

LIVING THE ETERNAL LIFE NOW

SESSION SEVEN:
DISCIPLINES FOR ETERNAL
(SPIRITUAL) LIVING. WHY WE
MUST ACT INCREASINGLY TO
TAKE ON ETERNAL LIFE

1

CHARACTER COMES FROM “INSIDE”

- What God gets out of our lives is the person we become.
- We become the person we do by action. That is how character is formed.
- The actions that form godly character are only possible through grace.
- But they also require intelligent effort.

2

LOVE: “THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY”

- Suppose I want to become a genuinely loving person, as portrayed in 1 Cor. 13.
- Not to act loving but to be loving.
- Beyond the goodness of the scribes and Pharisees. Matt. 5:20
- Being a person genuinely set for the good of those I affect.

3

TRAINING, NOT JUST TRYING

- I must train myself to see the things people do to make an impression as unworthy. Even good things. 1Cor. 13:1-3
- I must come to understand the goodness and power of love: The settled will for good.
- I must put into practice actions that habituate me through grace to act for what is good.

4

LOVE SUFFERS LONG AND IS KIND, DOES NOT ENVY....

- I do not just try to be patient.
- I learn what it is.
- I learn why it is good
- I learn where impatience comes from.
 - The thwarting of my will
 - Anxiety about what may happen
 - Lack of consideration for others

5

WHY PATIENCE MAKES PERFECT

- “Let patience have its completed work that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” James 2-4
- Patience makes room to know the faithfulness of God.
- It opens a space in which we can genuinely love and care for others.
- Where we can seek and see what is good.

6

LOVE IS KIND

- It is hard to be kind when in the grip of impatience.
- To be kind means to be sympathetic, gentle, forbearing. You must see people in the light of their own problems and interests to be kind.
- When you do that, you will not resent them in envy, but be glad they have what is good. And so forth.....

7

LOVE, JOY, PEACE...

- Now I can take the same approach to Joy, Peace, and the other elements in the Fruit of the Spirit.
- I must come to understand what each of these elements is: its parts and relations.
- It is in this way that I make progress toward the character of one engaged in eternal living.

8

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

- But I will also have to engage in activities that indirectly help me take on love, joy, peace, etc.
- These are spiritual disciplines.
- A discipline is an activity in my power that enables me to do what I cannot do by direct effort.

9

THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Disciplines of ABSTINENCE

- Solitude
- Silence
- Fasting
- Frugality
- Chastity
- Secrecy
- Sacrifice

Disciplines of ENGAGEMENT

- Study
- Worship
- Celebration
- Service
- Prayer
- Fellowship
- Confession

10

THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The Action of the Holy Spirit
John 3:5 ▪ Rom. 8:10-13 ▪ Gal. 5:22-26

Centered in
the Mind of
Christ

Phil 2:12-15
Rom. 13:14

Ordinary Events of
Life: "Temptations"

James 1:2-4
Rom. 5:1-5

Planned Discipline to
Put on a New Heart

Col. 3:12-17
2: Pet. 1:5,10