

The Third Characteristic: Peace
(Galatians 5:22-23).

Introduction:

1. In Galatians 5:22-23, nine very special characteristics are listed.
2. Together, these characteristics make up "the fruit of the Spirit."
3. Christians are to develop these traits, and we are to continually grow in them.
4. In our lesson we are concentrating on "the third characteristic: peace."
5. At the present time our world is suffering from a lack of peace.
6. When we consider the far-reaching effects of a lack of peace, we understand that peace is quite precious.

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST DEFINE "PEACE"
 - A. Peace: a state of tranquility; harmony; freedom from disturbance or turmoil
 - B. The Bible speaks of peace:
 1. between countries (Acts 12:20)
 2. between men (Ephesians 2:14-15)
 3. between God and men (Ephesians 2:16-17).
 - C. The "peace" included in the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) is "peace [harmony] between individuals."
- II. THE SCRIPTURES TEACH CHRISTIANS TO SEEK PEACE AND TO BE AT PEACE
 - A. See:
 1. 2 Corinthians 13:11
 2. Ephesians 4:3
 3. 1 Thessalonians 5:13b
 4. 1 Peter 3:10-11
 - B. The fact that similar instructions are given so many times ought to tell us something.
 - C. In addition to telling us to seek peace and to be at peace, . . .
- III. THE SCRIPTURES TEACH US HOW TO HAVE PEACE
 - A. To have peace, certain things must be avoided.
 1. (Galatians 5:20-21) Some of the works of the flesh destroy peace, including hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, heresies, envyings.
 2. We must avoid "respect of persons" (1 Corinthians 1:11-12; 3:3-4; 4:6).
 3. We must avoid the "love of preeminence" (3 John 9-10).
 4. We must put away pride.
 - a. Pride will prevent a person like Diotrefes from admitting his mistakes.
 - b. When this occurs, true peace will not exist.
 - c. Pride will actually cause a person to blame others for his faults.
 - d. The correct way to treat pride is revealed in James 5:16.
 - B. Certain things must be done to have peace and maintain it.
 1. We must put forth effort to live peaceably with others (Romans 12:18).
 2. We must follow after the things which promote peace (Romans 14:19).
 3. We must possess the right kind of wisdom.
 - a. The wrong kind of wisdom is mentioned in James 3:14-16.
 - b. The right kind of wisdom is mentioned in James 3:17-18.

Conclusion:

1. God wants peace in His church (1 Corinthians 14:33).
2. Those who promote peace will be blessed (Matthew 5:9).