

LSR2, Session 2

Preparation

- Isa 9:7 (a messianic prophecy about Jesus), “Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.”
 - What does this tell you about Jesus’ kingdom/government?
 - Mt 13:31-33, parables of mustard seed & yeast to describe kingdom of heaven

Character

- Ro 5:3-4, “Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”
 - What does this passage tell us about our character growth?
- Jas 1:2-4, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”
 - Consider the similarities in these passages

Romans 5	James 1
rejoice because we know sufferings produces perseverance produces character	pure joy because you know trials produces perseverance produces maturity, completeness

- 2 Co 4:17, “For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”
 - Fox paraphrase: “This is going to be really good!”
- 2 Ptr 1:5-7, “For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.”
 - According to this passage, whose effort produces these character qualities?
 - How do we produce these qualities?
 - Are you basically the same as you were a year ago?
- Conclusion
 - Our character should be developing continuously and it typically develops through trials.

Spiritual Development

- Lk 1:80 “And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the desert until he appeared publicly to Israel.”
 - What does this verse say about John’s spirit?
- 2 Co 3:18, “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are

being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

- Isn't it likely our transformation at least includes our spirits?
- You are a spirit being with a psyche, temporarily living in a physical body
- Your spirit is the real you
- Eph 4:13, “. . . until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”
 - What does the phrase, “whole measure of the fullness of Christ,” mean?
- Conclusion: Spiritual growth and development is our nature, our culture, and our destiny.

Spiritual Experiences

- Ro 8:28-29, “²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”
 - “works” (Gk, *synergeo*): to work together, help in work, be a fellow-worker
 - synergy describes an interaction that produces enhanced results; compounded, greater than the sum of the parts
 - example: 1 + 1 = 10
 - God combines every experience we have with all other experiences (good & bad) & compounds the results so they benefit us more than we'd expect
 - God predestined us to be “conformed to the likeness of his Son”
 - “firstborn” (Gk, *protokos*): (1) firstborn, before others; (2) highest quality
 - prototype is an original that serves as a model on which others are based or judged
 - Jesus is our prototype. What does that mean to us?
 - Can you see that remaining as you are is not an acceptable option?
- Php 2:6-7 (referring to Jesus), “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”
 - “something to be grasped” (Gk, *harpagmos*): (1) plunder, something taken by force; (2) something retained or held onto by force
 - “made . . . nothing” (Gk, *kenoo*): (1) cause to lose power, come to nothing; (2) empty oneself, divest oneself of position or ability; (3) make void, empty, hollow, false
 - Rom 4:14, “For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is **made void** and the promise is nullified.”
 - 1 Co 1:17, “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be **made void**.”
 - 2 Co 9:3, “But I have sent the brethren, in order that our boasting about you may not be **made empty** in this case.”

- When the Son of God “made himself nothing” and became a human, how complete was that?
- “likeness” (Gk, *homoiooma*): (1) similarity, likeness of form or appearance (e.g., a statue); (2) resemblance that amounts virtually to equality or identity
- Jesus’ transformation: originally he was God in essence of his nature, didn’t grasp or cling to his equality with God, totally laid aside everything associated with his “God-ness,” became human
- Was Jesus fully human, just like us? Or did he retain some of his God nature, which gave him an advantage over us?
 - God’s law required a human to die for humanity’s sin
 - If Jesus were part-God, how could he possibly be a prototype for us?
 - Jesus is the perfect model or prototype
- God ***predestined us*** to become like Jesus (Ro 8:29)
- Mk 16:15-18, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”
 - Do you believe the good news? Are you saved?
 - then these signs ***will accompany you***
- Jn 14:12, “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”
 - “great” (Gk, *megas*): (1) great in quantity; (2) great in degree; (3) great in size; (4) great in status or importance
 - Do you have faith in Jesus?
 - According to this verse, why is it possible for you to do even greater things than Jesus did?
- Does God ever ask us to do what is impossible for us?
- Conclusion
 - In humility, let’s serve God with all our heart, soul, mind & strength
 - Let’s lay aside everything that hinders us & passionately commit ourselves to becoming like Jesus & doing what he did

Blessing

- May the Lord strengthen your spirit and cause you to grow into his image, that you will accurately represent him and his kingdom in this fallen world.

Daily Activities

- Meditate on one of the passages below and consider its relevance to your spiritual growth.

2 Co 3:18; 2 Co 4:17; 2 Co 7:1; 2 Co 8:9; 1 Pet 2:2-3; 2 Pet 1:3

Proposed Model for Human Structure

Human Spirit	
<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● exists in spiritual realm ● eternal ● stable (only small, slow changes after salvation; except for trauma) 	<p>Traits or functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● source of human life ● grows, strengthens ● character (God-given true self, real you) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ aptitudes (spiritual gifts, natural abilities) ○ character traits (fruit of the spirit, other godly traits) ○ tendencies (personality traits: extrovert/introvert, etc.) ○ compelling interests ● will ● discernment (discerning of spirits, conscience) ● sub-conscious traits (intuition, thought, memory) ● spiritual senses (hearing, sight, smell, taste, touch) ● communion, relationship, worship ● courage, vitality ● disposition (root of feelings/emotions, desire, attitude)
Human Psyche	
<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● exists in spiritual realm ● eternal ● volatile/dynamic (changes easily, quickly) 	<p>Traits or functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● associated with physical life ● conscious traits (awareness, mind, intellect/reasoning, memory) ● decisiveness/decision-making ● attitudes, perspectives & behavior patterns ● feelings/emotions (expressions of disposition) ● imagination, creativity ● personality (expression of self)
Human Body	
<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● exists in physical realm ● temporal (will be replaced with eternal, spiritual body) 	<p>Traits or functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sensory info (hearing, sight, smell, taste, touch) ● bodily feelings (e.g., hunger, comfort, pain)