



FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.



FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PART ONE

AN INTRODUCTION

GALATIANS 5:22-23 *“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”*

1. CONTRAST BETWEEN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT

READ GALATIANS 5:19-23

- Love (intentional, selfless, unconditional) vs. Hostility
- Joy (deep inner contentment) vs. Jealousy
- Peace (a state of harmony) vs. Division and quarreling
- Patience (ability to endure without becoming upset) vs. Outbursts of anger
- Kindness (being helpful to others) vs. Selfish ambition and envy
- Goodness (a life of moral excellence and integrity) vs. Sexual immorality and impurity
- Faithfulness (loyalty and trustworthiness) vs. Idolatry and sorcery
- Gentleness (meekness and humility) vs. Dissension
- Self-control (ability to put your desires and passions under submission) vs. Drunkenness, lustful pleasures and wild parties

READ COLOSSIANS 3:5-10, 12-15

VERSE 5 says to “*put to death*”, and **VERSE 10** says to “*put on*”

2. REMOVING THE OLD NATURE AND PUTTING ON THE NEW NATURE

EPHESIANS 4:21-24 *“Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God, truly righteous and holy.”*

ROMANS 12:2 *“to let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.”*

- We do not try to change and then come to Jesus. We come to Jesus and let him change us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

PHILIPPIANS 2:13 *“For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.”*

ROMANS 8:11-14 *“The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.”*

3. GOOD FRUIT IS THE EVIDENCE OF A TRANSFORMED LIFE

MATTHEW 7:17-20 *“A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.”*

- That good fruit is produced as we grow in our walk with the Lord.

COLOSSIANS 1:9B-10 *“We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.”*

- This fruit comes from the Holy Spirit, not merely from human willpower; it is the result of a life transformed by God’s power, not of self-improvement efforts
- It is cultivated by staying connected to Jesus through prayer, Bible study, obedience, and allowing the Spirit to guide your life—not by “trying harder.”

JOHN 15:5 *“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.”*

VERSE 8: *“When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.”*

VERSE 16-17: *“You didn’t choose me. I chose you. I appointed*

you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for; using my name. This is my command: Love each other.”

- Notice **VERSE 8**: “*When you produce much fruit.*”
- The fruit of the Spirit are not separate items that you collect, but rather a unified expression of the Spirit’s work.

WE ARE CREATED IN GOD’S IMAGE AND THEREFORE REFLECT HIS CHARACTER AND NATURE

- God is love (1 John 4:8)
- In His presence is fullness of joy (Psalm 16:11)
- He gives us peace (John 14:27)
- He is patient towards us (2 Peter 3:9)
- He displays His kindness to us (Romans 2:4)
- God is the origin of all good things (James 1:17)
- God’s gentleness supports His people (2 Samuel 22:36)
- Gentleness (meekness and humility) vs. Dissension
- God gives us self-control (2 Timothy 1:7)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you recall the fruit of the Spirit by memory?
2. How can we stay connected to Christ?
3. Name some ways that the Holy Spirit helps us.

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PART TWO

LOVE

READ GALATIANS 5:22-23

1. LOVE IS THE FOUNDATION

The first fruit listed is love because everything else flows from it. The fruit of the Spirit is not nine separate fruits—it is one unified expression of the Spirit’s work. Without love, the other fruits collapse into performance.

1 JOHN 4:8 *“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”*

- God is love—but love is not God. We do not worship love itself; we reflect the nature of God.

2. UNDERSTANDING THE TYPES OF LOVE

In Greek, there are different words translated as “love.” Every form has its place:

- *Philéo* → friendship
- *Éros* → romantic/sexual
- *Storgé* → family affection
- *Agápē* → divine, selfless

Agape is the love that sustains marriages, friendships, churches, and even enemies. It is a spiritual and intentional love, not an emotional one.

3. LOVE IS NOT A FEELING

PROVERBS 28:26 *“He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered”*

- Love is not adrenaline, chemistry, or butterflies —it is a decision, not a feeling, because feelings are unstable.

MATTHEW 5:44 *“Love your enemies, bless those who curse you...”*

- You do not feel love for your enemies; you choose to love them.

4. LOVE IS A COMMAND AND A DEBT

JOHN 13:34-35 *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you... By this all will know that you are My disciples”*

- Love is not optional or personality-based; it is rooted in obedience. We are commanded to love, and through this the world recognizes Jesus.

ROMANS 13:8 *“Owe no one anything except to love one another.”*

- This kind of debt you never finish paying, for love is ongoing.

5. LOVE DETERMINES VALUE

JOHN 3:16 *“For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son”*

- The value of something is determined by what you are willing to give for it. God valued you at the cost of Himself. When you love someone, sacrifice follows naturally, for real love gives and does not calculate.

6. LOVE HAS NO CONDITIONS

ROMANS 5:8 *“But God determines His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

- Love has no conditions. It does not say, “if you do this, I will do that.”
- Love gives fully, not partially; it gives one hundred percent, not fifty-fifty.
- Love anticipates, it cares, and it serves.

7. LOVE FLOWS FROM ABIDING

JOHN 15:5 *“I am the vine, you are the branches [...] without Me you can do nothing.”*

- Love flows from abiding.
- You cannot manufacture love, for love is the fruit of the Spirit.
- Fruit is produced by connection, not by effort, but by abiding.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

PROVERBS 4:7 *“Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom.”*

- Do not let emotions make covenant decisions.
- Do not enter relationships to receive; instead enter them to give.
- Do not confuse attraction with love.
- Do not allow ignorance to sabotage what God has given you.
- Love must be applied with knowledge.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where in your life is God calling you to choose love instead of reacting emotionally?
2. How does understanding that love is a command and a debt change the way you treat difficult people?
3. What does “100/100” love look like practically in your marriage, friendships, or church community this week?

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PART THREE

JOY

WHAT IS JOY?

A Spirit-given delight that comes from the presence of God and the truth of what God has done for us through Jesus Christ.

1 PETER 1:8 *“You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy.”*

- More than emotion.
- Inner gladness, cheerfulness.
- Joy is supernatural-not based on circumstances.

ROMANS 14:17 *“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. ”*

- Joy is a defining characteristic in the life of a Christian.

SIX BIBLE TRUTHS ABOUT JOY

1. JOY IS A FRUIT

GALATIANS 5:22-23 *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”*

- When you received Jesus, the Spirit of God came and made His home inside of you, beginning the work of transforming you and making you holy. This begins the inward change.
- True joy is based on the fact that our names are written in the Lambs Book of Life. This should produce gratitude in our lives. You cannot be joyful unless you are grateful!

- As we grow in intimate relationship with Christ, we bear fruit and it will mature.

JOHN 15:4 *“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.”*

2. JOY IS FOUND IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

PSALM 16:11 *“You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”*

- We enter His gates with thanksgiving—into His courts with praise
- The enemy operates in atmospheres of complaining, anxiety, depression and fear.
- God operates in atmosphere’s of joy and thanksgiving.

3. JOY COMES FROM THE WORD OF GOD

PSALM 19:8 *“The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living.”*

4. JOY IS A SOURCE OF HEALTH & STRENGTH

PROVERBS 17:22 *“A joyful heart is good medicine, But a broken spirit dries up the bones.”*

NEHEMIAH 8:10 *“Do not grieve for the Joy of the Lord is your strength!”*

- This strength is needed to overcome the trials of life.

JAMES 1:2-4 *“Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.”*

- Hebrews presents Jesus as the model: “For the joy set before Him He endured the cross”

5. JOY IS A KEY FOR FRUITFULNESS

GALATIANS 6:9 *“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”*

NEHEMIAH 8:10 *“Do not grieve for the Joy of the Lord is your strength!”*

- Joy, not sleep is the cure for weariness.

6. JOY MUST BE PURPOSELY MAINTAINED

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7 *“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”*

PRACTICAL STEPS

WATCH YOUR MOUTH

- Action affects emotion—rejoicing stirs your joy!

WATCH YOUR MIND

- Joy, not sleep, is the cure for weariness.

PHILIPPIANS 4 *“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is true Biblical joy?
2. What steals your joy?
3. What are some practical ways we can stay in joy?

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PART FOUR

PEACE

1. PEACE IS PROVIDED

JOHN 14:27 *“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”*

- Jesus’ words in this scripture give us a keen insight: There are two types of peace. One comes from the world, but one comes directly from God.
- Worldly peace is based on circumstances, or temporal and material things. Worldly peace will leave you troubled and afraid because of its source. But, the fruit of peace is sourced in God.
- It is not based on circumstances, and it cannot be impacted by outside factors. It has a supernatural, unchanging, and unlimited source.
- Jesus left the gift of peace just for you!

2. PEACE IS PERSONAL

COLOSSIANS 3:15 *“And let the peace (soul harmony which comes) from Christ rule (act as umpire continually) in your hearts [deciding and settling with finality all questions that arise in your minds, in that peaceful state] to which as [members of Christ’s] one body you were also called [to live]. And be thankful (appreciative), [giving praise to God always]..”*

- The peace of God is meant to directly aid and assist YOU.

- Peace is not an impersonal force or a vague sensation. It is a governing agent in the life of the believer.
- God has provided peace for you in the work of the Holy Spirit.
- An umpire is an official responsible for enforcing rules, making binding judgments in real time, and managing disputes in sports like baseball, cricket, and tennis. Just as an umpire has the authority to call the shots in their sport, peace calls the shots in the life of a believer.
- You do not have to be confused, make wrong decisions, learn things the hard way or live unsure. You have the right and the ability to live a life that is settled, decided, and no longer ruled by unanswered questions because you are governed by peace.

3. PEACE IS PROTECTED

PHILIPPIANS 4:7 *“and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”*

- God’s peace serves a practical purpose: it protects you! The peace of God will keep your heart safe and your mind guarded. There is a reason Paul specifically names the heart and mind in relation to peace.
- Humans are three-part beings: we are a spirit, we have a soul, and we live in a body.
- Your soul is made up of your mind, your will, and your emotions. This is the area where the enemy attempts to attack believers, but the peace of God is what defends you against his attacks.
- You will not be a victim of the soulish realm when you operate in the fruit of peace.

- Peace will protect you from being led by your emotions.
- Peace will defend your thought life from the lies of the enemy.
- Peace will keep you seeing through the eyes of faith rather than being focused on your senses.
- Peace will keep you living a life of supernatural understanding.

4. PEACE IS PORTABLE

MATTHEW 10:11-13 *“and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”*

- The peace of God is meant to be carried, not contained.
- Like all works of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, our fruit should impact the world around us. God’s peace at work in and through us translates to our spheres of influence. God’s peace working through us has the ability to impact the people around us.
- As a believer, you are a beacon of peace to a hostile, lost, hurt, and broken world. You have the ability to command and transform the environment that you find yourself in.

5. PEACE MUST BE PURSUED

ROMANS 14:19 *“Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.”*

- Peace does not happen accidentally—it must be pursued. Just as a bank card is needed to deposit or withdraw funds that rightfully belong to you, there is a Bible action

required to see the peace of God manifested in your life. Plainly stated, peace must be pursued.

- Peace requires determination, intention, and decision. The peace of God also demands a review of that which we participate in, so that we can prioritize and choose it over and again.

ROMANS 14:17 *“for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”*

MATTHEW 6:33 *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”*

- God’s kingdom is founded on righteousness, peace, and joy. It is a biblical command to pursue God’s kingdom. Therefore, we must make a conscientious and intentional decision to pursue peace.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can you tell when you are relying on worldly peace versus the peace that comes from God? What usually exposes the difference in your own life?
2. Colossians 3:15 describes peace as an umpire that settles decisions. Can you share a time when peace (or the lack of it) helped guide a decision you made?
3. Are there any habits, patterns or thoughts that compete with the pursuit of peace in your relationships? What intentional step(s) can you take this week to actively pursue peace as part of God’s kingdom?

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT : PART FIVE PATIENCE + FAITHFULNESS

READ GALATIANS 5:22-23

THREE LESSONS FROM A TREE AND ITS FRUIT

Before we discuss the fruit of patience and faithfulness, it is important that we do not move too quickly past the imagery the Apostle Paul uses of a tree and its fruit. In this illustration, there are three lessons we can learn from that shed greater light on the working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

1. A TREE IS DESIGNED TO PRODUCE FRUIT

- Paul intentionally connects fruit with these virtues because of how God purposefully designed trees. God created the tree so that it would naturally produce fruit.
- In the same way, a believer who is full of the Holy Spirit should “naturally,” [or in this case supernaturally] produce the virtues of patience and faithfulness.

2. THE TYPE OF ROOT WILL DETERMINE THE FRUIT

- We know the roots of an apple tree produce apples. The roots of a fig tree produce figs. The roots of an orange tree produce oranges. So in Galatians 5:22-23, Paul is indirectly telling us about what lies beneath the fruit of the Spirit: the roots.
- If we are discussing the fruit of the Spirit, then we must conclude that the roots of the Spirit are responsible for producing the fruit of the Spirit.

- If we desire to walk in the fruit of patience and faithfulness, it requires that we are rooted (or continually filled) with the Holy Spirit.

3. IF THE ROOTS ARE NOT STRONG, THE FRUIT DOES NOT LAST LONG

- Trees with unhealthy roots often produce malformed and inconsistent fruit. In the same way, if we are not being spiritually developed and our roots remain shallow, our conduct will be inconsistent, and our lives will fail to reflect the likeness of Christ.

UNDERSTANDING PATIENCE AND FAITHFULNESS

With a proper understanding of how Paul intended us to understand a tree and its fruit, let us examine now the meaning of patience and faithfulness more closely.

1. PATIENCE RELATES TO OUR ABILITY TO REMAIN STEADFAST THROUGH TROUBLES

- The word ‘patience’ (In the Greek, *Makrothymia*) means: “one who has endurance, constancy, steadfastness, perseverance; especially as shown in bearing troubles and ills.”
- Consider an unwavering individual in your life—someone who remains consistent in their emotions, faith, and thinking even in the midst of difficult times. Scripture would describe such a person as patient.

2. PATIENCE RELATES TO OUR ABILITY TO REMAIN SLOW IN AVENGING WRONGS

- The word ‘patience’ can also mean: “forbearance, long-suffering, slowness in avenging wrongs.”
- Patience not only refers to a person who stays steady when times get tough, but also one who does not seek revenge when wronged.
- They are long-suffering, which means they are willing to endure mistreatment for longer periods than most people.
- They are able to do this because vengeance is left in the hands of the Lord.

3. FAITHFULNESS RELATES TO OUR RELIABILITY AND PROVEN CHARACTER

- The word ‘faithfulness’ (in the Greek, *Pistis*) means: “fidelity, faithfulness, i.e. the character of one who can be relied on.”
- I believe that faithfulness can often be confused with the first scriptural definitions of patience. We view it as a person’s ability to stick it out through tough times. But faithfulness has more to do with the character of a person and how that character impacts their reliability. They can be counted on and they have been proven true, not because of their outward presence, but because of their inner integrity.

CLOSING

As we remain rooted in the Spirit, the fruit of patience and faithfulness will be produced in our lives. We will be steadfast in the midst of tribulation and slow in avenging wrongs. We will prove ourselves in inner character and allow the integrity within us to produce faithfulness that others can rely upon.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How are you rooting yourself in the Holy Spirit?
2. Have you demonstrated the patience required when dealing with a hard time? How?
3. Have you proven that you can be relied on, why or why not?
4. What are practical ways that you think a person can take to grow in faithfulness?

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PART SIX

KINDNESS AND GOODNESS

READ GALATIANS 5:22-23

KINDNESS AND GOODNESS

Kindness and goodness are often spoken about together, because they naturally overlap. To have one, you must have the other! Kindness and goodness can often be seen as internal qualities, since they invoke a sense of morality. They work together to help encourage and edify others around us.

GALATIANS 5:22-23 *“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”*

- **Kindness:** In this passage, ‘kindness’ is interchangeable with ‘gentleness.’ The Greek word used in this passage is: ‘*Chrēstotēs*’ which means moral goodness, integrity, usefulness, and excellence (in character or demeanor).
- **Goodness:** The Greek word for ‘goodness’ in this passage is the word: ‘*Agathōsynē*’ which means uprightness of heart and life.

Kindness and goodness are fruits of the Spirit that remind us to put the needs of others before our own, and in doing so, we are able to advance the Kingdom of God on the Earth.

They are virtues that are spoken of throughout Scripture; especially when identifying those who are called by God.

MOVED WITH COMPASSION

EPHESIANS 4:32 *“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”*

COLOSSIANS 3:12 *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”*

- Scripture remind us that, as Children of God, and followers of Christ, we should have the same character and demeanor as Christ did while He was on the Earth.
- Compassion is a core component of kindness and goodness.

MATTHEW 9:36 *“When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”*

MATTHEW 14:14 *“When He went ashore He saw a great crowd, and He had compassion on them and healed their sick.”*

MARK 6:34 *“When He went ashore he saw a great crowd, and He had compassion on them [...] And He began to teach them many things.”*

- We see in Scripture that Jesus was often moved with compassion.

Jesus demonstrates practical examples of what it looks like to show kindness and goodness to others.

He often paused what He was doing to help others, demonstrating kindness and embodying a deep sense of goodness and morality.

MOTIVATED BY LOVE

Jesus was motivated by His love for others. Kindness and Goodness are expressions of our love for those around us. When we see someone hurting or in need, our kindness and sense of morality should motivate us to step in and help.

In this way, we can put the fruits of the Spirit into action and become Jesus' hands and feet on the Earth.

EPHESIANS 2:10 *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

GALATIANS 5:16-18 *“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”*

- In the letter Paul wrote to the Galatians, he is urging them to be led by the Spirit and not by their flesh. This message applies to us today!
- In order to produce all the fruits of the Spirit, we must learn to silence our flesh, and let the Spirit of God take over. The Holy Spirit will help us to be kind, and make the right choices. Our job is to listen to the Spirit, obey, and act.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can you practice showing kindness & goodness daily?
2. In what ways are compassion, kindness, and goodness connected? Do they usually go hand-in-hand?
3. How does the Holy Spirit help us exemplify kindness and goodness to others?

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PART SEVEN

GENTLENESS

GALATIANS 5:22-23 *“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”*

1. WHAT IS GENTLENESS?

The Greek word *pratēs* (gentleness) is defined as “gentle strength”—meekness; a tender, humble, and patient spirit that, instead of reacting with harshness, exercises self-controlled power.

Gentleness is not being weak, on the contrary, it is actually controlled strength.

The following illustrations help depict a great picture of gentleness:

- “It is likened to a tamed horse or a blacksmith’s powerful yet careful hand—possessing power but choosing not to use it for destruction.”

Gentleness is a byproduct of the Spirit working in our lives. It reflects a life that has been transformed.

One commentator wrote about gentleness: “the word has the idea of being teachable, not having a superior attitude, not demanding one’s rights. It isn’t timidity or passiveness; it is the quality of the man who is always angry at the right time and never at the wrong time.”

The story that immediately comes to mind is when Jesus flips tables in the Temple. The definition of gentleness was demonstrated in the life of Jesus! He personified gentleness—strength under control.

2. GENTLENESS CAN BE SEEN

The fruit of the Spirit may not be tangible, but they can be seen in the life of the believer. Just as you cannot see the roots of a tree, you know the tree is healthy and strong based on how it looks and what it produces. You can also see if a tree is diseased and not producing as it should.

You know when someone is patient or kind. You can see joy in a person. Often, the fruit are seen in our actions, words, and reactions.

- Colossians 3:12 says, “Since God chose you to be the holy people He loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

Paul uses the analogy of clothing: we are to clothe ourselves with these qualities. Why? Because it will identify who we are in Christ. In the same way that we can see what someone puts on for the day, we can see in our day-to-day interactions, what spiritual clothing we are wearing.

As mentioned in point number one, the fruit of gentleness is the byproduct of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. We learned in the first week that “we don’t try to change and then come to Jesus. We come to Jesus and let Him change us through the power of the Holy Spirit.”

3. GENTLENESS ON DISPLAY

MATTHEW 5:15 AMP *“Blessed [inwardly peaceful, spiritually secure, worthy of respect] are the gentle [the kind-hearted, the sweet-spirited, the self-controlled], for they will inherit the earth.”*

- There is a reward for gentleness. Jesus says the gentle will inherit the earth.

PROVERBS 15:1 *“A soft and gentle and thoughtful answer turns away wrath, but harsh and painful and careless words stir up anger.”*

- A gentle response can change a person's disposition; it can bring peace instead of stirring up wrath.

EPHESIANS 4:1-2 *“So I, the prisoner for the Lord, appeal to you to live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called [that is, to live a life that exhibits godly character, moral courage, personal integrity, and mature behavior - a life that expresses gratitude to God for your salvation], with all humility [forsaking self-righteousness], and gentleness [maintaining self-control], with patience, bearing with one another in [unselfish] love.”*

- Our lives will produce fruit which demonstrates our yielding to the Spirit working in us, like a tamed horse controlled under the master's leading rather than running wild.
- Jesus paid a high price for our salvation. When we display the fruit of the Spirit, we demonstrate a life that is fully surrendered to our Lord and Savior.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. We learned how gentleness is often described as controlled strength. Do you feel you demonstrate gentleness (controlled strength) in your day to day interactions?
2. Do the people closest to you see that fruit evident in your life?
3. What is one area in your life (how you treat your spouse, how you talk to your kids, your actions at work etc..) that you need the Holy Spirits help to grow in the fruit of gentleness?

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PART EIGHT

SELF-CONTROL

The fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23 gives us a picture of what life looks like when the Holy Spirit is shaping us to be more like Christ. They show us that God is at work in our hearts, help us grow in holiness, and point others to Jesus through the way we live.

DEFINING SELF-CONTROL

In Galatians 5:23, the word translated as self-control is the Greek word '*egkrateia*.' This word has the meaning of 'temperance, mastery from within, and having power over.'

Self-control relates:

- The passions: anger, love, etc.
- The appetites: food, sex, etc.
- The will: impulsive decisions

Self-control is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in the face of temptations and impulses.

Biblical definition of self-control could be 'Spirit-enabled mastery of desires and defeating the flesh.'

We must understand that we are in a spiritual battle that affects the physical realm. The good news is that we have been equipped with the resources we need to fight back. Paul takes us through the armour of God that we've been given. There are six pieces of the armour that we will go through together.

SELF-CONTROL TROUGHOUT THE BIBLE

PROVERBS 25:28 *“a person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls.”*

- The vulnerability and chaos that result from a lack of discipline.

READ CORINTHIANS 9:24-27

Successful athletes model self-control by avoiding desirable things that would harm their bodies. By exercising control over their bodies, rather than allowing their desires to control them, they prepare themselves to compete well and to win!

- We show self-control when we turn away from what Paul calls the “works of the flesh”—which are chasing and satisfying our own desires.
- The first step in letting go of selfish impulses and putting aside our own agenda is death to self. You cannot have self-control without death to the old nature.

READ THE STORY OF SAMSON (JUDGES 13-16)

- Impulsive actions and desires led to Samson’s downfall.
- He forfeited God’s plans for his life, and consequently his people, because he did not value self-discipline and control.

CULTIVATING SELF-CONTROL

Self-control is not something we achieve on our own. The fruit of the Spirit can only be cultivated with the help, dependence, and participation of the Holy Spirit.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:18 *“So all of us who have had that veil removed*

can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—Who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like Him as we are changed into His glorious image”

PRACTICAL ACTION

There are some practical ways we, with the Spirit’s help, can cultivate self-control, and the other eight fruit of the Spirit in our lives:

a. Daily Time in the Reading and Study of the Word of

God: As we consistently spend time in Scripture, God’s Word shapes our desires, corrects our thinking, and sets boundaries for how we live.

- **EPHESIANS 5:26** *“that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.”*

b. Daily Time in Intentional Prayer: Prayer helps align our will with God’s will— it softens our hearts, and gives space for the Holy Spirit to convict, guide, and empower us.

- **MATTHEW 26:41** *“Keep actively watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”*

c. Fellowship with Other Believers: God uses other believers to encourage us, challenge us, and model godly living.

d. Walking in Wisdom and Godly Boundaries: Self-control is often demonstrated through wise, preventative choices, not just strong resistance in the moment.

In Genesis 39, Joseph faithfully exercised self-control by refusing the advances of Potiphar’s wife, yet Scripture also highlights the importance of godly boundaries. Temptation was intensified because Joseph found himself alone in a vulnerable situation.

BENEFITS OF SELF-CONTROL

As we cultivate self-control in our lives, we begin to experience its powerful benefits, both in our walk with God and in the influence we have on the world around us.

- **Protects the Testimony of the Gospel:** Philippians 1:27a “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ.”
- **Balances the Other Fruits of the Spirit:** Self-control acts like a stabilizer for the other fruits—love, joy, patience, kindness, and more—helping them function consistently rather than sporadically.
- **A Marker of True Freedom:** Romans 6:7 “For when we died with Christ, we were set free from the power of sin.”
- **Positions Us for Spiritual Insight:** Self-control sharpens our spiritual discernment, helping us hear God more clearly and respond wisely.

In 2 Peter 1:5-9, Peter urges believers to “make every effort” to grow in virtue, knowledge, and self-control, showing that spiritual growth is intentional and disciplined. Self-control is not a burden, but a vital expression of faith that strengthens our character and deepens our walk with God.

As we pursue it faithfully, we cultivate a life that is fruitful, steadfast, and marked by the assurance of God’s calling and presence. Let us commit ourselves to this pursuit, knowing that neglecting it hinders both our growth and our joy in Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some Biblical examples of self-control, or lack there-of?
2. In your own words, how would you define self-control?
3. As a Christian, why is self-control important?

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GOOD NEWS
CHapel