

# CHRISTIAN LIVING

**BIBLE TEXT** : Romans 12:1-21; II Peter 1:5-11

LESSON 357 **Senior Course**

**MEMORY VERSE:** "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

## **BIBLE TEXT in King James Version**

### **Romans 12:1-21**

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, *let us wait* on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 *Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in

## **Bible References:**

### **I The Christian's Walk**

1. A busy life, profitable unto God, is expected of God's people, Romans 12:1, 11-13;

#### **Luke 19:12-27**

<sup>12</sup> He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

<sup>13</sup> And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

<sup>14</sup> But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us.

<sup>15</sup> And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

<sup>16</sup> Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

<sup>17</sup> And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

<sup>18</sup> And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

<sup>19</sup> And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

<sup>20</sup> And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

<sup>21</sup> For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

<sup>22</sup> And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

<sup>23</sup> Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

<sup>24</sup> And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds.

<sup>25</sup> (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

<sup>26</sup> For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

<sup>27</sup> But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

#### **James 1:27**

<sup>27</sup> Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

2. The Christian should conform his life to Christ, and not to the customs, manners, or spirit of the world, Romans 12:2;

#### **John 17:14**

<sup>14</sup> I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

#### **2 Corinthians 6:17-18**

<sup>17</sup> Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,

<sup>18</sup> And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

#### **2 Corinthians 7:1**

honour preferring one another;  
 11 Not slothful in business;  
 fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;  
 12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;  
 13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.  
 14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.  
 15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.  
 16 *Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.  
 17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.  
 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.  
 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.  
 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.  
 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.  
**2 Peter 1:5-11**  
 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;  
 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;  
 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.  
 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

**Revelation 18:4**

<sup>4</sup> And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

3. A humble recognition of one's insufficiency, coupled with earnest labour in one's individual calling, is a prime requisite in Christian living, Romans 12:3-8;

**Proverbs 25:27**

<sup>27</sup> *It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory.*

**1 Corinthians 12:11-27**

<sup>11</sup> But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

<sup>12</sup> For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ.

<sup>13</sup> For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

<sup>14</sup> For the body is not one member, but many.

<sup>15</sup> If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

<sup>16</sup> And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

<sup>17</sup> If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling?

<sup>18</sup> But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

<sup>19</sup> And if they were all one member, where *were* the body?

<sup>20</sup> But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.

<sup>21</sup> And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

<sup>22</sup> Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

<sup>23</sup> And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

<sup>24</sup> For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked:

<sup>25</sup> That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

<sup>26</sup> And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

<sup>27</sup> Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

**Ephesians 4:1-13**

<sup>1</sup> I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

<sup>2</sup> With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

<sup>3</sup> Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

<sup>4</sup> *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

<sup>5</sup> One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

<sup>6</sup> One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

<sup>7</sup> But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

<sup>8</sup> Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

<sup>9</sup> (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

<sup>10</sup> He that descended is the same also that ascended up far

9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

<sup>11</sup> And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

<sup>12</sup> For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

<sup>13</sup> Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

4. Brotherly love, kindly affection, and charity are the all-encompassing virtues that are the very essence of the Christian life, Romans 12:9, 10, 14-16; II Peter 1:5-11.

**Romans 13:9-10**

<sup>9</sup> For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

<sup>10</sup> Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

**Romans 16:27**

<sup>27</sup> To God only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

**1 Corinthians 13:1-13**

<sup>1</sup> Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

<sup>2</sup> And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

<sup>3</sup> And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

<sup>5</sup> Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

<sup>6</sup> Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

<sup>7</sup> Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

<sup>8</sup> Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

<sup>9</sup> For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

<sup>10</sup> But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

<sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

<sup>12</sup> For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

<sup>13</sup> And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

5. The Christian must live and practice the great law of the Gospel exemplified by Jesus Christ; "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," Romans 12:17-21;

**Psalms 64:1-10**

<sup>1</sup> Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

<sup>2</sup> Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

<sup>3</sup> Who whet their tongue like a sword, *and* bend *their bows* to shoot their arrows, *even* bitter words:

<sup>4</sup> That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

<sup>5</sup> They encourage themselves *in* an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?

<sup>6</sup> They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward *thought* of every one *of them*, and the heart, is deep.

<sup>7</sup> But God shall shoot at them *with* an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

<sup>8</sup> So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.

<sup>9</sup> And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

<sup>10</sup> The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

#### **Psalm 94:1**

<sup>1</sup> O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.

#### **Psalm 94:23**

<sup>23</sup> And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness; *yea*, the LORD our God shall cut them off.

#### **Matthew 5:38-48**

<sup>38</sup> Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

<sup>39</sup> But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

<sup>40</sup> And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also.

<sup>41</sup> And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

<sup>42</sup> Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

<sup>43</sup> Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

<sup>44</sup> But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

<sup>45</sup> That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

<sup>46</sup> For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

<sup>47</sup> And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?

<sup>48</sup> Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

#### **Notes:**

#### **The Christian Walk**

What is Christian living? It is, briefly, living all of life for the glory of God, spending ourselves for the cause of Christ, and being His living epistles, known and read of all men. Christians are representatives of the Kingdom of God, ambassadors for Christ, through whom God beseeches the world to be reconciled unto Him by Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:19-20)

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.)

Christians are to be lights in the world (**Philippians 2:15**)

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world), living examples of the transforming grace of God. If those who profess to follow Christ are not recognised in the world for their holy way of life, known for their separation from the world, they can hardly be Christians.

Separation from the world is a requirement of Christianity and



Christian living. The Christian's heart belongs to the Lord, and his citizenship is in the Kingdom of God. The Christian is in the world, but not part of it; he is a stranger and a pilgrim passing through it. (1 **Corinthians 5:9-11** 9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: 10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. 11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. **Hebrews 11:13** 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.)

What is the world that the Christian should be separate from it? The Word of God refers to all systems, all peoples, all spirits that are opposed to, or contradict the law of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as "the world." To be part of the world, or in accord with its principles and movements, is to be at enmity with God. C. H. Spurgeon, an eminent minister of another day, once said of the world: "Of its maxims nine out of ten are false, and the other one selfish; and even that which is selfish has a lie at the bottom of it." The Word of God states: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye jot that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). That this is true is plainly seen in the Divine Record: "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ" (Acts 4:26). The command of God to all who would name the name of Christ is: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Corinthians 6:17, 18). Despite the unmistakable meaning of such portions of Scripture, there are many in the world who try to have favour with God and still have the friendship of the world. Such people desire the favour of God but cannot bear the reproach of the Gospel, nor the offence of the Cross. (**Galatians 5:11** 11

And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. **Matthew 11:6** 6 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me. **Matthew 13:21** 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.)

### A Living Sacrifice

Another most fundamental tenet of the Gospel and Christianity is that, the follower of Jesus Christ surrender his life and all to the service and call of God. Our text states that, the presentation of our lives as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, is but a reasonable service.

Christ is the paramount interest and influence in the Christian's life. While it is granted that there are many circumstances and people that influence all men, including Christians, yet if Christ and the Kingdom of God are not the principal shaping-influence in a person's life, he is not a Christian. As the sun is the centre around which the earth revolves in its orbit, receiving life-sustaining heat and light from its "fiery furnace," in like manner the Christian's life revolves around Christ, and receives spiritual strength and light from Him.

God expects His people to be busy at His business. The world is most busy seeking their own gain, building their own ends, and living for themselves and to themselves. The Christian lives for

Christ. He seeks to promote the cause of Christ instead of his own cause, and is a labourer with God, building not alone for time, but for eternity! (1 Corinthians 3:9 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building.) Unless a person lives for the Lord, he shall suffer eternal damnation and loss. To bury one's talent in the earth is to do no more than the people of the world who, not wanting Heavenly things, bury their lives in earthly things. (Matthew 25:14-30

14 For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. 15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. 16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. 17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two. 18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. 20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. 21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. 23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine. 26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: 27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. 28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. 29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. 30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth)

### Transformed

"Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." The mind is the door to the soul; and too much cannot be said on the importance of Christians keeping their minds upon Christ and His Kingdom, and not upon the world and the things that are in the world. The world has travelled so far from God that sin and all its enticements are brazenly advertised by every medium man can invent. Most of the entertainment that the world has devised is synthetic, unnatural, and even immoral. It is soul-destroying because it incites people to sin.

The true Christian has neither the desires nor time for these so-called pleasures. Television, one of the latest of men's inventions, has become so corrupted by irresponsible men that it is one of the greatest deterrents to Christian living that youth faces today. Liquor and cigarette industries are two of the biggest sponsors of television shows, and they spend fortunes yearly advertising their wares. Need anyone ask, "Can a Christian smoke or drink?"

### Humility

Pride — self-seeking, the exaltation of self — was the root

cause of the downfall of Satan, and of countless human beings since. The opposite of such fleshly aspirations is humility. Humility cannot be separated from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The text states: "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." And again, "In honour preferring one another."

The Christian desires to be as his Lord. He desires that his own life might be hid behind the Cross of Christ, that, the beauties of Jesus might shine out. The Word of God says: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:5-8). There are many who say it is impossible for men to live lives comparable to the life of Christ. Doubters and gainsayers may say what they will, but Jesus set the example for all men to follow. He became flesh and dwelt among us, and men can, by the grace of God, live pure and holy, free from sin, pleasing unto God.

### Fruit Bearing

Justification nails the "old man" of sin to the cross of Christ.

(**Romans 6:1-7** 1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.) Sanctification completely kills the "old man"; the root of sin is eradicated, and holiness fills the life of the believer. (**Luke 1:74-75** 74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. **Ephesians 5:27** 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.) Upon receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, the Third Person of the Trinity of God guides "into all truth"; and this guiding and directing influence in the life enables the Christian to bear much fruit. (**John 16:13** 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. **John 15:8** 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.)

Christ is the True Vine; Christians are the branches. The branches bear the same manner and kind of fruit as the vine bears. Therefore, Christians bear the same kind of fruit and good works before men that Jesus Christ did. (**John 14:12** 12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. **John 15:1-8** 1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of

itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. <sup>7</sup> If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. <sup>8</sup> Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.)

A small fruit tree begins bearing fruit in small quantities. No matter how small its crop, the fruit it bears is as good as it will ever be. Through the years, as the tree reaches maturity, it bears in even greater quantities, but the fruit is the same as it was from the beginning. Only the quantity has changed — not the kind it bears or its quality. So exactly does the Christian life begin. It begins bearing small quantities of the fruit of the Spirit, but it does bear the fruit of the Spirit. As Christians grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, they bear more profusely the fruits of the Spirit of God, but the kind of fruit is still the same; only the quantity has increased. This growing in grace is beautifully expressed in our text: "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For it these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It can be said that the Christian adds continually to his life the virtues and qualities that reside in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian, being a branch of the True Vine, receives the sap, which is holiness, and life-sustaining for the soul, and adds to his life the graces of Christ.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. What is the main business of a Christian?
2. Why should a Christian have no fellowship with the world?
3. Define what the Bible means by the term, "the world."
4. How can one distinguish Christians from people of the world?
5. Why is it not proper for Christians to partake of most of the recreational activities of the world?
6. Name some of the qualities that are in Christian lives.
7. What is meant by the Scripture passage that Christ is the Vine, and believers are the branches?
8. Describe how Christians should bear more fruit in their lives.