

“Those who”

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This is a concordance study using the phrase “those who” in the NKJV and the biblegateway.com platform. The verses used in this study are selected to focus upon repeated points. It makes it easier to witness patterns—repeated examples of how our choices and actions affect what happens to us and around us.

Reading formative key instructions over and over can help rewire our understanding of scripture. Sometimes, we need to read things many times over before they sink in. It works best when we can pray for a humble and willing mindset, to be clay for the potter, and participate in the teaching.

This study uses scripture to help us search our own inward being to better understand where we are and where scripture is guiding us to grow. For best results, we are to search ourselves. Questions will follow the verses to guide us in our self-searching and learning. Answering even just one question a day with an open heart and mind for 30 days can bring a new or renewed way of thinking with God. Those who test this out can learn the truth.

There are many instructions in the Bible using the phrase, “those who.” In fact, according to biblegateway.com, the NKJV has nearly a thousand uses of the phrase. “Those who” is a phrase that differentiates between two possibilities. There are those who do and those who don’t. When it says those who . . . and describes an outcome, it likely means those who don’t will get a different outcome.

Here is a real-world example:

Those who show up for work will get paid. What do you think will happen to those who don’t show up for work? Isn’t it important to know that if we don’t show up for work, we won’t get paid? When reading scripture, it can be a good idea to discern both sides of what it is being said. This will require thinking deeper and further beyond the words used. Questions will be added to help guide our thoughts, but it will be up to each one of us to

struggle toward an answer. Those who struggle towards answers will grow. What do you think will happen with those who don't?

For example,

“Now therefore, listen to me, *my children*, For blessed *are those who keep my ways.*” (Proverbs 8:32, NKJV)

Notice the words italicized in this verse? Italicized means important. Who do you think is blessed in this verse? Who isn't blessed? What might keeping “my ways” or not keeping them be like?

Stand guard against self-deception. Watch out for seeking scripture to validate spiritual inactivity, avoiding truth, resting on laurels, or reducing efforts to grow Godly Good. God wants us to grow, improve, and walk in correction. It's a choice and an inward struggle. (Proverbs 12)

Do we believe in the Bible and trust the directions in it more than our own understanding . . . even religious understanding? If religion teaches us one thing and the Bible another, which will we choose to believe? 2 Peter 2 teaches us that false teachers exist. It's good to keep this in mind.

“All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17, NKJV)

Think about the meaning of, “*is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” In this study, we are going to focus on practicing this description on how scripture is to be used. We are going to read verses, look inwardly at our own thoughts, attitudes, behaviors, and senses, and then think about how to apply corrective actions toward improving our good work.

When scripture points out how to improve and correct our ways, it's good to learn how we respond. How we respond can teach us about our faith. This is very important. Let's always pray for a humble and willing attitude.

Prayer can help. It's good to pray for openness to God's direction and willingness to walk with improvement in Good. We can pray for a humble

and willing mind to hear new corrective insight and instruction. We can pray for strength and courage to face challenging information. At any time, we can confess and repent for such actions, which are always good to do. The goal is to abide more in God with our heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Below is an example of prayer for growth and improvement.

Dear God, please help guide my heart and mind to humbly learn what is right and good. Help me learn how to better do your will. Guide my thoughts to learn your message. Set aside any closed-minded thoughts involving fear or defensiveness. Help me to discern your words more clearly to see the truth. Teach me your ways and how they are good. Remove from me any condemnation, including self-condemnation. Prompt me toward new understanding and better thinking with your goodness. Add to me courage and strength for reproof and correction. Thank you for your teachings in righteousness and goodness, Amen.

As we read the verses, we can review the “Good and evil quick reference” tool (See Appendix at the end of the book). We can read the scripture, see if it agrees with the tool, and ponder our own inward productivity with Good and evil. Remember, scripture is “for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

Let’s seek reproof and correction so we may be more complete and better equipped for good work.

Matthew - Acts

“Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4, NKJV)

What are your thoughts or beliefs about mourning? Do you embrace mourning or avoid it? What is it inwardly like to mourn? Do you comfort or condemn those who mourn? Are you open to being comforted by others as you mourn? Do you hide from others as you mourn? Is there fear or pride interfering with mourning? How might you align better with the verse? How might you improve your thoughts about mourning?

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. (Matthew 5:6, NKJV)

What is righteousness? Are you hungry for it? How might being hungry for righteousness help to fill you?

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:10, NKJV)

Please share an example in your life where you were persecuted for doing something Godly right. How might it be a blessing/bring happiness to be persecuted for righteousness? How does it feel to be right with God?

“The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,” (Matthew 13:41, NKJV)

What is it like to practice lawlessness? What does that look like in your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors? How might your choices impact practicing it?

“Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:19, NKJV)

Why is it important to do what you teach? If your actions do not match your words, does that diminish the teaching? How so or why not?

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:” (Matthew 7:24, NKJV)

Why is doing them important? What is the difference between hearing instructions and doing them? Does it make a difference in learning and understanding? How so or why not?

“For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.” (Mark 3:35, NKJV)

What if your blood family does not do the will of God? How might Jesus view that relationship? Does your faith and belief agree with Christ?

“Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like:” (Luke 6:47, NKJV)

How well are you listening? Are you doing His sayings? What affect is your doings having upon you?

“And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:27, NKJV) (&) “So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.” (Luke 14:33, NKJV)

Why is dying to self and forsaking things important for discipleship? What ways have you died to self? What things have you forsaken? What might that feel like? What thoughts might develop?

“God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:24, NKJV)

Notice the word ‘must.’ Are you doing it right if you don’t worship in spirit and truth? Can you worship without singing, standing, or waving hands? What happens with your thoughts and hearts when you worship in spirit and truth? Is there discernment, focus, guidance, testimonies, or correction with spiritual worship?

“and come forth— those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.” (John 5:29, NKJV)

Are you discerning good and evil, how the Bible describes them? Are you setting your mind to carefully improve with doing good? How might doing good bring life or doing evil bring condemnation? What’s the difference between life and condemnation?

“And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.” (John 9:39, NKJV)

How might your eyes be opened through increased love, peace, compassion, truth, justice, forgiveness, mercy, and generosity? Can you inwardly understand these beyond your experiences of them? How so or why not?

How might your eyes be closed through your cooperation with pride, deception, insincerity, self-seeking, bitterness, and idolatry?

“Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed *are* those who have not seen and yet have believed.” (John 20:29, NKJV)

How might believing in God and God’s Good help you into being blessed? Does belief affect your choices? How so or why not?

“And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also *is* the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.” (Acts 5:39, NKJV)

How might obedience to God, doing the will of God, and increased productivity in God’s Good help you better sense the Spirit of God?

“So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” (Acts 20:32, NKJV)

biblehub.com uses a definition of sanctification as “sanctifying work.” This of course is doing the will of God, growing in God’s Good, and increasing righteousness. It’s an inward development.

What thoughts, attitudes, choices, and practices are you doing that might be sanctifying work? What spiritual activity might build you up to give an inheritance among all those who are sanctified?

“to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” (Acts 26:18, NKJV)

How are you turning from darkness to light? What corrections are you making from evil to good?

Debrief

It's important to understand the pattern presented so far. There are points made which inform us of a certain direction to improve and grow through sanctifying work. The scriptures all guide us to increased productivity with God's Good. Let's review Deuteronomy 6:3-9, which Jesus emphasized with high esteem.

"Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe *it*, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the Lord God of your fathers has promised you — 'a land flowing with milk and honey.'

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord *is* one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Deuteronomy 6:3-9, NKJV)

Ponder deeper the meaning of the words used here. Why? Because the longer God's corrective truth is held within your conscious activity, the more likely you are able to abide in and remember it. The Bible teaches us how to grow our faith with God's good. This is an inward activity involving interests, thoughts, attitudes, desires, choices, words, and actions.

It's about improvement, not condemnation or bitterness. It's about waking up to truth, not staying asleep in sin. It's about walking more in Good, which involves forgiveness and mercy, even toward ourselves. It's about self-discipline, courage, picking up the cross, putting on the yoke of Christ, and increasing productivity. It's a daily activity with practiced conscious effort, self-discovery, and setting our hearts and minds toward God. It's about mistakes with redirections, failures with tears and forgiveness, and encouragement to do Good. It's about experiencing amazing grace through trials and growth. It's about finding beauty of love and peace. It's about experiencing deeper sincere spiritual families dedicated to doing the will of God with increasing measure.

What is it like to “be careful to observe” something? Perhaps it’s like a fishing pole set down aside us, carefully watching it, so when a fish takes the hook it does not also take the pole. We carefully observe in waiting anticipation and are ready to grab it as soon as it moves.

What is it like to love something with your whole being? How might the way you think affect your love? How much time is spent thinking about something you love with your whole being? Would you talk about it with others or set reminders? How much energy and resources might you invest to be in it? How high of a priority might it be?

What is it like to teach something diligently? How important is the role of experience to know something well? Might experience with growing God’s good help improve our knowledge and teaching? Would someone who teaches how to fish have experience in fishing? Wouldn’t a teacher of God’s Good be someone who actively practices growing in it? Might they have personal stories of such experiences?

How might you better situate yourself with reminders of doing the will of God? How might you remind yourself about growing in love, peace, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, sincerity, truth, and generosity? Might you place them on your mirror, dashboard in your car, image on your phone, or tattoo on your skin (for those who get tattoos)?

How well do you take into your heart, mind, and soul the way this is written and walk in it better? How can you do it better?

What ways might you be able to improve? Do you have room for growth? What is one simple way you can improve today?

Romans -

“And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such

things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.” (Romans 1:28-32, NKJV)

What is retaining God in your knowledge? What is a debased mind and how might it function? What sort of thoughts would be involved? Looking at the list, notice the words ‘proud,’ ‘undiscerning,’ ‘untrustworthy,’ ‘unloving,’ ‘unforgiving,’ and ‘unmerciful.’ How does this description match up with the “Good & evil quick reference tool?”

Why might discerning be so important that it is used in the above verse?

“But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.” (Romans 2:2, NKJV)

How might people who ‘practice such things’ be avoiding truth? How might they feel if they faced God’s truth? What might they think about God’s truth that reveals things against them?

“But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who “will render to each one according to his deeds”: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.” (Romans 2:5, NKJV)

What goes on in your mind when you treasure up for yourself something? What might the meaning be of, “will render to each one according to his deeds?”

What is the meaning of, “by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality.”

What are some current day examples of, “those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil.”

What are some current day examples of, “but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good.”

What does it mean, “For there is no partiality with God?” Why might this point be important? Was Jesus partial to anyone? If so, who and how? (Matthew 12:46-50)

“For if those who are of the law *are* heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect,” (Romans 4:14, NKJV)

Faith gives us access to to grace. Faith is the way to grace. Faith is a state of mind that can change quickly. What are ways you can increase your self-awareness to observe your thoughts and perceptions? Can meditating upon your inward activity help? What are some good thoughts you believe that you can practice more to help guide your faith into more productivity with God’s good?

“Therefore *it is* of faith that *it might be* according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all” (Romans 4:16, NKJV)

Why are the words “it is’ and ’might be’ italicized. How important is faith with receiving grace? Isn’t faith a state of mind; thoughts, perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs? Can you practice new thoughts to help your faith be more in “according to grace?” How so or why not?

Faith changes minute by minute. New information, feelings, even the beliefs of others around us can influence our faith. It is easy to be misled. Look at the stories in the Bible about how faith changes. How important is it to create improved thought practices with love, peace, mercy, forgiveness, truth, justice, sincerity, and compassion?

What is the faith of Abraham? How strong was the faith of Abraham? How well does your faith match up with Abraham’s? How might your faith be impacted if you cooperated with God more like Abraham? How can you grow even a little today? What’s one improved choice you can make?

“*There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” (Romans 8:1, NKJV)

What might the words “those who are in Christ Jesus” mean? What is the difference between walking in Christ and the flesh? Look at the “Good & evil reference tool.” How important is the focus of your thoughts and perceptions with walking in Christ?

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. (Romans 8:5, NKJV)

How might you better set your mind on the things of the Spirit? What sort of things might you think? How often might you practice thinking them? What might you do if you noticed your thoughts set according to the flesh? Would you correct them? How so or why not?

“So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Romans 8:8, NKJV)

It is important to understand we all sin. We all have evil involved in our faith. This is not black and white. Faith can grow and decrease. When we realize our sin and faulty thoughts, it can get uncomfortable. This is not bad, it's learning a sense of humility about our inward truth and faith. What often hurts is our evil pride. It's the ungodly parts of our minds that can become defensive, guarded, and even resistant to God's truth. We can be inclined to protect our pride. We are not bad people trying to become good, we are mislead people seeking to grow better in righteous truth. That said, humility and relying less upon our own understanding is a good path. Taking captive our misunderstandings and correcting them with God's righteous ways is good.

This next question is one to guide us to think deeper about how we respond to God's instructions . . . to learn more about our thought messages. What we inwardly think about ourselves, the world around us, and what we should do impacts our faith.

If you know your thoughts are set according to the flesh and you know you can make corrections, but don't, are you then choosing to ignore growth with God? How so or why not? How does it feel to learn how wrong you are? How do you respond to it? Is there fear, anger, bitterness, defensiveness, etc? Or is there humble understanding with anxious anticipation to learn new and better ways? One response is about

protecting the evil. The other response is about readiness to grow with God.

The goal is the faith of Abraham. Think about what he went through in his mind and the thoughts he wrestled with. Read his story and learn how he might have felt as he followed and obeyed God.

But what if you don't have the faith of Abraham? The good news is that some of us can actually grow more gradually toward the faith of Abraham and still reap benefits with God. Being with God is about a journey, a journey that continues to take us to new and different spiritual places within our heart, mind, and soul. You can have moments of Abraham like faith and then fall away from it. You can have days with growth and days of withering. This is daily, moment by moment, activity. It's journey.

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.” (Romans 8:28, NKJV)

Let's continue to grow our thoughts with understanding God's purpose.

If you know that God is love and 1 Corinthians 13 defines love in detail, wouldn't you practice what it says love is with improvement and growth? How so or why not?

Would working together for God's good include cooperating and practicing thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors described in 1 Corinthians 13? How so or why not?

“And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!” (Romans 10:15, NKJV)

What is it to preach peace? What does peace sound, feel, and look like? Does it involve hurry, worry, bitterness, or self-seeking? Might it involve calm confidence? How well can you preach peace if you don't practice it?

“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in *His* goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.” (Romans 11:22, NKJV)

Notice the qualifier, “. . . if you continue in *His* goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.” What thoughts would be continuing in His goodness?

“Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.” (Romans 13:2, NKJV)

What is resisting? What sort of thoughts, attitudes, or actions would involve resistance? What does it mean by “will bring judgment on themselves.” Can what you choose to do bring judgement upon yourself? Review the “Good & evil quick reference tool” to see what traits might involve resistance or obedience.

“For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.” (Romans 15:3, NKJV)

How might pleasing yourself be ungodly? What does the Bible say about self-seeking? What is the difference between seeking God and self-seeking? Are you guarding against self-seeking in your thoughts, goals, and pursuits? How so or why not?

“Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.” (Romans 16:17-18, NKJV)

What might it be like to choose to avoid people, even those close to you, who are causing divisions and offenses? How might you speak truth to such people? How might you make requests for changes and set good spiritual boundaries?

Those who . . . do the will of God

“But He answered and said to the one who told Him, “Who is My mother and who are My brothers?” And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, “Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.” (Matthew 12:48-50, NKJV)

Corinthians

“To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be saints*, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:” (1 Corinthians 1:2, NKJV)

What might those who are sanctified in Christ look like? Here is a definition of sanctification, “living lives that reflect holiness and dedication to His service—biblehub.com.”

“But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” (1 Corinthians 2:9, NKJV)

What might ‘those who love Him’ be like? What thoughts, attitudes, words, and actions might involve loving God? How did Jesus or the Apostles love God?

“For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.” (2 Corinthians 2:15, NKJV)

Our fragrance, aroma, vibe, attitude, and demeanor matters. Can you discern the difference between those who are being saved and those who are perishing? Describe the fragrance of those who are being saved and those who are perishing. Try writing it down to see it clearly.

“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4, NKJV)

How are some minds blinded and some able to see? Are there differences in their thinking? Use the ‘Good & evil quick reference’ tool for help with this question and keep in mind the idea of fragrance. Can some be blind to the God’s good? How so or why not?

“For we do not commend ourselves again to you, but give you opportunity to boast on our behalf, that you may have *an answer* for those who boast in appearance and not in heart.” (2 Corinthians 5:12, NKJV)

What is the difference between boasting in appearance and heart? How are they different? How can you increase with boasting in your heart and decrease boasting in appearance?

“and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.” (2 Corinthians 5:15, NKJV)

What is it like to no longer live for yourself? How might living for yourself get in the way of living for God?

“For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” (2 Corinthians 10:12, NKJV)

Why should you avoid comparing yourself with others? Which would help you grow more, comparing yourself with others around you or with God’s goodness? Who or what is your goal that you are seeking to become more like? How are you doing it? What thoughts and actions are you applying to improve?

“I have told you before, and foretell as if I yre present the second time, and now being absent I write to **those who** have sinned before, and to all the rest, that if I come again I will not spare— since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, who is not weak toward you, but mighty in you. For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you. Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? —unless indeed you are disqualified. But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.” (2 Corinthians 13:2-6, NKJV)

How has Christ been “mighty in you?” Why is it important to examine ourself? How might you examine your faith? How might you test yourself?

How can you learn better how Christ is in you? Use the reference tool for help.

What might it be like to be disqualified?

“But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed *to be something* added nothing to me.” (Galatians 2:6, NKJV)

What does it mean by, "God shows personal favoritism to no man." Who are people who seem to be something in our lives? How might looking up to a person be idolatry? How can you respect others while keeping God your priority and top focus?

“Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.” (Galatians 3:7, NKJV)

“So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.” (Galatians 3:9, NKJV)

What character might the son of Abraham practice? What is having the faith of Abraham? Why is Abraham’s faith so important? How does our faith compare to Abraham’s? How might you improve?

“But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.” (Galatians 3:22, NKJV)

Who are “those who believe?” Is this belief involving the faith of Abraham? If some have faith in Jesus, won’t they then practice improving doing what Jesus teaches? How so or why not?

“But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such there is no law. And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another." (Galatians 5:18-26, NKJV)

How does the works of the flesh here agree with the 'reference tool?' What does it mean by, "those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God?" Does crucifying the flesh mean putting to death the behaviors described as the flesh? What are ways you can practice each day putting to death such thoughts, attitudes, words, demeanor/fragrance, and actions?

Do you have a flesh fragrance or a fragrance of Christ? Please describe what choices and actions have affected your fragrance?

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith." (Galatians 6:10, NKJV)

What does it mean by, "especially to those who are of the household of faith?" How might you discern "those who are of the household of faith?" What are ways you do good to others? In what ways can you improve in doing good to others?

"Grace *be* with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." (Ephesians 6:24, NKJV)

Why might grace be more with "those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity?" What is the difference between loving with sincerity and without sincerity? What might happen to grace if you love with hypocrisy—insincerely?

"Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern." (Philippians 3:17, NKJV)

How can you join in following his example? Why can you note how others walk? How are you learning discernment about such things?

"But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope." (1 Thessalonians 4:13, NKJV)

What might those who have fallen asleep look like? How might someone be ignorant of such people? How might you recognize them? What sort of thoughts, beliefs, or faith might involve sorrowing with no hope?

“Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.” (1 Thessalonians 5:14, NKJV)

Are you patient with all? Are you improving with patience? Who can you be more patient with? How do you warn those who are unruly? How might you comfort the fainthearted and uphold the weak?

“in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thessalonians 1:8, NKJV)

What is it like to know God? What is it like to not know God? What are some ways to better obey the gospel? What are some ways to improve in obeying the gospel and knowing God?

“Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power,” (2 Thessalonians 1:11, NKJV)

What might it be like to be counted worthy of this calling? How can you fulfill the good pleasure of His goodness? Use the ‘reference tool’ and see which of the character traits might be fulfilling the good pleasure of His goodness. What might the work of faith with power be like?

“and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” (2 Thessalonians 2:10, NKJV)

How might our clinging to evil deceive us? Using the ‘reference tool,’ what thoughts might fit the phrase, ‘unrighteous deception?’ How does God’s truth grow or correct us? Do you love correction? How so or why not?

“However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.” (1 Timothy 1:16, NKJV)

How is mercy obtained? What is longsuffering? How might longsuffering be a pattern to believers in Christ? Are you growing in longsuffering? How so or why not?

“Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.” (1 Timothy 4:16, NKJV)

How might you take heed to the doctrine? What would taking heed to the doctrine be like in your thoughts, attitudes, words, and actions? How might your taking heed to the doctrine affect others and their beliefs?

“Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.” (1 Timothy 5:20, NKJV)

Why might rebuking in the presence of all be important? What is the difference between private rebuke and public? Which way brings more humility or protects pride?

“But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.” (1 Timothy 6:9, NKJV)

What is it like to desire to be rich and how might that affect our beliefs and thoughts? How might “foolish and harmful lusts” drown people in destruction?

“Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.” (1 Timothy 6:17, NKJV)

How is trusting in riches spiritually harmful? Does trusting in riches build good or evil? How so? What does haughty mean and look like?

“Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2 Timothy 2:19, NKJV)

How does the “The Lord knows those who are His?” What is it like to depart from iniquity? What are some ways you can depart from iniquity today? What is a process of departing from iniquity?

“Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.” (2 Timothy 2:21-26, NKJV)

What attitude and thoughts are in a vessel for honor? What attitude and thoughts are in a vessel for dishonor? How do you learn your thoughts? Why might it be important to flee youthful lusts/evil as you pursue righteousness? What is a pure heart? How might you avoid foolish disputes? What is an ignorant dispute? How might you grow in gentleness toward all today? How might you correct others with humility? Why is repentance important to know the truth and come to your senses? How might repentance help you to be more pure? How might you be taken captive to do the will of the devil?

“holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.” (Titus 1:9, NKJV)

What is it like to hold fast the faithful word? What is sound doctrine? What is unsound doctrine? How might you humbly exhort and convict those who contradict?

“To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but in works they deny *Him*, being

abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.” (Titus 1:15-16, NKJV)

What are some examples of pure things? How does a mind become defiled? What thoughts and perceptions would be in a defiled mind? Might the practices of insincerity or dishonesty deny God? How so or why not? What might an obedient mind concentrate upon? How might taking captive disobedient thoughts and humbly submitting your consciousness more to God purify and correct you?

“This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.” (Titus 3:8, NKJV)

How might you “be careful to maintain good works?” How might you be more careful to maintain good works today? How are maintaining good works profitable to you and others?

“For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified *are* all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,” (Hebrews 2:11, NKJV)

What is it like to be sanctified? How might being sanctified affect your heart and conscience? How might being sanctified help you from shame?

“Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.” (Hebrews 3:17-19, NKJV)

Notice the following, “those who sinned,” “those who did not obey,” and “because of unbelief.” What might disobedience have to do with unbelief? Are they related? How so or why not? What might this look like in yourself and how might you better guard against it?

Look up & Read Hebrews 4 Take note the words disobedience and diligence.

What does it mean by, “ceased from his works?”

What does it mean by, “to whom we *must give* account?”

What does it mean by, “let us hold fast *our* confession?”

What does it mean by, “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need?”

“He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.” (Hebrews 5:2, NKJV)

How can you discern “those who are ignorant and going astray?” What are they like? What might it look like in yourself?

“But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Hebrews 5:14, NKJV)

What is the difference between solid food and milk? How does reason of use “exercise senses?” How might senses exercised help us better discern good and evil?

“For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.” (Hebrews 6:4-6, NKJV)

What is it inwardly like to be a partaker of the Holy Spirit and taste the good word of God? What does the good word of God taste like. How might it feel to have a pure heart and clean conscience and then grow corruption and evil? What is it like to be taken captive by evil and repent? What’s your story? What does repentance have to do with renewal?

“that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” (Hebrews 6:12, NKJV)

What does it mean by “do not become sluggish?” Why is productivity with faith and patience a factor with inheritance?

“For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” (Hebrews 10:14, NKJV)

What might this mean about those who are not being sanctified? How are you being sanctified?

“But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.” (Hebrews 10:39, NKJV)

What might drawing back be like in your thoughts, attitudes, and actions? What thoughts, attitudes, and actions would a soul being saved practice?

“But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6, NKJV)

What thoughts would be in a faith that pleases Him? What sort of things would you set your mind upon that would build a faith that pleases God? Is there a difference between seeking God a little and diligently seeking God? Why might the Bible be using the phrase diligently seeking God instead of just seeking God?

“Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” (Hebrews 12:11, NKJV)

Does peaceable fruit come before unrewarding chastening or after? What is an example in your life where chastening yielded peaceable fruit of righteousness? What is it like to be trained in righteousness? How do you train in righteousness?

“Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” (James 1:12, NKJV)

When does the crown of life come, before or after enduring temptation? What might enduring temptation be like? Which is better, endure a tiny bit or a lot? Why is enduring temptation important to God and what might that have to do with loving God with our all—the greatest commandment?

“Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” (James 3:18, NKJV)

Does the fruit of righteousness come to those who don't practice it? What is it inwardly like to make peace? What are some ways you can improve in making peace?

“Therefore, to you who believe, *He is* precious; but to those who are disobedient, “The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,” (1 Peter 2:7, NKJV)

How does disobedience impact faith? Is there a difference in the faith of someone disobedient and someone who obeys? How so or why not? What are ways you have corrected your own disobedience?

"For the eyes of the Lord *are* on the righteous, And His ears *are open* to their prayers; But the face of the Lord *is* against those who do evil." And who *is* he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, *you are* blessed. “And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.” But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For *it is* better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.” (1 Peter 3:12-17, NKJV)

Why is the face of the Lord against those who do evil? How does following what is good protect you? How might you “sanctify the Lord God in” your heart? What is a good conscience like? What sort of thoughts and mental attitudes are in a good conscience? How is meekness a good thing? What is good conduct in Christ? What might it be like to suffer for doing good?

“For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.” (1 Peter 4:6, NKJV)

How can the gospel be preached to the dead? How can preaching to the dead help them live according to God in the spirit? Describe what it is like

to “live according to God in the spirit.” Does this lifestyle involve finding errors and making corrections? How so or why not?

“For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now “If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?” Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to Him* in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.” (1 Peter 4:17-19, NKJV)

How does judgement involve obeying the gospel? What is it like to suffer according to the will of God? Do you struggle with disciplining yourself to obey the gospel? How so or why not? How are you committing your “souls *to Him* in doing good?”

“Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ,
To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:
Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.

(Fruitful Growth in the Faith)

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, *you* will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 1:1-11, NKJV)

What is it like to obtain a “precious faith?”

What are ways to have “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God?”

What is it like to “be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption?”

How might you “add to your faith virtue?”

Why is self-control and perseverance important?

What sort of thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors bring forth brotherly kindness and love?

What happens to people who lack these things?

What does it mean by “if you do these things you will never stumble” and what does stumbling involve in our thoughts, attitudes, and actions?”

“Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.” (1 John 3:6, NKJV)

Does can improving your abiding in God help you know God better?

“In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor *is* he who does not love his brother.” (1 John 3:10, NKJV)

What is it like to practice righteousness? What is the process of increasing in righteousness? What are ways to practice it better?

“But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?” (1 John 3:17, NKJV)

What is it like to shut up your heart? How might shutting up your heart affect your love? How might you better open your heart? Might that involve caring, empathy, emotional understanding, and compassion? How so or why not?

“If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *which does not lead* to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not *leading* to death. There is sin *leading* to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.” (1 John 5:16, NKJV)

What is a sin that does not lead to death? What is “sin *leading* to death?” Why not pray about a sin leading to death? Would increased introspective

thought analysis better equip you for corrective action? How so or why not?

“We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.” (1 John 5:18, NKJV)

What is the difference between someone who is born of God and someone who is not? Which one would be growing in understanding with God’s good? Which one would be attentive to improve understanding with good and evil?

“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.” (2 John 1:9, NKJV)

What does abiding in the doctrine of Christ involve with your heart and mind? Does abiding in the doctrine improve your cooperation and understanding with God’s good? How so or why not?

“Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.” (Jude 1:1-2, NKJV)

How can you improve our discerning those who are sanctified by God? Might your own sanctifying work help you better understand it? What are some ways you can multiply mercy, peace, and love?

“I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;” (Revelation 2:2, NKJV)

What does not bearing those who are evil look like? What are some examples? How might you test those who say they are apostles? What would you look for and what questions might you ask? Might some questions in this study help? How so or why not?

“I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.” (Revelation 2:9, NKJV)

What works might this verse be referring to? What is this person rich in?

“Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.” (Revelation 2:22, NKJV)

Why is repenting important? What happens if you don't repent?

“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.” (Revelation 3:10, NKJV)

What are ways you have kept God's command to persevere? How might you do it better or continue in it?

“Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.” (Revelation 22:14, NKJV)

How can doing His commandments bring blessings and the right to the tree of life? How might doing His commandments be necessary?

Good & Evil Quick Reference

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| 1. Truth, No partiality, Heeding the word | 1. Deceit, False lips, Flattery, Hypocrisy |
| 2. Humble, Serving, Contrite | 2. Pride, Arrogance, Vanity |
| 3. Seeking good, Knowing good, Abhor evil, Repentance | 3. Seeking evil, Thinking evil, Avoiding good, Covet, Envy, Rebellion, Ungodliness |
| 4. Peace, Love, Compassion, Mercy | 4. Malice, Clamor, Bitterness, Wrath, Anger |
| 5. Charitable deeds, Lending | 5. Not giving or helping others |
| 6. Zeal, Perseverance, Labor | 6. Seeking comforts, Sloth, Avoiding struggle |
| 7. Forgiveness, Caring for enemies, Not to burden | 7. Holding grudges, Vengeful thinking, Paybacks, Doing evil, Creating harm |
| 8. Generosity, Sharing, Giving | 8. Love of money, Debt, Oppressing |
| 9. Building sincere love with others | 9. Withdrawing from others, keeping people out |

Malice - desiring ill will or misfortune of others

Clamor - making lots of noise to agitate

Hypocrisy (hypokrisis) - playacting,

“any person who was wearing a figurative mask and pretending to be someone or something they were not”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/hypocrite-meaning-origin>

Romans 12:9 NKJV “Behave Like a Christian
Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.”

Daily Process

Ponder God's character traits, learn how to inwardly practice and serve them, for they are Good.

Practice introspection identifying thoughts and feelings throughout the day.
What was I thinking and feeling? Why did I choose . . . ?
How are my thoughts with God?

Humble ourselves away from self-seeking, pride, vanity, idolatry, or other ungodly distractions.

Meditate upon the feelings and sensations of our doing Good and evil.
Inwardly learn how Good is Good and evil is evil.

Pray for strength, courage, and direction to trust, obey, and do Good.

Identify struggles with evil, confess and discuss them, have mercy, and walk in forgiveness. Psalm 34:14

Slow down, take it easy, practice patience, walk peacefully.

Look for opportunities to do God's good today. Be spiritually ready, observant, and discerning. Practice spiritual connections.

Take comfort in the Good experienced, find the joy in it, and feel the affects of God's Good.

Empathetically and sincerely; compliment, comfort, encourage, and support others with love and truth. Let conviction happen when necessary.

Progress, not perfection. Improve awareness of progress. Tally up the good each day. Identify errors to better learn how to make improvements.

Teach by example, demonstration, and shared personal experiences. Be ready to describe own progress with real life examples.