

A Study on the Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is found in Galatians 5:22-23, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” The fruit of the Spirit can only be developed by the Holy Spirit’s work in our lives. Without Him, we cannot bear fruit for the Lord.

Therefore, in order to develop the fruit of the Spirit, we first have to be a Christian. Anyone can become a Christian if they choose to believe that Jesus died for their sins, was buried, and rose again (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). If you believe this and repent of your sins, you are saved (Romans 10:9-11). From the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside you, and He will never leave.

He will instruct, guide, and direct us in the path we should go. Through conviction, He will bring our hearts back to the Lord. By having the indwelling Holy Spirit, we will be able to bear spiritual fruit. Secondly, it is important to remember that the fruits are developed by the Spirit. This means the Spirit is the One who should be praised—not ourselves.

The fruits of the Spirit come from Him. They are not accomplished by our own works or efforts. This doesn’t mean we don’t do anything to cultivate these fruits; however, it does mean that these fruits are the work of the Spirit, and He enables us to bear much fruit. By leaning on Him, listening to Him, and walking in step with Him, we will soon develop the fruits of the Spirit.

The Fruit of Love

The first fruit in Paul’s line-up is love. Love is the choice to be there for others and see their interests as being more important than our own. Jesus shows us the ultimate form of love by dying for our sins on the cross (John 3:16-17). He died for our sins because He loves us this much. Our parents and siblings love us, but Jesus’ love goes deeper.



From the Bible, we learn that His love is unconditional (Romans 8:37-39). There is nothing in all creation that can separate us from His love. With the love that Jesus has given us, we need to extend it to others. By asking the Holy Spirit to help us cultivate the spiritual fruit of love, He will provide many opportunities to develop this fruit in our lives.

Prayer: “Dear Holy Spirit, please help me to develop the spiritual fruit of love. Sometimes it can be hard to love others when I’m upset, angry, or in pain. Help me to choose to love others as You love me. Amen.”

Challenge Questions:

- Do you think the spiritual fruit of love will be hard to develop? Why or why not?
- How can you depend on the Spirit rather than taking matters into your own hands?
- Does Jesus’ love propel you to cultivate this fruit?

The Fruit of Joy

The second fruit of the Spirit is joy. Joy is different from happiness, even though they are often used interchangeably. Happiness and joy are different because happiness is rooted in situations; however, joy is rooted in Jesus. With the help of the Holy Spirit, He can cultivate the fruit of joy in your life by pointing you to Jesus. The more time you spend with Jesus, the more you will trust Him, and the more you trust Him, the more joyful you will become.

Joy is a beautiful thing, as it will stay with us even when times are hard. Even when we are crying or upset, the lasting joy from the Lord can shine in our hearts. Allow the Holy Spirit to work through your life and develop this fruit. Once this fruit has been developed, continue to cultivate it. Remind yourself that happiness is fleeting, but joy is eternal.

Prayer: “Dear Holy Spirit, I come to You today asking for the spiritual fruit of joy. Joy is not something that comes naturally to me. Please help me develop the spiritual fruit of joy, as I know only You can develop these fruits in my heart. Thank You for hearing my prayers. Amen.”



Challenge Questions:

- Are you more familiar with happiness or joy?
- Happiness is great, but joy lasts forever. How do you think your life will change after developing the spiritual fruit of joy?
- The Holy Spirit enables us to develop each of the spiritual fruits. How can you thank Him for this blessing today?

The Fruit of Peace

The spiritual fruit of peace is the third fruit listed by Paul in Galatians 5:22-23. Peace can seem far from us at times, but it is brought near by the Lord (John 14:27). We can have lasting peace by reminding ourselves of His love. The Holy Spirit will help us develop peace when we reflect on the Lord, apply His teachings, and trust that He will provide us with comfort.

The Holy Spirit is our Comforter (John 14:26). The peace He provides in our hearts will pour into our lives. As we begin to think more about the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, more peace will fill our minds. Rather than being afraid, worried, or stressed, the Holy Spirit will bless us with the spiritual fruit of peace. This fruit of the Spirit will help us in all areas of life, including remaining peaceful when others are being hostile and striving for unity instead of discord.

Prayer: “Dear Holy Spirit, the peace of the Lord is in my heart, and I know this points me to the desire to develop this fruit even further. I want to be peaceful in life and enter every situation with a gracious heart. I ask You to help me develop this fruit in my life. Thank You, Amen.”

Challenge Questions:

- Are you currently a peaceful person? If not, what would it look like to develop the spiritual fruit of peace?
- Do you think the fruit of peace will be hard to cultivate? Why or why not?
- The Holy Spirit will help you develop this spiritual fruit. Does this help you feel less intimidated at developing this fruit in your own life?



The Fruit of Forbearance

The fruit of forbearance is also known as the fruit of patience, depending on which Bible translation you are using. The spiritual fruit of forbearance refers to the ability to tolerate delays without growing impatient or irritable. This is very difficult, especially if we are tired, hungry, or sick.

By going to the Holy Spirit in prayer, you can ask Him to help you develop this fruit. He might provide a few opportunities to help you cultivate this fruit, such as being patient when a person is driving too slowly or being kind when a friend says something insensitive. Over time, by listening to the Spirit and applying biblical teachings in your life, the fruit of forbearance will be developed in your life.

Prayer: “Dear Holy Spirit, waiting and being patient do not come easily to me. Please help me develop the spiritual fruit of forbearance. Provide me with opportunities to cultivate this fruit and change my approaches to testy situations. Give me guidance and direction. I praise You, Amen.”

Challenge Questions:

- Is this the hardest spiritual fruit so far? Why or why not?
- Do you have trouble being patient on a normal day?
- How would your life change if you developed the fruit of forbearance?

The Fruit of Kindness

The fruit of kindness is the next fruit of the Spirit. This can be a challenge for some people, especially if they have been bullied before. If you have been bullied in the workforce or in the past at school, know that bullying others in return is never the answer. Instead of returning evil for evil, we need to return evil with kindness and blessing (1 Peter 3:9). In this way, we will bring glory to God.

As you reflect on kindness, bring your thoughts to the Holy Spirit. He will equip you with everything you need for this spiritual fruit to grow. A few ways He might encourage this fruit to develop is by pushing you toward scenarios and situations where you have an opportunity to be kind. These situations might be easier than you thought, or they might be harder. Rely on the Spirit and allow Him to direct your steps.



Prayer: “Dear Holy Spirit, the spiritual fruit of kindness sounds beautiful, as I want to be kind to all people. Help me develop this fruit and model Your love to others. Being kind is always better than being mean, hurtful, and rude. Amen.”

Challenge Questions:

- Do you have trouble being kind? If so, how would life look different if you were kind to all people?
- Being kind and being taken advantage of are two different things. How do you think you can balance this divide?
- What opportunities do you think the Spirit will provide for you to develop this fruit?

The Fruit of Goodness

The fruit of goodness is directly related to God’s goodness. In fact, if we look at each of the spiritual fruits, we see that they are all derived from God and the attributes He possesses. This is because the Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity, which means He is God. Therefore, each of the fruits of the Spirit is directly related to God, including the fruit of goodness.

Goodness refers to the idea that you will be morally good, well-behaved, and well-mannered in your life. Rather than being evil or rebellious, you will be good and follow the Lord. The Holy Spirit will equip you with this fruit as you trust in Him. Even if it is a struggle to develop this fruit, with time and patience, the Holy Spirit will cultivate this fruit in your heart.

Prayer: “Dear Holy Spirit, the spiritual fruit of goodness might be a bit hard for me to develop. I’m often drifting away from doing the right thing and honoring your ways. Please help me to change and lead my heart after You. Amen.”

Challenge Questions:

- Do you currently have an inclination toward goodness? Why or why not?
- What do you think the spiritual fruit of goodness will add to your life?
- How can you surrender to the Holy Spirit’s direction today?



The Fruit of Faithfulness

The seventh fruit of the Spirit is faithfulness. Faithfulness means being reliable, loyal, and steadfast. You might have heard of faithfulness in marriage. It is good to be faithful in marriage, but it is also important to develop the spiritual fruit in all areas of life. This will help you to be steadfast in your devotion to others and God.

Yet again, we can only develop the fruit of faithfulness by the work of the Holy Spirit. Allow yourself to be led and convicted by the Spirit. Trust Him with your spiritual growth and rest in the peace that, since He is faithful, He can help us be faithful, too. Faithfulness will benefit us in this life and the next.

Prayer: “Dear Holy Spirit, faithfulness is such a beautiful thing, and I want to develop it in my own life. Please help me to be reliable, loyal, and steadfast in my relationships. I can only develop this spiritual fruit with your help, Holy Spirit. I trust You to guide me. Amen.”

Challenge Questions:

- Faithfulness takes time to develop. How will your life look different after developing this fruit?
- How do you think the Holy Spirit will develop this fruit in your life?
- Is anything preventing you from developing this fruit? If so, how might you remove this barrier?

The Fruit of Gentleness

The fruit of gentleness refers to being kind, mild, and temperate. In other words, it is the exact opposite of being hot-tempered. God wants us to be gentle in our dealings with others and to always walk in His will. We can do this by allowing the Spirit to develop gentleness in our lives.

Even if we are someone who struggles with anger, the Spirit can help us. He has a way of transforming our lives and helping us become the people God created us to be. Through the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, we can glorify God and live gentle lives for the Lord. With time and trust in the Holy Spirit, we will develop gentleness.



Prayer: “Dear Holy Spirit, I have often struggled with being angry and losing my temper. I don’t want to be a hot-tempered person anymore. I want to have the spiritual fruit of gentleness. I trust that You will help me develop this fruit. Thank You, Amen.”

Challenge Questions:

- Are you currently practicing gentleness?
- Gentleness is the exact opposite of being hot-tempered. How might you allow the Spirit to develop gentleness rather than you falling prey to the sinful flesh?
- Life will be different after you develop the spiritual fruit of gentleness. What do you think it will look like for you?

The Fruit of Self-Control

The last spiritual fruit is the fruit of self-control. Self-control is, literally, the ability to control self. Sometimes self-control can be extremely difficult, especially when we are angry or feel unheard or disrespected. If you are struggling with self-control, don’t feel embarrassed—all people struggle with self-control at times. Rather than being embarrassed, be encouraged by knowing that the Spirit can help you develop self-control.

Be prepared, though, because the Spirit will bring many things into your life that will call for self-control. This will be hard, but lean on the Holy Spirit’s strength. He will direct you and make your paths clear. As you continue to follow the Holy Spirit and listen to His guidance, you will develop self-control. The Holy Spirit will walk with you through each situation and equip you with everything you need to cultivate self-control.

Prayer: “Dear Holy Spirit, please help me to develop self-control in my own life. Please help me follow the Bible and apply its teachings to my life. Thank You for helping me develop each of the spiritual fruits. Developing any spiritual fruit is only by You. Amen.”

Challenge Questions:

- Do you struggle with self-control?
- Continued reliance on the Holy Spirit helps develop this fruit. How might you rely on Him to help you develop self-control?
- How might you praise the Holy Spirit for His help?



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