

Discipleship Training Course

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- Pronouns referring to the Trinity and some specific terms relating to the Trinity (such as Name and Word) have been capitalized
- Speech marks around entire quotes and at the beginning of new paragraphs have been omitted
- Anglicised spellings have been used
- All quotes begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop
- Some weights, measures and times have been replaced with easier to understand terms given in the footnotes using square brackets
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- Poetry has been indented and only new sentences start with a capital letter

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Chapter 10. Fruit of the Spirit

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1. Introduction

1.1 Key passage: Galatians 5:22-23 (NHEB)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

1.2 Gifts and fruit

The Holy Spirit works in us in two different ways: by giving us gifts and by producing fruit. The image of fruit is that which grows naturally in season when a plant is properly connected to a source of nourishment (Psalm 1 3). Jesus taught the need for His Word to remain in us for us to bear much fruit. We need to meditate on His Word.

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples.

John 15:5-8 (ESVUK)

The word “fruit” is singular. The image is of many fruit of the same kind or of segments of the same fruit, such as an orange, rather than different kinds of fruit. *Fruit represent character.* They demonstrate our salvation. They are not optional or a sign of diversity – we cannot claim to be mature by being strong in some fruit but weak in others – we have an obligation to grow all nine of the fruit mentioned in Galatians 5. We cannot make ourselves grow fruit. They are conditional on a right relationship with God.

It is possible to receive gifts of the Holy Spirit but not have character. This is very dangerous:

Not everyone who calls out to Me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of My Father in heaven will enter. On judgment day many will say to Me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in Your Name and cast out demons in Your Name and

performed many miracles in Your Name.’ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from Me, you who break God’s laws.’

Matthew 7:21-23 (NLT)

To know the Lord is to allow His Word to abide in us, causing the fruit of His Spirit to grow within us. We need to spend time waiting on God for His counsel before we exercise gifts. This will also cause our ministry to be fruitful:

*But if they had stood in My council,
then they would have proclaimed My words to My people,
and they would have turned them from their evil way,
and from the evil of their deeds.*

Jeremiah 23:22 (ESVUK)

Joseph had a gift of receiving and interpreting dreams but his character was lacking:

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father’s wives. Joseph brought an evil report of them to their father.

Genesis 37:2b (WEBPB)

Joseph had to pass through the heavy discipline of slavery and imprisonment, allowing God’s Word to abide in him, before his character came into line with his gifting:

*He called for a famine on the land.
He destroyed the food supplies.
He sent a man before them.
Joseph was sold for a slave.
They bruised his feet with shackles.
His neck was locked in irons,
until the time that His word happened,
and the LORD’s word proved him true.*

Psalms 105:16-19 (WEBPB)

Notice how God was proving His word true in Joseph and not Joseph proving God’s Word true in him. God desires truth in our inmost being (Psalm 51:6). We are made clean by His Word abiding in us (John 15:3). This enabled God to promote Joseph to a position of responsibility after the “I” in him had died:

*And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” Joseph answered Pharaoh, **“It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favourable answer.”***

Genesis 41:15-16 (ESVUK)

Fruit therefore precede gifts in terms of importance for believers. We shall now consider the nine fruit of the Holy Spirit described in Galatians 5 in turn.

2. Love

The word for love in the New Testament is *agape* which means love in a spiritual sense. In the term *s’agapo*, which means *I love you* in Ancient Greek, it often refers to a general affection or deeper sense of **true unconditional love** rather than the attraction suggested by *eros*. This love is selfless; it gives and expects nothing in return. *Agape* is used in 1 Corinthians 13 and is described there and throughout the New Testament as sacrificial and spiritual love. Whether the love given is returned or not, the person continues to love (even without any self-benefit). *Agape* is also used in ancient texts to denote feelings for one’s children and the feelings for a spouse, and it was also used to refer to a love feast. It can

also be described as the feeling of being content or holding one in high regard. Agape was used by Christians to express the unconditional love of God.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13 (ESVUK)

The new commandment Jesus gave His disciples went beyond the old commandment:

One of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together. Knowing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which commandment is the greatest of all?"

Jesus answered, "The greatest is, 'Hear, Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is One: you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. The second is like this, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Mark 12:28-31 (WEBPB)

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

John 13:34-35 (WEBPB)

This new commandment is the essence of the New Covenant. To love others as Christ loved us means we need to love them when they do not deserve to be loved. Notice how the new commandment does not even mention loving God. However, this is explained in 1 John 4:19-21 (WEBPB):

We love Him, because He first loved us. If a man says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who doesn't love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? This commandment we have from Him, that he who loves God should also love his brother.

There are also two corresponding principles. The principle of the Old Covenant is one of equal action and reaction.

Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

Matthew 7:12 (NLT)

The principle of the New Covenant is unequal:

And He said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

Mark 4:24-25 (ESVUK)

Whatever we measure out to others will be returned to us with interest. This is why it is so important to listen to God through the Holy Spirit, obey and operate according to grace rather than the law. This is illustrated in the parable of the unmerciful servant:

At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, "Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?"

Jesus replied, "Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven."

The kingdom of God is like a king who decided to square accounts with his servants. As he got under way, one servant was brought before him who had run up a debt of a hundred thousand dollars. He couldn't pay up, so the king ordered the man, along with his wife, children, and goods, to be auctioned off at the slave market.

The poor wretch threw himself at the king's feet and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' Touched by his plea, the king let him off, erasing the debt.

The servant was no sooner out of the room when he came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him ten dollars. He seized him by the throat and demanded, 'Pay up. Now!'

The poor wretch threw himself down and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' But he wouldn't do it. He had him arrested and put in jail until the debt was paid. When the other servants saw this going on, they were outraged and brought a detailed report to the king.

*The king summoned the man and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave your entire debt when you begged me for mercy. Shouldn't you be compelled to be merciful to your fellow servant who asked for mercy?' The king was furious and put the screws to the man until he paid back his entire debt. **And that's exactly what My Father in heaven is going to do to each one of you who doesn't forgive unconditionally anyone who asks for mercy.***

Matthew 18:21-35 (MSG)

If we receive forgiveness from God but do not measure it out to others we frustrate the work of the Kingdom and allow ourselves to be *tormented*.

*His lord was angry, and delivered him to the **tormentors**, until he should pay all that was due to him.*

Matthew 18:34 (WEBPB)

To love unconditionally is to forgive unconditionally:

When they came to the place that is called "The Skull", they crucified Him there with the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left.

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."

Luke 23:33-34a (WEBPB)

Love was demonstrated by Jesus in its fullness through His sacrifice for us upon the cross:

For God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

John 3:16 (WEBPB)

But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8 (ESVUK)

This enables us to know the love of God in a covenant sense of knowing:

He said to Abram, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give you this land to inherit it."

He said, "Lord GOD, how will I know that I will inherit it?"

He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

Genesis 15:7-9 (WEBPB)

God was not angry with Abraham when he asked how he could know His promise was true. Instead, God immediately made a covenant with him. This is how we can know the love of God in our hearts in a way that surpasses knowledge in our heads:

And to know Christ's love which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:19 (WEBPB)

But how do we receive this love? God has already poured it into our hearts. We need to believe and receive:

And hope doesn't disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Romans 5:5 (WEBPB)

It was Paul's testimony through his experience of many trials that it is impossible for us to be separated and disconnected from Christ's love:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,

*"For Your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."*

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35-39 (ESVUK)

The love of God is also seen in our adoption as sons of God through Christ's sacrifice:

See how great a love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God!

1 John 3:1a (WEBPB)

When we believe in Jesus and receive Him by faith the Father bestows special love upon us:

For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came from God.

John 16:27 (WEBPB)

Obedience to the truth also causes a brotherly love to be manifest in us:

Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart.

1 Peter 1:22 (NASB1995)

John encourages us that the command to love one another is not burdensome:

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him. By this we know that we love the

children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments. **For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**

1 John 5:1-5 (ESVUK)

Conversely, walking in love affects the quality of our faith:

*For [if we are] in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, **but only faith activated and expressed and working through love.***

Galatians 5:6 (AMP)

3. Joy

Joy is different from happiness, which is circumstantial. Joy is a **spiritual state of gladness** which is imparted to us when we are in **right relationship with God**.

*Fire blazed forth from the LORD's presence and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. **When the people saw this, they shouted with joy and fell face down on the ground.***

Leviticus 9:24 (NLT)

*Then the whole assembly agreed together to keep the feast for another seven days. So they kept it for another seven days with gladness. For Hezekiah king of Judah gave the assembly 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep for offerings, and the princes gave the assembly 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep. And the priests consecrated themselves in great numbers. The whole assembly of Judah, and the priests and the Levites, and the whole assembly that came out of Israel, and the sojourners who came out of the land of Israel, and the sojourners who lived in Judah, rejoiced. **So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem.** Then the priests and the Levites arose and blessed the people, and their voice was heard, and their prayer came to his holy habitation in heaven.*

2 Chronicles 30:23-27 (ESVUK)

The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your Name!"

*In that same hour **Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit**, and said, "I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and understanding, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in Your sight."*

Luke 10:17, 21 (WEBPB)

*Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, **but your sorrow will turn into joy.** When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. So also you have sorrow now, **but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.***

John 16:20-22 (ESVUK)

*Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed to them the Christ. The multitudes listened with one accord to the things that were spoken by Philip when they heard and saw the signs which he did. For unclean spirits came out of many of those who had them. They came out, crying with a loud voice. Many who had been paralysed and lame were healed. **There was great joy in that city.***

Acts 8:5-8 (WEBPB)

Each of these examples describes spontaneous joy coming out of a right relationship with God and the experience of His goodness. However, joy is not limited to these kinds of experiences: it can also come upon us when in faith and obedience we **choose to rejoice in the Lord**.

Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I will say, “Rejoice!”

Philippians 4:4 (WEBPB)

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart.

I will tell of all Your marvellous works.

I will be glad and rejoice in You.

I will sing praise to Your Name, O Most High.

Psalms 9:1-2 (WEBPB)

Joy is a perspective we can choose to have of our trying circumstances as a God-given opportunity to grow. This is not a struggle or a mistake but, according to James, is **great joy**:

Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

James 1:2-3 (HCSB)

Rejoicing in trials will lead to us being **overjoyed** when God comes through for us:

Instead, rejoice as you share in the sufferings of the Messiah, so that you may also rejoice with great joy at the revelation of His glory.

1 Peter 4:13 (HCSB)

Having joy and rejoicing has the benefit of **giving us strength**:

*And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law. Then he said to them, “Go on your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our LORD. **And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.**” So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, “Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.” And all the people went on their way to eat and drink and to send portions and **to make great rejoicing**, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.*

Nehemiah 8:9-12 (ESVUK)

Blessed be the LORD,

because He has heard the voice of my petitions.

The LORD is my strength and my shield.

My heart has trusted in Him, and I am helped.

Therefore my heart greatly rejoices.

With my song I will thank Him.

Psalms 28:6-7 (WEBPB)

Sing aloud to God, our strength!

Make a joyful shout to the God of Jacob!

Psalms 81:1 (WEBPB)

Joy can also be the fruit of sowing our tears and **investing our sorrows in the Lord’s presence**:

Those who sow in tears will reap in joy.

*He who goes out weeping, carrying seed for sowing,
will certainly come again with joy, carrying his sheaves.*

Psalms 126:5-6 (WEBPB)

Hannah was unable to rejoice with her family because of her barrenness and the provocation of her rival but later she rejoiced after sowing her tears in the temple and receiving a miracle child.

She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly. And she vowed a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your servant and remember me and not forget Your servant, but will give to Your servant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head."

1 Samuel 1:10-11 (ESVUK)

Hannah prayed:

My heart rejoices in the LORD;
my horn is lifted up by the LORD.
My mouth boasts over my enemies,
because I rejoice in Your salvation.
There is no one holy like the LORD.
There is no one besides You!
And there is no rock like our God.

1 Samuel 2:1-2 (HCSB)

There is a joy in **salvation** (Psalm 51:12) which Peter describes as **inexpressible and glorious**:

*Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him **and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory**, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

1 Peter 1:8-9 (ESVUK)

Salvation is also a cause of great rejoicing in heaven:

*I tell you that even so **there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.***

Luke 15:7 (WEBPB)

Finally, the Bible talks about **complete joy**. John the Baptist was not threatened by the emergence of Jesus' ministry but understood that he needed to give way:

*He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. **So this joy of mine is now complete.***

John 3:29 (NHEB)

Jesus linked joy to remaining in His love and obeying the Father's command to love others as He loves us:

*Even as the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you. Remain in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and remain in His love. I have spoken these things to you, **that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be made full.***

This is My commandment, that you love one another, even as I have loved you.

John 15:9-12 (WEBPB)

Paul associates **unity** and **like-mindedness** with complete joy.

*If therefore there is any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassion, **make my joy full** by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*

Philippians 2:1-2 (WEBPB)

4. Peace

Peace is an **inner sense of wellbeing**. Jesus left His peace with His disciples after promising to teach and remind them of everything they needed to know through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit:

*But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My Name, will teach you all things, and will remind you of all that I said to you. **Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you;** not as the world gives, I give to you. Don't let your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful.*

John 14:26-27 (WEBPB)

Jesus also encouraged His disciples to be peaceful when they may have been alarmed:

*As they were talking about these things, Jesus Himself stood among them, and said to them, **"Peace to you!"***

Luke 24:36 (ESVUK)

The LORD is Peace is one of the covenant names of God. It was given to Gideon in a similar situation:

When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he cried out, "Oh, Sovereign LORD, I'm doomed! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!"

*"It is all right," the LORD replied. "Do not be afraid. You will not die." And Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and named it **Yahweh-Shalom (which means "the LORD is Peace")**.*

Judges 6:22-24a (NLT)

The word for peace here is **shalom**, meaning an overall state of health, wholeness and wellbeing. Peace comes from being in right relationship with God:

*Now yield and submit yourself to Him [agree with God and be conformed to His will] **and be at peace;***

In this way [you will prosper and great] good will come to you.

Job 22:21 (AMP)

The **work of Jesus on the cross** brought peace between Jews and Gentiles by providing peace with God for us all:

***For He is our peace**, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in the flesh the hostility, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man of the two, making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by which He put to death their enmity. He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.*

Ephesians 2:14-18 (NHEB)

Peace is also a **state of mind** when we are controlled by the Holy Spirit:

*For the mind set on the flesh is death, but **the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.***

Romans 8:6 (NHEB)

Peace is the consequence of bringing all our concerns to God in **prayer**. It will guard both our hearts and our minds:

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*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. **And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding**, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:6-7 (NHEB)

Peace should be a **way of life** for us. We should allow peace to rule in our hearts:

*And **let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts**, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

Colossians 3:15 (NHEB)

Peace is also a quality of **wisdom**:

*But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then **peaceful**, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*

James 3:17 (WEBPB)

We should choose the way of inner peace in order to walk in wisdom:

*Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gets understanding. For her good profit is better than getting silver, and her return is better than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies. None of the things you can desire are to be compared to her. Length of days is in her right hand. In her left hand are riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness. **All her paths are peace**. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her, and those who hold on to her are blessed.*

Proverbs 3:13-18 (NHEB)

Jesus also encourages us to be **peacemakers**.

***Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.***

Matthew 5:9 (WEBPB)

Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

James 3:18 (NIVUK)

However, the Gospel will sometime lead is to confrontation and hostility:

I came to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already set ablaze! But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how it consumes Me until it is finished! Do you think that I came here to give peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on, five in one household will be divided: three against two, and two against three.

*They will be divided, father against son,
son against father,
mother against daughter,
daughter against mother,
mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law,
and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.*

Luke 12:49-53 (HCSB)

We should not be deceived by seeking for an outward peace when there is no inner peace:

*They have treated superficially the [bloody] broken wound of My people,
**Saying, 'Peace, peace,'
When there is no peace.***

Jeremiah 6:14 (AMP)

*The fact is that they've lied to My people. **They've said, 'No problem; everything's just fine,' when things are not at all fine.** When people build a wall, they're right behind them slapping on whitewash. Tell those who are slapping on the whitewash, 'When a torrent of rain comes and the hailstones crash down and the hurricane sweeps in and the wall collapses, what's the good of the whitewash that you slapped on so liberally, making it look so good?'*

Ezekiel 13:10-12 (MSG)

We are promised **great peace** when we love God's word:

Those who love your law have great peace.

Nothing causes them to stumble.

Psalms 119:165 (WEBPB)

It was also promised to the barren woman in Isaiah 54:

All your children will be taught by the LORD;

and your children's peace will be great.

Isaiah 54:13 (WEBPB)

According to Galatians 4:26-27, this promise relates to the heavenly Jerusalem (the city of peace) who is our mother.

5. Patience

Patience is commended as a virtue in the Bible:

Better a patient person than a warrior,

one with self-control than one who takes a city.

Proverbs 16:32 (NIVUK)

James reminds us that, like a patient farmer waiting for a valuable harvest, we too should demonstrate patience because the Lord's coming is near:

*Dear brothers and sisters, **be patient as you wait for the Lord's return.** Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. **You, too, must be patient.** Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near.*

James 5:7-8 (NLT)

Patience is a quality of love (1 Corinthians 13:4). God is patient with us:

*The Lord is not slow concerning His promise, as some count slowness; but **He is patient with us**, not wishing that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

2 Peter 3:9 (WEBPB)

We need to measure out patience to others, taking the example of the unmerciful servant mentioned above (Matthew 18:21-35). Paul's prayer to the Colossians included a request for them to have great endurance and patience:

*And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. May you be strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, **for all endurance and patience** with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.*

Colossians 1:9-12 (ESVUK)

Paul was also very aware of God's patience towards him:

*But I received mercy for this reason, so that in me, the worst of them, Christ Jesus might demonstrate **His extraordinary patience** as an example to those who would believe in Him for eternal life.*

1 Timothy 1:16 (HCSB)

Paul encouraged Timothy to demonstrate great patience in the way he preached:

*I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word [as an official messenger]; be ready when the time is right and even when it is not [keep your sense of urgency, whether the opportunity seems favourable or unfavourable, whether convenient or inconvenient, whether welcome or unwelcome]; correct [those who err in doctrine or behaviour], warn [those who sin], exhort and encourage [those who are growing toward spiritual maturity], **with inexhaustible patience** and [faithful] teaching.*

2 Timothy 4:1-2 (AMP)

Patience is a fruit of wisdom and understanding:

A patient person shows great understanding,
but a quick-tempered one promotes foolishness.

Proverbs 14:29 (HCSB)

A person's insight gives him patience,
and his virtue is to overlook an offense.

Proverbs 19:11 (HCSB)

Patience comes out of humility:

*The end of a matter is better than its beginning;
a patient spirit is better than a proud spirit.
Don't let your spirit rush to be angry,
for anger abides in the heart of fools.*

Ecclesiastes 7:8-9 (HCSB)

6. Kindness

God is kind by nature. His loving kindness is better than life itself:

Because Your loving kindness is better than life,
my lips shall praise You.

Psalms 63:3 (WEBPB)

Kindness is a quality of God's love (1 Corinthians 13:4). It is seen in His dealings with Israel:

*In an outburst of anger
I hid My face from you for a moment,
but **with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you,**
says the LORD your Redeemer.*

Isaiah 54:8 (NASB1995)

*I shall make mention of **the lovingkindnesses of the LORD**, the praises of the LORD,
according to all that the LORD has granted us,
and the great goodness toward the house of Israel,
which He has granted them according to His compassion
and **according to the abundance of His lovingkindnesses.***

Isaiah 63:7 (NASB1995)

*The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying,
“I have loved you with an everlasting love;
therefore **I have drawn you with lovingkindness.**”*

Jeremiah 31:3 (NASB1995)

God has also been kind towards us through the gift and provision of His Son, Jesus Christ:

*Together with Christ Jesus He also raised us up and seated us in the heavens, so that in the coming ages He might display the immeasurable riches of His grace **through His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.***

Ephesians 2:6-7 (HCSB)

However, we should not misunderstand His kindness as weakness but should respond in our hearts through repentance:

*Or do you presume on **the riches of His kindness** and forbearance and patience, not knowing that **God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?***

Romans 2:4 (ESVUK)

*Note then **the kindness** and the severity of God: severity towards those who have fallen, but **God's kindness to you, provided you continue in His kindness.** Otherwise you too will be cut off.*

Romans 11:22 (ESVUK)

David was determined to show kindness to a descendent of Saul for the sake of his covenant with Saul's son, Jonathan (1 Samuel 20:14-17, 42):

*David said, “**Is there yet any who is left of Saul's house, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?**” There was of Saul's house a servant whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David; and the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?”*

He said, “I am your servant.”

The king said, “Is there not yet any of Saul's house, that I may show the kindness of God to him?”

Ziba said to the king, “Jonathan still has a son, who is lame in his feet.”

The king said to him, “Where is he?”

Ziba said to the king, “Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar.”

Then king David sent, and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar. Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, and fell on his face, and showed respect. David said, “Mephibosheth.”

He answered, “Behold, your servant!”

*David said to him, “Don't be afraid; **for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your father. You will eat bread at my table continually.**”*

2 Samuel 9:1-7 (WEBPB)

God's kindness towards Israel is likened to the kindness of a father to his child:

*I led Israel along
with My ropes of kindness and love.*

*I lifted the yoke from his neck,
and I Myself stooped to feed him.*

Hosea 11:4 (NLT)

It is important for us to have fatherly hearts of kindness towards each other. King Rehoboam's insecurity and his failure to listen to fatherly advice led him to be harsh rather than kind towards Israel, leading to the division of the nation:

Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. And as soon as Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from Egypt. And they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, "Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke on us, and we will serve you." He said to them, "Go away for three days, then come again to me." So the people went away.

*Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, who had stood before Solomon his father while he was yet alive, saying, "How do you advise me to answer this people?" And they said to him, **"If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them, and speak good words to them when you answer them, then they will be your servants for ever."** But he abandoned the counsel that the old men gave him and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him and stood before him. And he said to them, "What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, 'Lighten the yoke that your father put on us'?" And the young men who had grown up with him said to him, "Thus shall you speak to this people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you lighten it for us', thus shall you say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's thighs. And now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.'"*

*So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king said, "Come to me again on the third day." **And the king answered the people harshly**, and forsaking the counsel that the old men had given him, he spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that He might fulfil His word, which the LORD spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.*

***And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, "What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David."** So Israel went to their tents.*

1 Kings 12:1-16 (ESVUK)

However, the **roots of his separation from fatherly kindness** were sown in the sexual sin of his grandfather, King David (2 Samuel 11:1-12:14), and the idolatry of his father, King Solomon (1 Kings 11:9-13).

God has promised to restore the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers.

*Look, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome Day of the LORD comes. And **He will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers**. Otherwise, I will come and strike the land with a curse.*

Malachi 4:5-6 (HCSB)

This was partly fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist (Luke 1:17) who was Elijah to those who were able to accept it (Matthew 11:14). However, God is raising up an Elijah generation in the last days to restore heart relationships between generations, leading to a new generation with kind, fatherly hearts (Matthew 17:11).

7. Goodness

Goodness literally means to **be like God**. It is both a state of nature and a characteristic demonstrated towards others. Jesus once taught that no one is good except God Himself:

*And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? **No one is good except God alone.**"*

Mark 10:18 (ESVUK)

Goodness is a fruit of living as a **child of the light**.

*For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in **all that is good and right and true**).*

Ephesians 5:8-9 (ESVUK)

The Thessalonians were encouraged to desire to be good:

*To this end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfil **every desire of goodness** and work of faith, with power*

2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NHEB)

Goodness is associated with **righteousness**. Righteousness is both a gift and a discipline that needs to be practiced.

*In the same way, consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. Neither present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God, as alive from the dead, and your members as **instruments of righteousness to God**. For sin will not have dominion over you. For you are not under law, but under grace.*

Romans 6:11-14 (NHEB)

It is through God's promises that we are able to partake of His goodness and Divine nature:

*His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by **His own glory and goodness**. By these He has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may **share in the divine nature**, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires.*

2 Peter 1:3-4 (HCSB)

When Moses desired to come closer to God, the LORD promised to reveal His goodness to him. This was tied in with His name, representing His character:

Then Moses said, 'Now show me your glory.'

*Moses said, "Please show me Your glory." And he said, "I will make **all My goodness** pass before you and will proclaim before you My Name 'The LORD'. And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."*

Exodus 33:18-19 (ESVUK)

God demonstrated His goodness to His people in different ways:

- By providing for them materially:

*They captured fortified cities and fertile land
and took possession of well-supplied houses,
cisterns cut out of rock, vineyards,
olive groves, and fruit trees in abundance.*

*They ate, were filled,
became prosperous, and delighted in **Your great goodness**.*

Nehemiah 9:25 (HCSB)

- By revealing His love to them:

*Answer me, O LORD, for **Your steadfast love is good;**
according to Your abundant mercy, turn to me.*

Psalms 69:16 (ESVUK)

- By blessing them in a way others could observe:

*Show me a sign **of Your goodness,**
that those who hate me may see it, and be shamed,
because You, LORD, have helped me, and comforted me.*

Psalms 86:17 (WEBPB)

- By delivering them from trouble:

*But You, Yahweh my Lord,
deal kindly with me because of Your Name;
deliver me **because of the goodness of Your faithful love.***

Psalms 109:21 (HCSB)

David was confident of seeing the goodness of the LORD whilst he was alive:

I am still confident of this:

I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

Psalms 27:13 (WEBPB)

He was also confident that the LORD's goodness would follow him all the days of his life because the LORD was a shepherd towards him:

*Surely **goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life,**
and I will dwell in the LORD's house forever.*

Psalms 23:6 (WEBPB)

When the LORD deals with us according to His Word, He is doing us good:

***Do good to Your servant,**
according to Your Word, LORD.*

Psalms 119:65 (WEBPB)

In 2 Peter 1:3 already quoted above we can see that it is through God's goodness that we have been called to be His sons.

A wife of noble character always does good to her husband:

*Who can find a worthy woman?
For her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband trusts in her.
He shall have no lack of gain.
**She does him good, and not harm,
all the days of her life.***

Proverbs 31:10-12 (WEBPB)

Both goodness and godliness form part of a virtuous chain:

*For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with **goodness, goodness**
with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with
godliness, godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.*

2 Peter 1:5-7 (HCSB)

8. Faithfulness

Our understanding of faithfulness must begin with the faithfulness of God. His faithfulness is greater than man's faithfulness:

***If we are unfaithful,
He remains faithful,
for He cannot deny who He is.***

2 Timothy 2:13 (NLT)

What then? If some did not believe, will their unbelief cancel God's faithfulness? Absolutely not! God must be true, even if everyone is a liar, as it is written:

*That You may be justified in Your words
and triumph when You judge.*

Romans 3:3-4 (HCSB)

The faithfulness of God is often praised in the Psalms:

*I will give thanks to You, LORD, amongst the nations.
I will sing praises to You amongst the peoples.
For Your loving kindness is great above the heavens.
Your faithfulness reaches to the skies.*

Psalms 108:3-4 (WEBPB)

It was also recalled by Jeremiah when lamenting over the destruction of Jerusalem:

*I'll never forget the trouble, the utter lostness,
the taste of ashes, the poison I've swallowed.
I remember it all – oh, how well I remember –
the feeling of hitting the bottom.
But there's one other thing I remember,
and remembering, I keep a grip on hope:
God's loyal love couldn't have run out,
His merciful love couldn't have dried up.
They're created new every morning.
How great Your faithfulness!
I'm sticking with God (I say it over and over).
He's all I've got left.*

Lamentations 3:19-24 (MSG)

Hudson Taylor, a missionary to China, once said that **true faith is trusting in God's faithfulness.**

Faithfulness means discharging what has been entrusted to you in the right way:

Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:2 (NIVUK)

Jesus taught a parable illustrating the importance of faithfulness and how it leads to a future reward:

For it is like a man, going into another country, who called his own servants, and entrusted his goods to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his own ability. Then he went on his journey. Immediately he who received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. In the same way, he also who got the two gained another two. But he who received the one talent went away and dug in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

Now after a long time the lord of those servants came, and reconciled accounts with them. He who received the five talents came and brought another five talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents. Behold, I have gained another five talents in addition to them.'

*His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. **You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.**'*

He also who got the two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents. Behold, I have gained another two talents in addition to them.'

His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

He also who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you that you are a hard man, reaping where you didn't sow, and gathering where you didn't scatter. I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the earth. Behold, you have what is yours.'

*But his lord answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant. You knew that I reap where I didn't sow, and gather where I didn't scatter. You ought therefore to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back my own with interest. Take away therefore the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. **For to everyone who has will be given, and he will have abundance, but from him who doesn't have, even that which he has will be taken away.** Throw out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

Matthew 25:14-30 (WEBPB)

Jesus also taught about the importance of demonstrating faithfulness with worldly wealth and other people's property in order to be entrusted with true (spiritual) riches:

One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful with the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?

Luke 16:10-12 (ESVUK)

Peter reinforced Christ's teachings by emphasising the importance of faithfulness when administering whatever gift God has given us:

*Just as each one of you has received a special gift [a spiritual talent, an ability graciously given by God], employ it in serving one another as [is appropriate for] good stewards of God's multi-faceted grace [**faithfully using the diverse, varied gifts and abilities granted to Christians by God's unmerited favour**].*

1 Peter 4:10 (AMP)

Moses was commended for being a faithful servant in God's house:

*If there is a prophet among you,
I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision;
I speak to him in a dream.*

*Not so with My servant Moses;
he is faithful in all My house.*

*I speak with him face to face,
even plainly, and not in dark sayings;
and he sees the form of the LORD.*

*Why then were you not afraid
to speak against My servant Moses?*

Numbers 12:6b-8 (NKJV)

The faithfulness of Jesus was compared to the faithfulness of Moses:

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*Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses – as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honour than the house itself. (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, **but Christ is faithful over God's house as a Son**. And we are His house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.*

Hebrews 3:1-6 (ESVUK)

We need to choose to walk in faithfulness:

I have chosen the faithful way; I have placed Your ordinances before me.

Psalms 119:30 (NASB1995)

*My son, don't forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commands;
for they will bring you
many days, a full life, and well-being.*

Never let loyalty and faithfulness leave you.

*Tie them around your neck;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
Then you will find favour and high regard
in the sight of God and man.*

Proverbs 3:1-4 (HCSB)

Love and faithfulness also, to some extent, atone for our sins:

***By steadfast love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for,
and by the fear of the LORD one turns away from evil.***

Proverbs 16:6 (ESVUK)

They are also our protection:

Love and faithfulness keep the king safe.

His throne is sustained by love.

Proverbs 20:28 (WEBPB)

Our faithfulness can also be a testimony to others:

*For I was greatly pleased when [some of the] brothers came [from time to time] and testified to your **[faithfulness to the] truth** [of the gospel message], that is, how you are walking in truth.*

3 John 3 (AMP)

Faithfulness will be increasingly required in the End Times:

And all the people who belong to this world worshiped the beast. They are the ones whose names were not written in the Book of Life that belongs to the Lamb who was slaughtered before the world was made.

*Anyone with ears to hear
should listen and understand.*

*Anyone who is destined for prison
will be taken to prison.*

*Anyone destined to die by the sword
will die by the sword.*

*This means that God's holy people must endure persecution patiently and **remain faithful**.*

Revelation 13:8-10 (NLT)

The Patriarchs were encouraged or commended for their faithfulness in their walk with God:

*Enoch lived sixty-five years, then became the father of Methuselah. After Methuselah's birth, **Enoch walked with God** for three hundred years, and became the father of more sons and daughters. All the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. **Enoch walked with God**, and he was not found, for God took him.*

Genesis 5:21-24 (WEBPB)

*This is the history of the generations of Noah: Noah was a righteous man, blameless amongst the people of his time. **Noah walked with God**.*

Genesis 6:9 (WEBPB)

*When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, 'I am God Almighty; **walk before Me faithfully and be blameless**.*

Genesis 17:1 (NIVUK)

Then Jacob (Israel) blessed Joseph, and said,

*"The God before whom **my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked [in faithful obedience]**, the God who has been my Shepherd [leading and caring for me] all my life to this day, the Angel [that is, the LORD Himself] who has redeemed me [continually] from all evil, bless the boys; and may my name live on in them [may they be worthy of having their names linked with mine], and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and may they grow into a [great] multitude in the midst of the earth."*

Genesis 48:15-16 (AMP)

9. Gentleness

Gentleness is action with sensitivity. Peter encouraged believers to answer others in regards to their faith with gentleness:

*Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a **gentle** and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ.*

1 Peter 3:15-16 (NLT)

The LORD sometimes uses gentle means to speak to us. Elijah had seen the LORD manifest His power in a mighty way but had lost sight of His ability to speak to him without a big demonstration of power:

He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." Behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake a fire passed; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. It was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entrance of the cave. Behold, a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

1 Kings 19:11-13 (NHEB)

Gentleness can also be more persuasive and effective than harshness:

***A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger.***

Proverbs 15:1 (WEBPB)

***A ruler can be persuaded through patience,
and a gentle tongue can break a bone.***

Proverbs 25:15 (HCSB)

The lordship of Christ is like a gentle, light yoke upon us:

*Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for **I am gentle and humble in heart**; and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.*

Matthew 11:28-30 (WEBPB)

Gentleness demonstrates discretion and restraint but it is not a sign of weakness. We need to respond to a gentle rebuke or we might face harsher discipline:

*Some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power. For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power. What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, **or with love in a spirit of gentleness**?*

1 Corinthians 4:18-21 (ESVUK)

Our gentleness is a sign that we value our testimony and unity:

*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, **with all humility and gentleness**, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

Ephesians 4:1-3 (ESVUK)

Gentleness is not for specific circumstances, we should always demonstrate gentleness towards others:

*Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good. They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarrelling. **Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone.***

Titus 3:1-2 (NLT)

10. Self-control

Self-control cannot be achieved by merely trying to obey human rules. We need a deeper inner transformation:

*You have died with Christ, and He has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, "Don't handle! Don't taste! Don't touch!"? Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them. These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. **But they provide no help in conquering a person's evil desires.***

Colossians 2:20-23 (NLT)

Self-control is highly valued in Proverbs:

*Fools show their annoyance at once,
but the prudent overlook an insult.*

Proverbs 12:16 (NIVUK)

***One who is slow to anger is better than the mighty;
one who rules his spirit, than he who takes a city.***

Proverbs 16:32 (WEBPB)

A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.

Proverbs 25:28 (ESVUK)

It is through the grace of God that we can refuse worldly pleasures and lead a self-controlled life:

*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all mankind, **instructing us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly desires**, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good works.*

Titus 2:11-14 (NHEB)

It is through the Holy Spirit that we have self-control:

*For God didn't give us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and **self-control**.*

2 Timothy 1:7 (WEBPB)

Paul likened self-control to self-discipline when training. He testified of subjecting his body to discipline:

*Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But **I discipline my body and keep it under control**, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.*

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (ESVUK)

Hardship is seen as a route to discipline. We need God's discipline in our lives, not our own:

In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

*"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the LORD,
nor be weary when reproved by Him.*

*For the LORD disciplines the one He loves,
and chastises every son whom He receives."*

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. *For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

Hebrews 12:4-11 (ESVUK)