

# GROWING IN CHRIST LIKENESS

EPHESIANS 4:14-16



THE WORD  
OF GOD  
IS LIKE  
A SEED.  
PLANT IT  
IN YOUR  
HEART.

1 Peter 1:23

LESSONS 17-20

WEST JACKSONVILLE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

CATHEDRAL OF FAITH CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

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## LESSON 17

# Gratefulness vs. Unthankfulness

Letting others know by my words and actions  
how they have benefited my life.

### Character Thought

Honor others by expressing gratitude for their influence in your life.

### Character Scripture

In everything give thanks for it is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 1  
Thessalonians 5:18 *Comparative Scripture: Luke 17:17-18*

### Character Points

#### What Do You See?

- **Recognize Benefits** (Build gratefulness by sharpening your alertness to the benefits you experience)
- **Honor Benefactors** (Gratefulness is an active expression, not a passive feeling)
- **Act Responsibly** (Proof of gratefulness lies in our responsible use of the benefits we have)

### Balance Gratefulness

- **Adopt a Forgiving Perspective** (Clear the record of those who have wronged you, do not hold a grudge)
- **Express Sincere Gratitude** (Be eager to do what is right with transparent motives)
- **Sharpen Your Gratefulness With Justice** (Take personal responsibility to uphold what is pure, right, and true)

## **Five Keys to Building Gratefulness**

- Count Your Benefits
- Simplify Expectations
- Identify Your Benefactors
- Make Time To Thank
- Express Your Thanks

## **Gratefulness At Home**

Build and preserve relationships with gratefulness

- Show family members and friends that I appreciate them
- Write “thank you” notes
- Take care of my things
- Be content with what you have
- Count the benefits rather than the burdens

## **Evaluate Your Gratefulness**

1. Do you look for a benefit from each new situation, or do you resent unexpected situations?
2. Would others say that you appreciate those who have invested time and effort in your life?
3. Have you taken time to thank those who have benefited you?
4. Has your gratitude motivated you to freely invest in others?
5. Do your expectations blind you to others' efforts?

## LESSON 18

# Endurance vs. Discouragement

**“THE INWARD STRENGTH TO WITHSTAND STRESS AND DO MY BEST”**

### **Character Thought:**

Finish your race by taking the next step in the right direction.

### **Character Scripture:**

Mark 4:17 (KJV) And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

### **Character Points:**

- Winning the Race of Life (Live rather than just survive)
- Keep Hope Alive (Present inconvenience will pass)
- Overcome Discouragement (It threatens progress and completion)
- Run to Win (Recognize reality, and take responsibility for what you can change)

### **Balance Endurance**

- Proceed Wisely (Seeing and responding to life situations)
- Persist Joyfully (Maintaining a good attitude in unpleasant situations)
- Take Initiative (Recognizing and doing what needs to be done before being asked to do it)

## **Five Keys to Building Endurance**

- Know the Goal (Visualize it)
- Take One Step at a Time (Simple Steps and daily choices)
- Find Support (Humans need community/each other)
- Renew Your Energy (Recognize the physical, mental, and emotional energy required)
- Finish Well (Apply consistent effort – run through the finish line)

## **Practical Application of Endurance at Home**

- Learn to leave your work at work. On your way home, choose a landmark at which you mentally leave your problems.
- Demonstrate persistence by steadily paying off financial obligations.
- Stick with chores, homework, home projects until they are done.
- Support family members and friends as they go through difficult times.

## **Evaluate Your Endurance**

1. Do you remind yourself of the goal even when stressed?
2. Do you take the next step rather than become overwhelmed by obstacles?
3. Have you surrounded yourself with individuals who can help you?
4. Do you balance the time devoted to work, family and rest?
5. Do you finish well or slack off at the end?

## LESSON 19

# Obedience vs. Willfulness

“Quickly and cheerfully carrying out the direction of those who are responsible or me”

### **Character Thought**

Gain freedom and safety by operating in sync with your authorities.

### **Character Scripture**

I Samuel 15:22-23

### **Character Points**

**Ordered Freedom** (Find protection and direction as you honor authority)

- **Understand Leadership** (learn to operate within an appropriated authority structure is essential to effectiveness)
- **Practice Mutual Respect** (obedience is a relationship mutual respect and responsibility up and down the chain of command)
- **Accept responsibility** (Obedience accepts delegated responsibility)

### **Balance Obedience**

- **Act Patiently** (accept a difficult situation without giving a deadline to remove it)
- **Deliver Responsibly** (do not use loopholes to justify disobedience)
- **Appeal for a creative alternative** (approach a need, task, or idea from a new perspective)

## **Five Keys to Building Obedience**

- Get full instructions
- Have a good attitude
- Act immediately
- Go the extra mile
- Follow the Rules

## **Practical Application of Obedience at Home**

- Establish guidelines of character, teaching your children why something is wrong
- Help family members understand the purpose for guidelines and the consequences for failing to obey them
- Encourage family members to cultivate the boldness to reject wrong actions and obey authorities, despite external pressures.

## **Evaluate Your Obedience**

1. Do you set aside distractions when listening to instructions?
2. Would others say you cheerfully do what is asked of you?
3. Do you procrastinate on tasks that you do not enjoy?
4. Do you do only what is required?

## LESSON 20

# Punctuality vs. Tardiness

“Showing esteem for others by doing the right things at the right time”

### Character Thought

Set priorities so that you can do what matters most

### Character Scripture

Ephesians 5:16; Proverbs 18:19

### Character Points

Some say, “If you're on-time, you're late”

- **Keep Time**—The way you spend today determines if you look back from tomorrow with regret or satisfaction
- **Value Time**—Spend time as you get it, once is spent you can never replace it.
- **Value People**—Valuing another's time shows respect for that person.
- **Value Projects**—Others know your true value by the priorities you set.

### Balance Punctuality

- **Finish Thoroughly**—Never neglect the details
- **Persevere Patiently**—Stay on task and see it through without cutting corners
- **Treat Others Gently**—Show consideration and concern for others
- Don't forget the relationships behind the schedule/goals

## **Five Keys to Building Punctuality**

- ◆ **Begin Early**—A strong start sets the stage for a strong finish
- ◆ **Keep Track of Time**—Stay aware of due dates/deadlines
- ◆ **Prioritize your Day**—Organize daily objectives in proper order
- ◆ **Respect Others Time**—Your punctuality affects everyone around you
- ◆ **Finish on Time**—Keep the finish line in view and pace yourself to ensure you cross it at the right time

## **Practical Application of Punctuality at Home**

- ◆ Give priority to appointments made with family members.
- ◆ Lift burdens of family members so that they can get to their appointments on time.
- ◆ Be in the car early and avoid making the whole family late.
- ◆ Go to bed at a realistic hour and wake up on time tomorrow!
- ◆ Promptly respond to letters and phone calls.

## **Evaluate Your Punctuality**

1. Do you allow sufficient time so that minor delays do not foil your plans?
2. Are you always aware of time?
3. Do you organize your daily activities in order of importance?
4. Must others frequently wait on you?
5. Have you balanced priorities so that you can finish projects?