

## ***“The Fruit of the Spirit”***

May 29, 2011

Text: Galatians 5:22-23

**Galatians 5:16 contains a fundamental principle about the Xn life that every believer needs to understand, apply, and master=>**

*“Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”*

As a Xn walks by the Spirit, living in obedient/sensitive submission to His leading, the “fruit of the Spirit” will be reproduced in his life.

But when he walks according to the flesh, you see the deeds of the flesh in his life=>  
immorality/impurity/sensuality, idolatry/sorcery, nmities/strife/jealousy/outbursts-of-anger, disputes/dissensions/factions/envying, drunkenness/carousing and other sins of similar character/nature.

We examined each of these last Sunday.

A believer who is walking by/in the Spirit won’t gratify these desires of the flesh, but will bear the fruit of the Spirit, instead.

And in the process he’ll also displace the deeds of the flesh from his life.

**Having listed the “deeds of the flesh”, Paul will now provide a list of virtues that he calls the “fruit of the Spirit.”**

*“Fruit,”* not “fruits,” because these 9 virtues are multiple aspects of 1 fruit—Jesus’ own righteousness observable in a Xn’s life.

Each of these forms of “fruit” is used to describe X Himself in the NT, so the “fruit” of the Spirit can be viewed as X manifesting His righteousness in His people’s lives.

But Xns are also commanded to live out these virtues.

\* E.g. “Love”=> *“Walk in love, just as Christ also loved you”* (Eph 5:2).

It’s a command!

\* “Joy”=> *“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!”* (Phil 4:4).

\* “Peace”=> *“If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men”*  
(Rom 12:18).

Because we are incapable of manifesting these virtues and graces as X did, apart from the power of the H.S. w/i us, Paul refers to them as the *“fruit of the Spirit.”*

They are seen in us, but they come from the H.S. w/i us.

**In today’s text Paul will describe the “fruit of the Spirit” by its nature, its various manifestations, and its character.**

**\* The Nature of the Fruit of the Spirit**

[Galatians 5:22a]=> *“But the fruit of the Spirit...”*

**The key to understanding the nature of the fruit of the Spirit is to realize that it is indeed=> “of [from] the Spirit.”**

The Holy Spirit who indwells believers is not barren/lifeless.

He is almighty God who, having indwelt us, will inevitably reproduce His own likeness/life/nature w/i us.

\* E.g. God is love, and Rom 5:5 says, *“The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”*

When we received the H.S., we received the loving nature of God dwelling right within us.

So a born-again Xn will inevitably love.

\* God is joyful and blessed forever, so a Xn will inevitably become joyful (unless he suppresses that joy), especially when he is walking in the Spirit.

\* Rom 14:17 says God's Kingdom is one of=> "*righteousness and **peace** ... in the Holy Spirit.*"

So a born-again citizen of God's Kingdom, who is walking in the Spirit, will inevitably display the fruit of peace in his life, become a peacemaker, & will himself experience the H.S.'s peace.

And under the Spirit's influence, He will also become increasingly righteous, in a practical sense, because the Spirit is righteous.

The proof that the Spirit has saved a person, given him a new nature, & indwelt him, is the fruit of the Spirit w/i him.

And one of the strongest proofs that a person has not been regenerated, is a lack of spiritual fruit.

So X said (Mt 7:19)=> "*Every tree that does **not** bear **good fruit** is cut down and thrown into the fire.*"

Why? It represents an unregenerate man on his way to hell.

People can adopt mannerisms that look like the fruit of the Spirit, but are the spiritual equivalent of artificial fruit.

\* a sweetness that is really affectation rather than genuine affection;

\* a giddiness that's really just pretended joy, and may come from a very unhappy heart;

\* an appearance of peace that covers up fear, insecurity, or anger and has nothing to do w/ the indwelling Spirit's influence.

Some folks actually do have a congenial/positive temperament that can be mistaken for the fruit of the Spirit, but merely reflects their own congenial nature—not regeneration, nor "walking in the Spirit."

They're nice people, but their natural temperament is not a work of God's grace in their hearts.

They're pleasant to be around, but it's not necessarily the H.S. ministering through them to others.

**The word "Fruit" is used throughout the Bible to refer to the outflow of a person's life, which indicates his true inward nature.**

E.g. in Mt 7:16-17, Jesus said=> "*You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? / Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit.*"

The "fruit of the Spirit" is the overflow/outflow of a heart that has been indwelt by the H.S.

The flesh can produce no fruit, only fleshly deeds, because the flesh has no spiritual-life within it.

"Fruit" also pictures the sweetness/abundance of God's blessings.

Psa 128:2=> "*When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, You will be **happy** and it will be **well** with you.*"

The fruit of the Spirit represents all the sweet abundance of God's own gracious nature flowing out of His people, due to the sanctifying/life-giving influence of His Spirit in them.

It gives pleasure to God, & to other people as well.

"Fruit" also carries w/i itself the seeds by which its life is reproduced.

The fruit of the Spirit, seen in a Xn's character/personality draws people to X, so they can become saved, & X's life can be reproduced in another generation of believers through that Xns.

\* "Fruit" is also the final product of a tree's maturation.

It doesn't appear until the roots/trunk of a tree are well developed, & branches are well established on its trunk.

Even then, the fruit begins as a flower, out of which grows a sour little berry.

Only after it has had time to ripen, does the fruit reach its full/delicious potential.

Spiritual fruit w/i a Xn also ripens/sweetens with time/maturity.

Finally, "Fruit" comes from God, but it is increased by our own labor.

The farmer must protect it from the frost that spoils fruit.

False teaching can be just as destructive spiritual, and can destroy spiritual fruit just as fast, as frost destroys literal fruit.

A quarrelsome believer in the fellowship can destroy it like a worm, turning the sweetest fruit into bitterness.

Every Xn, and especially the leaders of a church, must watch over the fruit, to protect it from Satan, through obedience to the Word.

### \* **The Manifestations of the Fruit of the Spirit**

As we have seen, spiritual fruit is essentially X-like righteousness, in a Xn who walking by the H.S.

But that righteousness is specifically manifested in a variety of different ways.

[Gal 5:22a-b]—*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace..."*

#### **Love--the first/greatest/best fruit of the Spirit.**

It is the supreme form of spiritual fruit.

In I Cor 13:13, Paul writes=> *"But now abide faith, hope, and love, these three; the greatest of these is love."*

Love is the most God-like of all virtues/graces, because God Himself is love (I Jn 4:8).

I Cor 13:2=> *"If I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing."*

Love leads the parade in the list of the Spirit's fruit, because it is the motive & dynamic energy that animates all the others.

E.g. without God's love there can be no real joy/peace.

Loveless people know nothing about true joy.

And all the other virtues on the list of spiritual fruit would be only shabby works of a human righteousness, no better than filthy rags, apart from Spirit-imparted/Spirit-empowered love.

Love fulfills the Law of God, & that's not true of any other virtue.

But love is not legal/legalistic, so no one loves because the law demands that of him.

A believer loves because the Spirit has poured God's love into his heart—genuine love, the spontaneous outflow of a Spirit-controlled heart.

He responds freely from his heart—by loving.

Love casts out fear, eliminating his self-protective guardedness.

**Agape love may feel affection toward others, but it goes way beyond that—choosing to humbly serve them.**

It does so indiscriminately and w/o favoritism, serving the poor a/w/a the rich, the ignoble a/w/a the noble.

That's how Jesus loved (1 Jn 3:16)=> "*We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us.*"

John then goes on to say our Spirit-inspired love should respond in the same way=>

*"...and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. / But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?"* (I Jn 3:16-17).

Real love is ready/willing to sacrifice for those it care about.

If a Xn is walking in the Spirit, his love for others can actually become extremely sacrificial, & take on the character of X's own love.

**Joy—placid/optimistic confidence, w/ occasional gusts of exhilaration.**

For the Xn who is walking in the Spirit, joy is a deep sense of wellbeing that is not based on circumstances, but on the confidence that all is well with his soul.

Joy is the believer's God-given portion, so the Church has always been joyful, even in times of persecution.

\* Paul/Silas joyfully sang praises to God in a Philippian jail, with their legs stretched apart in painful stocks.

\* The inscriptions left by Xns in the catacombs of Rome show that they worshiped the Lord with joy, despite their being despised/hunted/persecuted by the world around them.

They suffered for the sake of their Savior's name with a triumphant sense of joy.

\* David had many anxious/sorrowful times, but he could still write (Psa 16:11)=> "*In Thy presence is fulness of joy.*"

**Our joy seems to actually increase in times of distress, because they cause us to focus on our Lord, rather than ourselves or our problems.**

We find our joy in the goodness of our Great Shepherd.

Amazingly, Xns can say with Habakkuk (3:17-18)=> "*Though the fig tree should not blossom, & there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail, & the fields produce no food, Though the flock should be cut off from the fold, & there be no cattle in the stalls, / Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.*"

There have been times when believers actually feared coming out from under the pressure of affliction, where the Lord's presence had been so real/comforting to them.

They feared they might lose the joy of that closeness to Him, if their circumstances improved.

It was to believers like that, whose faith was being tested by fire, that Peter wrote (I Pet 1:8)=> "*Though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.*"

**Some Xns are actually afraid to experience too much joy.**

They are legalists, living under bondage to the Law.

They fear feeling too much assurance of their salvation.

It seems like arrogant presumption to them, & they're afraid that if they get too cocky about it, God will punish them, or even take their salvation away.

They don't seem to realize that the fruit of the Spirit is joy, so they owe it not only to themselves, but to God, to enjoy themselves, rejoice in their salvation, & ultimately in Him.

In fact, we are commanded to do so in Phil 3:1=> "**Rejoice in the Lord.**"

Other believers worship God at a distance, not rejoicing in Him, because they don't love Him as they should, or because they've lost their battle with the flesh, so they're suffering from guilt/shame.

Their praises are sung half-heartedly, if at all.

But Heb 13:15 tells us to *“offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.”*

We need to turn loose of our hearts, reveling in unrestrained love of our Lord, and in unbridled joy over His goodness to us.

David all but lost control of himself out of joy, as he danced with such glee before the Ark of the Covenant that his wife felt embarrassed.

It would do us good to follow his example, occasionally.

**God has given those who know Him every reason to rejoice=>**

- \* He has chosen us from before the foundation of the world.
- \* He has saved our souls from the wrath to come, justifying us and cleansing our consciences from guilt.
- \* Jesus has died to save us, has given us eternal life, and has promised that we will never perish.
- \* God has adopted us as His own sons/daughters, and granted us a priceless eternal inheritance.
- \* He has freely given us the precious gift of His Spirit, who empowers/gifts us, comforts/instructs/guides us.
- \* He has given us His Word as a sure/inerrant foundation on which to build our faith, our hopes, and our lives.
- \* He has torn apart the curtain separating us from Him, and invited us to commune with Him in prayer thru X.
- \* He has promised us that He will work all things together for our good—even in poverty/sickness/misfortune—as He comforts us in all our afflictions (II Cor 1:4).
- \* He grants us the joy of seeing others come to X, thus exalting our beloved Savior.
- \* Jesus has promised us that He will return, and that we will spend eternity with Him in glory and in joy.

We have every reason conceivable to rejoice, and so for those who walk in the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit is joy.

It is fulfilled through reliance on God, when we ask for, & receive, His help, as Jesus said, *“that your joy may be made full”* (Jn 16:24).

**Peace—tranquility of mind thru a saving relationship with X.**

In Phil 4, Paul told the Philippians=> *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer & supplication w/ thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. / And the **peace of God**, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”* (Phil 4:6-7).

Then Paul went on to say that if they would practice the truths they'd learned from him, and had seen in him=> *“The **God of peace shall be with you**”* (Phil 4:9).

Practicing those truths is the same as walking in the Spirit.

The key to personal peace is having the God of peace with you.

We gain the greatest advantage from that peace by walking in the Spirit, but the peace itself is our spiritual birthright in X.

Our Lord stands at the helm of our lives, commanding the winds and the waves to be still.

And even when He allows them to bounce us around a bit, our peace remains, knowing He is still at the helm, and will guide us safely home.

He has told us=> *“Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me”* (Jn 14:1) & we do.

Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and He dispenses His peace to us, saying, *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you.”*

But having given us that peace, He then commands us to apply it to our hearts, saying=> *“Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful”* (Jn 14:27).

**Ours is a rational peace, because X has given us good reason to turn-loose of our anxiety, calm our hearts, & rest in Him.**

\* He has reconciled us, giving us peace with God.

\* He has justified us through His death, granted us pardon from our sins, & lifted away our condemnation.

That alone should give us an enormous sense of peace.

\* He has securely established our lives on the truth of God’s Word.

Psa 119:165=> *“Those who love Thy law have great peace, And nothing causes them to stumble.”*

\* As the fruit of the Spirit manifests itself as love w/i us, it softens/enriches all our relationships with others, making them peaceful.

The deeds of the flesh (enmities/strife/jealousy/anger, disputes/dissensions/factions) are displaced by the peaceful fruit of the Spirit, and what Hebrews 12:11 calls, *“the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”*

We become peacemakers among people in general.

And we become part of the peaceful infrastructure of unity w/i the Church—*“the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”* (Eph 4:4).

**Having carefully examined the primary manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit (love/joy/peace), we can now move on to its secondary manifestations, and move through them rather quickly.**

[Gal 5:22b-23]=> *“...patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, / gentleness, self-control;”*

\* **Patience**—a calm willingness to accept negative situations, knowing that God is in control of them all.

It applies the commands of Psa 37:7 to the heart=>

*“Rest in the LORD & wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes.”*

Patience refuses to give in to frustration/anger, even when faced with injustice/aggravations/ill-treatment/persecution.

It resists the temptation to preempt God’s will by acting hastily instead of waiting on Him.

Controlled by love, it refrains from reacting to its enemies in the flesh.

Although Jesus was/is almighty God, He exercised extraordinary patience, especially while suffering, not even uttering a threat, as He was crucified.

Instead, He patiently entrusted Himself=> *“to Him who judges righteously”* (I Pet 2:23).

\* **Kindness**—a gracious attitude that forgives/blesses-others.

This is a humble attitude which acts out of concern for other people's welfare/happiness, finding its own happiness in theirs.

Because God has dealt so kindly with His elect, He commands them to show that same kindness towards others (Col 3:12)=> "*As those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion [&] kindness.*"

If we do that in the flesh, it may only be a pretense.

If we do it by the H.S., it will surely reflect God's own love in us, redirected towards others, in acts of kindness.

\* **Goodness—a generous willingness to give & to share.**

This is a Spirit-activated match-up of moral excellence w/ active benevolence that seeks to do good to others.

It rarely asks for anything, but is quick to give, believing it is more blessed to give than to receive.

E.g. Barnabas is describes as a "*good man*" in Acts 11:24.

He had sold property & given the money to the poor.

Tabitha in Acts 9:36 was beloved for doing many good works—sewing garments for widows.

\* **Faithfulness: fidelity/trustworthiness in keeping one's word.**

Because a believer has confessed Jesus as his Lord and Savior, Xn faithfulness is reliable/obedient loyalty to X/His-will/His-Word—keeping the faith; keeping one's commitment.

Eph 1:1 equates being a Xn with being "*faithful in Christ.*"

God is faithful to fulfill His promises to us, and He calls us to faithfulness as well.

We are servants/stewards of X, & 1 Cor 4:2 says, "*It is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy* [faithfulness]."

\* **Gentleness—strength under control for the good of others.**

It accommodates itself to other people's weakness, & is linked in Scripture w/ compassion/kindness/humility.

It is the giant who helps a duckling across the road.

And it is the opposite of violent outbursts of anger.

It never seeks revenge.

As with all the fruit of the Spirit, Jesus is the epitome of gentleness, appealing to us in Mt 11:29=> "*Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.*"

\* **Self-control—restraining one's passions/appetites.**

In Acts 24, Paul was preaching to the governor named Felix.

Vs 25=> "*As he was discussing righteousness, self-control & the judgment to come, Felix became frightened.*"

Felix was living a very dissolute life, & he knew he would be judged by God for his lack of self-control.

So he was frightened by talk of God's judgment.

Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit that is characteristic of those who walk by the Spirit, just as it was of Jesus.

He could say (Jn 8:29)=> "*I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.*"

That included the time when He prayed, "*Not My will, but Thine be done*"

(Lk 22:42).

\* **The Character of the Fruit of the Spirit**

**The fruit of the Spirit demonstrates how God changes hearts, resulting in godly character.**

It is character which, from the Spirit's p.o.v. results from spiritual restoration, transformation, and empowerment.

From our own p.o.v. it results from yieldedness to the H.S.

It doesn't need a law to compel/coerce/constrain it from the top down, because it's controlled from the inside out.

God's Law has been written on the believer's heart, and the Holy Spirit empowers him to obey it, out of love.

So Paul writes [Vs 23b]—*“against such things there is no law.”*

**The Law is a restrainer, but a believer who is walking in the Spirit, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit in his life, has no need of restraint, or outside coercion.**

He is operating on a different level—love for God/man, under the godly influence of the H.S.

He loves God's Law because it represents God's own nature, and he longs with his whole heart to obey it, perfectly.

He is deeply grieved whenever he sins against it.

I Tim 1:9=> *“Law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are **lawless and rebellious**, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane.”*

That's the opposite of what he is becoming, and what he wants to be.

The believer was once just such a man, but God has renewed/reconditioned/remodeled his heart, and that has changed his character.

Now his goals are love/joy/peace/patience/kindness,  
goodness/faithfulness/gentleness/self-control.

Nobody is going to pass a law against virtues like that.

As Gal 5:18 said=> *“If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.”*

For that we give praise/glory to the Holy Spirit within us.

As 1 old hymn put it=> “We give You, sacred Spirit, praise,

Who in our hearts of sin & woe

Makes living springs of Grace arise,

And into boundless glory flow.”

***“The Fruit of the Spirit”***

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Text: Galatians 5:22-23

1. A believer who is walking in the Spirit won't gratify the desires of the flesh, but will bear the fruit of the Spirit; and in the process, he will also [20 displace] the deeds of the flesh.

Gal 5:16; Eph 5:2; Phil 4:4; Rom 12:18

**In today's text Paul will describe the “fruit if the Spirit” by its nature, its various manifestations, and its character...**

**\* The Nature of the Fruit of the Spirit**

**[Galatians 5:22a]**

2. The Holy Spirit who indwells believers is almighty God, who will inevitably reproduce His own life and [14 nature] within us.

Rom 5:5; 14:17; Mt 7:19

3. “Fruit” is used throughout the Bible to refer to the outflow of a person's life, which indicates his true [14 inward] nature.

Mt 7:16-17; Psa 128:2

**\* The Manifestations of the Fruit of the Spirit**

**[Galatians 5:22a-b]**

4. Love—the first, [20 greatest], and best fruit of the Spirit.

I Cor 13:13; I Jn 4:8; 3:16-17

5. Joy—placid, optimistic confidence, with occasional exhilaration; joy is a deep sense of wellbeing that is [8 not] based on circumstances.

Psa 16:11; Hab 3:17-18; I Pet 1:8

6. Some Christians are actually afraid to experience too much joy; they are [20 legalists], living under bondage to the Law.

Phil 1:3; Heb 13:15

7. God has given those who know Him every [14 reason] to rejoice.

II Cor 1:4; Jn 16:24

8. Peace—tranquility of mind through a saving relationship with [14 Christ].

Phil 4:6-7, 9; Jn 14:1, 27; Psa 119:165; Eph 4:4

**[Galatians 5:22b-23a]**

9. Patience—a calm willingness to accept negative situations knowing that [8 God] is in control. Psa 37:7; I Pet 2:23
10. Kindness—a gracious attitude that forgives and [16 blesses] others. Col 3:12
11. Goodness—a generous willingness to [10 give] and to share. Acts 11:24; 9:36
12. Faithfulness—fidelity and trustworthiness in [16 keeping] one’s word. Eph 1:1; I Cor 4:2
13. Gentleness—strength under control for the [10 good] of others. Mt 11:29
14. Self-control—restraining one’s [18 passions] and appetites. Acts 24:25; Jn 8:29

\* **The Character of the Fruit of the Spirit**

15. The fruit of the Spirit doesn’t need a law to compel or constrain it from the top down because it is controlled from the [14 inside] out. [Galatians 5:23b] I Tim 1:9; Gal 5:18
16. For that we give the praise and glory to the Holy [14 Spirit] within us.