

Fresh Produce

The fruit of the Spirit

A. Being in Christ, the Holy Spirit **indwells** us

1. This is the **distinguishing mark** of a genuine Christian—

Romans 8:9 (NLT)

⁹But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.)

2. This provides **reliable assurance** that we are genuine Christians—

1 John 4:13 (NIV)

¹³We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

B. The Spirit-indwelt person exhibits **proof** of the Spirit's presence within him

1. In Galatians 5:22, Paul calls this evidence “**the fruit of the Spirit**”—

Galatians 5:22

²²...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control.

2. The fruit of the Spirit is **Christ-like character**

3. The fruit of the Spirit is the **outward indicator of salvation**

a. For example, we identify an apple tree by the apple it produces, and an orange tree by the oranges it produces

b. In the same way, we identify a Spirit-indwelt person by the fruit he produces—“the fruit of the Spirit”

c. The fruit of the Spirit is the natural byproduct of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in a person’s life

d. **John Calvin** (1509-1564) comments that only those who bear all of the fruit, to one degree or another, prove themselves to be in Christ

C. God wants us to be **fruit-bearing** people

1. He **chose us** for this—

John 15:16 (NIV)

¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last.

2. He is **glorified** in this—

John 15:8 (NIV)

⁸This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

D. The “fruitful” life illustrates (1) a **healthy Christian life** and (2) a **productive Christian life**:

1. It is a **healthy** Christian life—

a. A fruit-bearing tree is a healthy fruit tree

b. A fruit-bearing Christian is a healthy Christian—

Psalm 1:3 (NIV)

³He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

2. It is a **productive** Christian life—

a. God wants us to “bear fruit” in life, then “more fruit”, and then “much fruit”

b. God cultivates us to this end:

¹“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that **bears fruit** He prunes, that it may **bear more fruit**. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

⁵“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, **bears much fruit**; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is

withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you **bear much fruit**; so you will be My disciples.

E. The **place** for fruit-bearing is “in Christ”, and the **means** of fruit-bearing is the Holy Spirit

1. The place for fruit-bearing is “in Christ”

a. Jesus made this clear in John 15:4-5—

John 15:4-5 (NIV)

⁴Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

b. Christ—“the vine”—is our life-source, and we—“the branches”—exhibit His life in us by the fruit His Spirit produces through us

2. The means of fruit-bearing is the **Holy Spirit**

a. In Galatians 5:22, Paul writes about the fruit “of the Spirit” because it is produced by the Holy Spirit

b. We cannot manufacture the fruit of the Spirit; it is the work of the Holy Spirit

i. A healthy apple tree does not strive to manufacture apples; it simply produces them because it's alive and healthy

ii. The same is true with the Spirit-indwelt Christian

iii. The Christian life should not be viewed as an industrial factory with the sound of grinding gears working to manufacture Christ-like character; rather it should be understood as God's garden where the fruit of the Spirit is naturally produced

Chuck Smith: "God does not want to be in the factory inspecting the works; instead, He wants to be in His garden enjoying the fruit."

iv. Foundations of Pentecostal Theology:

"The true Christian virtues are the fruit of the Spirit, not the fruit of human effort. We have the fruit of the Spirit when we have the Spirit. We can achieve fruitbearing only by living in cooperation with the indwelling Fruitbearer. The fruit of the Spirit is the character of Christ, produced by the Spirit of Christ, in the follower of Christ..."

"A great many persons are endeavoring to produce the fruit of the Spirit through the entirely natural process of character building, such as: the exercise of the will, esthetic culture, mental science, the pursuit of philosophy, education in ethics, etc.; all of which is very commendable from the human point of view. It is much better to be moral, ethical, cultured, well-informed, decent, friendly, honorable and patient than to be the opposite; however, these above-named virtues, achieved by purely human effort, are not the fruit of the Spirit, but an imitation of it. They are wax fruit in contrast with real fruit; just as beautiful as the real to view from a distance, but immeasurably inferior to the taste. When Christ is

fully formed in the believer by the indwelling of the Spirit, true Christ-like virtues will be the natural result—a result as natural as that of the growth of apples on an apple tree. If he is devoid of fruit, he is obviously devoid of the Spirit of Christ.”

F. With this understanding, let’s focus-in on Paul’s description of the fruit of the Spirit...

The fruit of the Spirit is love

A. “Love” is the fruit of the Spirit; “joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” are distinctive features of love

B. Romans 15:30 refers to “the love of the Spirit”

c. The Spirit-indwelt person exhibits a sincere love for others

D. God is love, and He commands us to love one another

1 John 3:23

²³This is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

E. When a person is born of the Spirit, God’s commands become realities within him, and lived-out through him—

Ezekiel 36:25-27

²⁷I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

F. This means: The Spirit-indwelt person obeys God’s command to love one another

G. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 describes the kind of love we should be expressing toward others—

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NLT)

⁴Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

H. The standard for our love for one another is **God’s love** towards us—

1 John 4:9-12

⁹In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

a. God’s love is “others-centered”

b. God’s love is “self-sacrificial”

I. This kind of love should saturate and motivate our attitudes and actions toward others

J. We cannot manufacture this kind of love—it is the fruit of the Spirit

K. “Love for others” is the **proof that we are born of the Spirit**—

1 John 4:7-8

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:20-21 (ESV)

If anyone says, “I love God,” yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

L. “Love for others” is the **mark of a true follower of Christ—**

John 13:34-35

³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

M. When we exhibit “love”, “joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” follow—these are **the characteristics of “love”**

N. Application:

1. Does your life exhibit the fruit of the Spirit—“love”?
2. Lord willing, we will speak more on this subject tonight

The characteristics of love

A. Joy

1. Romans 14:17 refers to the “**joy in the Holy Spirit**”
2. “Joy” is a repeated theme in the Bible—the word “joy” appears 158 times

3. Joy corresponds to happiness, but it is independent of outward circumstances and is to be found within every Christian's life
4. Joy is a deep gladness that comes from a personal relationship with Jesus Christ
5. Let the Holy Spirit exhibit His joy in your life

B. Peace

1. Peace refers to a tranquility of mind, body, and soul—it is a spiritual well being that only God can give a person
2. Paul writes about the peace of God in Philippians 4:6-7—

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

⁶Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

3. Let the Holy Spirit settle you with God's peace

c. Longsuffering

1. Christians should be able to hold strong in the midst of trials and difficulty—we need to be steadfast and endure
2. "Longsuffering" means the quality of putting up with others, waiting through the difficult times, even when we are severely tried, confused, or weak
3. It is like being a spiritual rubber band—when we are being stretched we will not break if we have long suffering

4. The Holy Spirit will supernaturally give us patience to hold on under difficult situations and circumstances
5. Let the Holy Spirit help you put up with difficult people and keep on keeping on with God in difficult times

D. Kindness

1. “Kindness” is the ability to respond to the special needs of others who are hurting or in need
2. Those who have experienced the kindness of God’s salvation in Christ are to clothe themselves with the same kindness—

In a world full of anger, selfishness, and contention, the Lord wants us to cultivate kindness in our lives

3. Let the Holy Spirit use you to show kindness to others

E. Goodness

1. “Goodness” is the generosity that overflows from kindness
2. “Goodness” is the action of helping others in need
3. We are to take action and become agents of God’s goodness in the world—
 - a. When we see a need we must meet it
 - b. When we see a hurt we must attend to it
4. “Goodness” reminds us that we become the hands and feet of Jesus Christ

5. Let the Holy Spirit use you as vehicles through which the goodness of God may flow

F. Faithfulness

1. “Faithfulness” refers to being a person that others can rely upon
2. You cannot have faith in God without being faithful—the two are one and the same
3. The Holy Spirit wants to make us responsible persons in every area of our lives
4. Can God trust you to be faithful?

G. Gentleness

1. “Gentleness” literally means to be mild or tame—

The word is often used to refer to an animal, such as a bridled horse

2. In the personal sense it refers more to controlled strength than it does weakness—it is closely associated to humility
3. The Bible tells us that “gentleness” is needed when confronted by opposition and necessary to be a true Christian witness
4. Let the Holy Spirit help you cultivate gentleness in your life

H. Self-control

1. “Self-control” is victory of the desires of the flesh

2. It describes a person who masters their passions and desires
3. It is opposite to the desires of the flesh—it is victory over the flesh
4. Self control is closely associated to purity of mind, heart, and conduct
5. It is the ability to crucify the flesh and walk in the Spirit
6. It is relying on the power of the Spirit to overcome the desires of the flesh
7. Let the Holy Spirit help you exercise self-control in your daily life

Application

A. God produces the fruit of the Spirit inside us, and we respond to His gracious work by practically living it out by faith on a daily, regular basis

B. Galatians 5:22 is nestled in the context of Galatians 5:13-26—

Galatians 5:13-26

¹³For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

¹⁵But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

¹⁶I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷For 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. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹envy, 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.

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

c. God produces the fruit of the Spirit, and our job is to practice to fruit of the Spirit—

D. Remember: “God does not want to be in the factory inspecting the works; instead, He wants to be in His garden enjoying the fruit.”—Chuck Smith