

LSR2, Session 9

Intro

- Romans 8:28-29 tells us God works *everything* in our lives together for our good *because* he predestined us to become like Jesus.

Character

- Gal 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”
 - we choose to change, we “put on” the desired traits (i.e., we act as though we have them), then God makes them our traits
- “kindness” (Gk, *chrestotes*): (1) moral goodness expressed in action; (2) benevolence, usefulness; (3) kindness of heart
 - expressed by appropriate, mild and pleasant behavior toward others
 - Col 3:12 “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”
 - Eph 4:32 “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”
 - What kind of experience do you think would make it clear you needed more kindness and motivate you to become kinder?
- “goodness” (Gk, *agathosyne*): (1) goodness; (2) generosity
 - action on another’s behalf, whether pleasant or unpleasant; motivates you to do what is best for others
 - Acts 14:17, “. . . yet he has not left himself without a witness by doing good, by giving you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, and by filling you with food and joyful hearts” (ISV).
 - What kind of situation might demand more goodness than you have and give you opportunity to develop it?
- “faithfulness” (Gk, *pistis*):
 - *pistis* (noun) — (1) faith, firm persuasion, conviction based on belief (there is no proof); (2) faithfulness, state of being full of faith or worthy of faith (?)
 - ability to trust God’s promises and act on them with an unwavering belief in God’s ability; enables you to move forward in spite of opposition
 - Heb 11:1, “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”
 - Ro 4:18-21, “¹⁸ Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be.’ ¹⁹ Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead — since he was about a hundred years old — and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. ²⁰ Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith

and gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.”

- How many of you have been believing/trusting God for something for a long time & there’s no evidence it will ever happen?
- “gentleness” (Gk, *prautes*): (1) mildness of disposition, gentleness of spirit, meekness
 - allows you to accept another’s dealings with you as good
 - Mt 11:29, “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.”
 - Eph 4:2, “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.”
 - Php 4:5, “Let your gentleness be evident to all.”
 - Describe a situation that would be an excellent opportunity to develop gentleness.
- “self-control” (Gk, *egkrateia*): self-control
 - a virtue of one who masters his desires, appetites and passions
 - restraint (control of self); moderation in thought, action or feeling
 - 1 Co 9:25, “Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training.”
 - What situation or desire are you facing that is an opportunity to develop self-control?
- Meditate on these — love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control — and ask Father to show you which one you need to focus on
- Conclusion
 - Developing the fruit of the spirit is part of your spiritual development and will greatly increase your effectiveness in God’s kingdom

Spiritual Development

- Definition of a spiritual journal: a record of your *dialog* with God, *personal expression* (e.g., thoughts, desires, feelings, questions), significant *life experiences* and *spiritual experiences* (e.g., revelation, insight, dreams, visions, impressions, healing, deliverance, growth, discoveries, prophecies, spontaneous thoughts or mental images, unusual sensations)
- Conclusion
 - Keeping a spiritual journal is an excellent way to build up your spirit.

Spiritual Experiences

- Definition of spiritual transport: the experience of being unexpectedly and supernaturally transported; between the physical and spiritual realms, or between locations in the physical realm; either in the body or in the spirit.

- Examples of people being transported *from earth to heaven*; i.e., thru portals
 - 2 Ki 2:11, “As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.”
 - 2 Co 12:2-4, “² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know — God knows. ³ And I know that this man — whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows — ⁴ was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.”
 - 1 Th 4:16-17, “¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”
 - Heb 11:5, “By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.”
 - also, Gen 5:24
 - Rev 4:1-2, “¹ After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.’ ² At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.”
- Examples of people being physically transported to places on earth
 - 1 Ki 18:11-12, “¹¹ But now you tell me to go to my master and say, ‘Elijah is here.’ ¹² I don’t know where the Spirit of the Lord may carry you when I leave you.”
 - Eze 8:1-3, “¹ In the sixth year, in the sixth month on the fifth day, while I was sitting in my house and the elders of Judah were sitting before me, the hand of the Sovereign Lord came upon me there. ² I looked, and I saw a figure like that of a man. From what appeared to be his waist down he was like fire, and from there up his appearance was as bright as glowing metal. ³ He stretched out what looked like a hand and took me by the hair of my head. The Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and in visions of God he took me to Jerusalem, to the entrance to the north gate of the inner court, where the idol that provokes to jealousy stood.”
 - Mt 4:5, 8, “Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. . . . Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.”
 - John 6:16-21, “¹⁶ When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, ¹⁷ where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. ¹⁸ A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. ¹⁹ When they had rowed three or three and a half miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were terrified. ²⁰ But he said to them, ‘It is I; don’t be afraid.’ ²¹ Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.”
 - Acts 8:38-40, “³⁸ Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.”

- examples of people being spiritually (not physically) transported to places on earth
 - 2 Ki 5:24-26

²⁴ When Gehazi came to the hill, he took the things from the servants and put them away in the house. He sent the men away and they left. ²⁵ Then he went in and stood before his master Elisha.

“Where have you been, Gehazi?” Elisha asked.

“Your servant didn’t go anywhere,” Gehazi answered.

²⁶ But Elisha said to him, “Was not my spirit with you when the man got down from his chariot to meet you?”

- 1 Co 5:2-3, “² And you are proud! Shouldn’t you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? ³ Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present.”
- Col 2:5, “For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.”
- Rev 17:3, “Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns.”
- Rev 21:10, “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.”

- Conclusion

- There are many biblical and contemporary examples of people being transported to the spirit realm or places on earth, either physically or spiritually. These experiences are likely to become more common in the near future.

Series Review

- It’s God’s plan for us to be much more active in the spiritual realm than most of us realize
- Our overall goal in this study was to expand our thinking about what it means to be a Christian and make us aware of the scriptural basis for spiritual experiences we’re likely to have in the near future
- With that in mind, we had three tracks in each session
 - Character
 - I believe godly character is an absolute prerequisite to increased effectiveness in God’s kingdom, including being active in the spiritual realm
 - Spiritual development
 - spiritual growth is our destiny; it’s God’s plan for us
 - Spiritual experiences
 - Jesus is our prototype, so each of us is to be like him by healing people, driving out demons, performing miracles

Blessing

- The Lord bless you with opportunities to become more like him and participate in what he’s doing.

Daily Activities

- Spend quality time with God — in Bible reading, meditating, dialoging with him.