According to Dr. Sproul, why do people choose to sin rather than obedience to God?
 - a. We don't know that sin is wrong.
 - b. We think sin will make us happy.
 - c. We think sin will draw us away from God.
 - d. We think sin will increase God's grace.
6. Who said, "The Holy Spirit is not a skeptic"?
 - a. Martin Luther
 - b. Jonathan Edwards
 - c. John Calvin
 - d. John Owen

Answer Key—Goodness and Faith

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 10

1. **B.**

While external obedience to the demands of the law is one component of a good deed, that alone is not enough. For a good deed to be genuinely good, it must externally conform to the law of God and be internally motivated by a desire to please God.

2. **A.**

According to Scripture, “No one does good, not even one” (Rom. 3:12). Goodness is a relative term which must be defined according to a standard, namely external conformity to God’s law and an inward desire to please God. Because man is fallen, however, his desire is not naturally oriented to pleasing God.

3. **C.**

According to Edwards, goodness allows someone to further appreciate excellence wherever it is found. Dr. Sproul pointed to medieval architecture and cathedrals that were designed to display the supremacy of Christ over creation as examples of excellence.

4. **A.**

The basic meaning of the Greek word for faith is “trust.” When faith becomes fruitful, we have an increased capacity to believe God, which has a direct impact on our struggle with sin. The Holy Spirit helps us trust more deeply in God, develop a more trusting disposition, and become more trustworthy ourselves as we gradually grow in sanctification.

5. **B.**

We choose to sin because we think it will make us happy, and it can for a time, but it inevitably ends in guilt and pain. When we seek to glorify God, however, we experience joy in Him. There is delight in obedience to the law of the Lord because it is full of wisdom and acts as light unto our path, keeping us from self-destruction.

6. **A.**

Luther once remarked, “The Holy Spirit is not a skeptic.” Dr. Sproul used this point to show that the Spirit will guide the believer to not be skeptical of others but give them the benefit of the doubt, developing an appropriately more trusting disposition.

Meekness and Self-Control

INTRODUCTION

In this day of self-assertiveness and macho heroes, the word *meekness* conjures up the image of weakness. But the Bible offers a vastly different concept of meekness. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul examines how meekness, gentleness, strength, and self-control operate hand in hand.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of person do you envision as meek? Does Jesus Christ fit your conception of a meek person? Explain.
2. Dr. Sproul mentioned a popular book titled *Winning through Intimidation*. What do those who live by this secular philosophy usually win? What do they lose?
3. The political philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli taught that a leader is better off making his subjects fear him rather than gently trying to win their love. Do you agree? Why or why not?
4. According to Dr. Sproul, what issue often lies beneath the surface of intimidation tactics? What can Christians do to guard themselves against using intimidation in their relationships and seek to manifest the fruit of the Spirit instead?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. Meekness is attributed to some of the Bible's most powerful characters.
 - a. True
 - b. False

2. Gentleness presupposes which of the following?
 - a. Divinity
 - b. Leadership
 - c. Sin
 - d. Strength
3. The more power and authority one has, the more one needs to combine them with which of the following?
 - a. Ruthlessness
 - b. Gentleness
 - c. Autonomy
 - d. Wealth
4. Self-control is a manifestation of the Spirit, who is not the author of confusion but of:
 - a. Reason
 - b. Divinization
 - c. Order
 - d. Chaos
5. What metaphor did Dr. Sproul use to explain the growth of a temperate Christian?
 - a. A jungle
 - b. A monastery
 - c. A farm
 - d. A garden
6. According to Dr. Sproul, which of the following describes the opposite of a gentle personality?
 - a. Tender
 - b. Powerful
 - c. Greedy
 - d. Pugnacious

Answer Key—Meekness and Self-Control

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 11

1. **A.**

Meekness is a virtue that Scripture attributes to characters like Moses, Elijah, and Jesus Himself. All of these men exhibited extraordinary power and strength, yet Scripture describes them as meek.

2. **D.**

Gentleness does not exclude strength, but presupposes it. It is, however, strength that is under control. In order to manifest a spirit of gentleness, one must possess a measure of self-control.

3. **B.**

The more power and authority one possesses, the more one needs to exercise gentleness and patience. The Holy Spirit has incredible power, but the fruit of the Spirit is gentleness, not intimidation. For those in positions of authority, showing forth the fruit of the Spirit involves carrying their power with dignity and exercising it graciously.

4. **C.**

When Paul instructed the Corinthian church about worship in 1 Corinthians 14, he grounded the principle of orderly worship in God's character. God is not the author of confusion or chaos but of peace and order. This characteristic of God extends beyond worship into other arenas, such as the Spirit's working to produce the fruit of self-control in the lives of believers.

5. **D.**

Dr. Sproul compared the growth of a temperate Christian to the growth of a garden. Gardens are intentionally restrained in order to retain order and cultivate growth, while a jungle is a place of chaos and disorder. The temperate person lives within restraints and seeks to develop the ability to bridle wild impulses, making his character more reflective of a garden than a jungle.

6. **D.**

The opposite of a gentle personality is a pugnacious, aggressive, and contentious personality. Meekness is the opposite of arrogance. The meek person does not use his strength to make others feel inferior, but to help them.

12

Growing to Maturity

INTRODUCTION

When James Garfield was president of Hiram College, a man asked him to shorten the required curriculum for his son. “He wants to graduate quickly,” said the father. “Can you arrange it?” “It depends on what you want to make of him,” Garfield replied. “When God makes an oak, He takes centuries. But He only takes two months to make a squash.” There are no shortcuts to maturity in education or in spiritual growth. In this lesson, Dr. Sproul examines what it is we all need to reach maturity in Christ: commitment, perseverance, patience, and the diligent use of the means of grace.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What words, attitudes, or actions might be typical of immature Christians but are not appropriate for mature believers? What passages of Scripture come to mind that can inform your answer?
2. Scripture says to be infants in regard to evil (1 Cor. 14:20). What does this mean? What might you gain by being an infant in regard to evil?
3. Do you see Christians avoiding serious study of doctrine and theology in the church today? What excuses have you heard (or used yourself) against serious study? How would you now respond to those excuses?
4. What have you learned from this series on developing Christian character? What steps will you take to develop habits which will benefit you in your growth as a believer?

REVIEW QUIZ

Use these multiple-choice questions to measure what you learned from this lesson.

1. What is the end of sanctification?

- a. Glorification
- b. Regeneration
- c. Divinization
- d. Justification

2. Childlike faith involves trusting God in which of the following ways?
 - a. Normally
 - b. Usually
 - c. Often
 - d. Implicitly
3. The Bible calls us to be babes in regard to evil, but what does it call us to be in regard to understanding?
 - a. Childlike
 - b. Mature
 - c. Ignorant
 - d. Indifferent
4. Why did Dr. Sproul get excited about the small, inedible apples on his apple tree?
 - a. They would make a good treat for the squirrels in his yard.
 - b. They were the first sign of fruit on the tree.
 - c. He knew they would be good for apple pie.
 - d. He wanted to show them to his grandchildren.
5. The tools necessary for spiritual growth are referred to as which of the following?
 - a. Means of grace
 - b. Laws
 - c. Ceremonies
 - d. Sacraments
6. Scripture teaches that we cannot know all the mysteries of the gospel, so we should be satisfied with ignorance of its teaching.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Answer Key—Growing to Maturity

REVIEW QUIZ

Lesson 12

1. **A.**

After we are justified, the process of sanctification begins, where we become more and more conformed to the image of Christ in our lives. This sanctification is finally completed in glorification, where we will finally be freed from our sin nature, given glorified and resurrected bodies, and see our Lord face-to-face.

2. **D.**

Having a childlike faith involves having a wholehearted trust in God and His Word. Augustine called this an “implicit” faith, which resembles the kind of unwavering trust a child has in his parents at an early age.

3. **B.**

Scripture calls believers to be mature in understanding the things of God (1 Cor. 14:20). The more mature a person is in his understanding of God and His works, the greater his capacity to trust God implicitly with a childlike faith.

4. **B.**

Dr. Sproul was excited by the apples on his apple tree because it was the first sign that his hard work and nurture of the tree was bearing fruit, even if the fruit was small. Sanctification is often similar to this. It is hard work that requires patience and nurture, and sometimes it is difficult to see the results, but it will bear fruit.

5. **A.**

The means of grace are instruments or tools which help us in our spiritual growth. These include the Word, sacraments, prayer, service, and fellowship with one another.

6. **B.**

Although we cannot know all the mysteries of God, we are not to be satisfied with ignorance. Rather, Scripture consistently emphasizes that believers ought to seek to grow in the knowledge of God and His will.