

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Peace with the world cannot be procured on hard terms, and is oftener of short duration. But the peace of God which passeth all understanding, is not only sinless in its nature, but eternal in its duration. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my loving kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy upon thee. Nor does the Lord sit not here, for peace with God produces peace of conscience, which is one of the greatest blessings we can enjoy. If we have not peace in our own minds, it is vain to expect happiness. "But if our conscience condemn us, not, then have we confidence towards God." Nor is this all. Wherever there is peace, there is mutual affection, and where there is mutual affection, there is happiness. Hence, peace with God leads his children to love one another, and thus to come to a bond of union, and an evidence of our relation to Christ. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you love one another.

Cultivate *long-suffering*, or forbearance towards your brethren, as God does daily towards you. It was necessary to fit Christ for his office, that he should have compassion on the ignorant, and on those who are out of the way, and the more closely we resemble him, the nearer we are to perfection, as well as happiness. By patience towards, not only those who are without, but also towards your erring brethren—not resenting the injuries they may have done you, but by mild reasoning and remonstrating to bring them back to the path of duty. In all cases of private offence, let the excellent rule laid down by the author of our religion, (Matt. 18:15-20,) be strictly observed in the spirit of christian charity; rebuking one another and forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.

*Gentleness* or mildness of temper and conduct is another fruit of the Spirit. Pure religion is the wisdom which cometh from above. It is first pure, then peaceable, *gentle* and easy to be entreated. It is equally removed from mean compliance with things which are sinful and an indiscriminating opposition to others. It is open to conviction, and ever allows to others that liberty in matters of religion, which we claim for ourselves. Paul commanded not the Corinthians with harshness and authority, but besought them by the gentleness of Christ. In his own conduct towards the Thessalonians, he exemplified the same doctrine, being gentle among them, even as a nurse towards her charge. Putting on a harsh and forbidding aspect, even in the performance of duty, has often created dislike and even opposition to religion, while gentleness and kindness have overcome opposition, and conciliated even the perverse.

*Goodness* is another fruit of the Spirit, and manifests itself in acts of kindness and benevolence, and a readiness to do good to our fellow creatures, as far as may be in our power.

God is good, and does good; and if you, as christians, aim at a likeness to the moral character of God, you will endeavor to bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction," &c. "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?"