

Ga 5:22–23 (ESV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ⁽²³⁾ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

1. We continue our study on the Fruit of the Holy Spirit

- A. We saw last time these 9 fruits are simply the characteristics of Christ
That grow naturally when a person is filled with the Spirit
- B. This is the way to tell if a person is Spirit-filled – is there a Christlikeness in them?
 - 1). Are these fruits evident not only in church – but the home – work – neighbourhood - driving
- C. When these fruits are growing the affect will be radical
 - 1). Lives characterized by hatred, prejudice, darkness and stress
Will become characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness etc.
 - 2). We begin to live out that *exchanged life* wherever we are
 - a). Our anxiety for His peace – our hatred for His love – our hardness for His gentleness
Our sorrow for His joy – our agitations for His patience....

Transition: As we go through these fruits we must be careful – a warning

2. We can turn the fruit of the Spirit into works produced by the flesh

- A. **Explanation:** I see I need more love – therefore I am going to be more loving
Off I go in my own strength to love like the Bible tells me too – and I fail and fail
- B. Remember these are fruits that grow naturally as we remain connected to the vine - yielded
 - 1). We’ve seen sin severs that connection = live out Christianity in our own strength
We end up living a life of regular defeat and great frustration
 - 2). But as we remain connected – yielded – these fruits naturally grow

Question: Does that mean we have no responsibility when it comes to living these virtues out?
I abide and it’s just naturally there – no struggle at all

This is important need to take a moment to look at this before see individual fruit

- A. This all begins with being filled with the Spirit
 - 1). As I yield to Him – He begins to do a couple of things
 - a). **First:** He will produce godly desires in me to obey and please God
Php 2:12–13 (ESV) Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ⁽¹³⁾ *for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*
 - 1a). That will not be happening if I’m being controlled by the flesh
The flesh will be producing desires to sin
 - b). **Second:** He begins to produce Christlike character in me
 - 1a). That 9-fold cluster of fruit

Point: He is producing that fruit and He is producing a desire to live that fruit (Christlike character) out

- A. If you are Spirit-filled the fruit is being produced along with the desire to live it out
- B. But you’re still responsible to make the choice to live it out
 - 1). Many times as you walk in the Spirit this seems easy – *wind filling sails – you’re soaring*
You love easily – you’re patient and kind – seems to be no struggle at all
- C. Example love: There will be times you don’t feel so loving – something sets you off
 - 1). We’re called to love our enemies - those who persecute and abuse us
 - a). I don’t feel like loving somebody like that – I feel like getting revenge
I want to apply the eye for an eye – tooth for tooth scripture there
 - 2). But the Lord said ‘You’ve heard it said – eye for eye – tooth for tooth – but I say...’

Love your enemies – those who persecute you – abuse you

- 3). It's a matter of obedience isn't it? A matter of choice
To act like we're supposed to act regardless of how we feel
- 4). This is when the Christian separates themselves out from the pack
This is when the lost will see God at work in us
 - a). When we can do what the world can't – love those who don't love us

Thought: That can only happen when we are yielded to the Spirit – and He is producing that fruit

- A. But it is also going to take a choice – to express that fruit when we don't feel like it
- B. While love is a fruit of the Spirit – it is also a command I must obey
 - 1). If it just happened all the time naturally – there would be no need for the command
 - 2). I have a responsibility to choose to live those fruits out
 - a). As I obey – yield – I remain Spirit-filled – connected and more fruit is produced

Transition: Let's look at working out what He's worked in

3. Working out the fruit He's worked in

- A. I choose to obey – I choose to love – be patient – be gentle etc.
But I do this in absolute dependence upon the Spirit to live that Christlike characteristic out
"Father I don't feel like loving this person right now...but I know that is what you want, therefore I depend upon your Spirit to live the life of Christ through me...I pray you will enable me to love this person with your love"
- B. Then you step out to do what you know you should do – regardless of what you feel like doing
 - 1). As you do that – if you've been walking in the Spirit – you'll find love is there
 - a). It has been produced in you – and as you choose to love – it will flow out
- C. This is what the Psalmist was talking about in Psalm 1

Turn: Ps 1:1–2 (ESV) Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; ⁽²⁾ but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

- 1). That sounds like the Spirit-filled life doesn't it
 - a). Not giving into sin – but surrendering to the teachings of the Scripture
- 2). Notice the results

Ps 1:3 (ESV) He is like a tree planted by streams of water *that yields its fruit in its season...*

- a). Whatever fruit is necessary at the time will be produced
- b). When you need love – love will be available
When you need patience it will be there
When you need gentleness – it will be produced
 - 1a). As you step out depending upon the Spirit – it will be there

Thought: What is on offer here is fantastic – God's character given to us – lived out through us

- A. Virtues that cannot be produced by human effort – will be produced by the Spirit!
 - 1). This is what will separate us out from the unbeliever
This is what will add power to the words we speak about Christ

Maybe put here. Does the Spirit produce this fruit in isolation. We know you must remain connected to the vine. Which means you must be yielded. Sin severs that connection.

But fruit on vines doesn't grow without nutrients. It takes that nutrient from the ground. The Spirit pulls the nutrients from the word which is the believer's food. And uses that in the production of fruit. (Look up scriptures on the word being our food)

Example: Love. We see how much God has loved us. We love in return. Look up

Example: Peace. As we see the promises that tell us God is in control and will take care of us.....

Example; Joy. We see the command to have joy. We see the reasons to have joy even in times of trial. 1 Peter even though you're grieved you rejoice...

Transition: with that said – let's start taking a look at the individual pieces of fruit

I. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Ga 5:22–23 (ESV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ⁽²³⁾ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

The Fruit of Love

1. Love towards God

- A. Man wasn't created because God needed somebody to take care of His garden
 - 1). He was created to be in a loving relationship with God - to enjoy Him
- B. Adam's sin shattered that relationship – it brought an alienation between God and man
 - 1). Adam died spiritually
 - Rather than running to God Adam ran from God – didn't want to be close any longer
 - His love for God was replaced with hostility
 - His desire to please God was replaced with a desire to please himself
- C. Jesus died on the cross to restore that relationship
 - 1). So that we could enjoy God like Adam did before the fall
 - Walking and talking with Him – intimate relationship

Transition: In salvation the most important relationship is restored – *our love for God is returned*

2. Love towards man

- A. Another relationship the fall destroyed was man with woman – man with man
 - 1). Adam and Eve co-existed in beautiful harmony – working together
 - Eve created to be his help-mate – to come alongside in living life
 - 2). God describing the effects of the fall
 - Ge 3:16 (ESV)** To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. *Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.*”
 - a). We don't have time to trace this thought all over the Scriptures
 - b). This desire is not sexual – it is a desire to be superior to Adam
 - While Adam will try to keep her pushed down
 - 1a). This is the beginning of the war between the sexes
 - 2a). No longer finding joy in serving one another – desiring to dominate one another
- B. But the work of Christ on the cross wasn't only to restore the relation of God and man
 - It was also meant to restore the shattered relationship between man and woman – man and man
 - 1). It was meant to restore marriages to a place they glorified God
 - 2). It was meant to rip away the social, racial, economic barriers
 - Gal 3:27–28 (ESV)** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ⁽²⁸⁾ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
 - a). One people with one consuming desire = Jesus Christ

- b). One people with one consistent goal = His glory. Advancement of His kingdom
- C. Prejudice has no place in the Christian body it is sin – not being yielded to the Spirit
 - 1). God has made us family – brothers and sisters who want the best for one another
 - a). Who care for one another – have each other’s backs
Who are in competition – who rejoice when another is exalted
 - b). Who are willing to forfeit their own rights for another’s benefit

Point: This is the love the Spirit is working in to you

- A. This is the love you must choose to work out – depending upon Him to produce that fruit

Reminder: *It is a fruit – it is also a choice* to work that fruit out

When we feel like it and when we don’t – when it’s easy and when its hard

- A. Already seen this before – let me reiterate – Jesus command to who we should love

Mt 5:44–45 (ESV) “But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁽⁴⁵⁾ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

- 1). Here is the greatest proof of godliness – of Christlikeness
 - a). God causes the sun to rise – and sends rain on the evil as well as the good
 - b). He is our example of love – it goes out to all
- 2). The one who said that – Jesus Christ – was on His way to the cross
To die for those who would persecute and abuse Him
 - a). The one who cried out while he was hanging on the cross they nailed Him too

Lk 23:34 (ESV) And Jesus said, “*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*”

- B. That is love that is beyond us – but love we are called too –

- 1). It’s a fruit that only the Spirit can produce - It is a choice that we must make
 - a). And when we do – we bring great glory to God – we show we are His disciples
We give evidence that He is doing something in us the world is not used too

Thought: In light of that – please drop all your petty differences

- A. They don’t bring glory to Christ – He isn’t pleased – and you’re not yielded to the Spirit
 - 1). They steal His power from you – they rob you of enjoying Christianity
- B. I hear Christians say that they are mad at this person or that – over this or that = PETTY stuff
 - 1). Really! Is that worth trading your joy and peace over – your choice but REALLY!
 - a). You grieve the Spirit – stop everything He is wanting to do in your life

Transition: Speaking of losing something – the next one is big

The Fruit of Joy

1. Did you know the Bible is a book about joy - It has 542 references to joy in it

C. S. Lewis: Joy is the serious business of heaven.

2. Did you also know that joy is a command

Php 3:1 (ESV) Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord.

- A. **Jerry Bridges** said: True Christian joy is both a privilege and a duty
- B. To have joy is a choice I must make – even when I might not *feel* like it
 - 1). But that choice can only be successful if I’m living in the Spirit
Will only happen if He has produced this fruit in me – and enables me to live it out

Question: If the Bible is a book about joy? If God commands us to have joy?

Why are there so many miserable Christians?

- A. Why do we read things like this?

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not looked and acted so much like undertakers."

Robert Louis Stevenson once entered in his diary, as if he was recording an extraordinary phenomenon, "I have been to Church today, and am not depressed."

- 1). No wonder so many don't want to go to church
The believers in the church depress them
- 2). What a lousy testimony - who should have more joy than us
- B. This genuine joy is so important to fulfill our commission to reach the lost
 - 1). It is extremely attractive to the unbeliever who sees so little real joy in the world
 - 2). Not talking about giddy - cotton candy stuff - that some substitute for the real thing
 - a). Carri and I left a church once where the people were acting like fools
Back when being drunk in the Spirit was going around!
 - b). I'm talking about a deep joy based on our relationship with Christ
and upon His truth that we've embraced
 - 1a). A deep joy that can only come from the Holy Spirit as a fruit
 - 3). Joy that is not environmentally controlled because it is God's own joy given to us
Jn 15:11 (ESV) These things I have spoken to you, *that my joy may be in you*, and that your joy may be full.
 - a). Can you imagine being filled with God's joy?
 - b). A Joy that doesn't change when circumstances do - stable - unshakable
 - c). Peter speaks of this joy the believer can and should have
1 Pet 1:8 (ESV) Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with *joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory*,
 - 1a). So deep – so rich – human language falls short of being able to express it
 - 2a). It's a divine joy given to us - and mere mortals can't explain it
 - 3a). All we know it's so real – even the darkest moments can't shake it
 - 4). This is Paul filled with joy – chained in a Roman prison (Philippians)

Transition: So our Christianity should be characterized by joy

- A. We are meant to enjoy our salvation not endure it

3. Question: Why don't we have this joy?

- A. Could it be because it's a fruit that only grows when a person is Spirit filled
 - 1). And people are only Spirit-filled when they are yielded to the Spirit
- B. Could it be that we are trying to live Christianity out on our own terms – obedience optional
 - 1). Living like that brings this whole process to a screeching halt
 - 2). Our joy is replaced with frustration and defeat
- C. Could it be that we refuse to believe joy is a command not an option
 - 1). We refuse to believe we can have joy when we don't feel like having joy?
 - a). So we don't make that choice – looking away from self to the Spirit to enable it
 - b). We don't think through the issues – the truth about God and His promises
That feed that fruit of joy so it grows
- D. Could it be we aren't dealing with things that are joy stealers in our life – that cause compromise...
 - 1). We have a little fruit tree – but if we allow pests to attack it = No fruit
 - a). What are the little pests that steal your joy?
Lack of discipline in the Word and prayer? Compromise with sin in areas? Idols?
Allowing feelings to dominate instead of the truth

The Fruit of Peace

1. Starts with peace *with* God

- A. That assurance we are right with God through the work of Christ - the war is over
- 1). This leads to that comfort – knowing every sin is truly forgiven – past – present – future
Therefore we know our eternity is secure – we will be with our God in glory

Thought: This life is just a vapor – there are so many questions marks that hang over it

- 1). But we know that which matters most is secure
- B. There is a treasure waiting for us in heaven – guarded by God
- 1 Pet 1:3-5 (NIV) **Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has** given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, **(There is our treasure waiting – kept by God – now watch)** (5) who through faith *are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation* that is ready to be revealed in the last time.
- 1). He is guarding my inheritance for me – it is waiting
 - a). Great but will I get there to enjoy it
 - 2). Yes - He is guarding me too – making sure I'll make it into glory to enjoy that inheritance

Point: I have peace with God – the war is over – my eternity is secure

Jn 10:28–29 (ESV) I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ⁽²⁹⁾ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

- A. What peace that brings – this world can fall apart – that which is most important can't be touched

Transition: This peace with God then leads to the next kind of peace

- A. I believe this is what this fruit is primarily speaking of

2. The peace *of* God

- A. Like joy this is God's own peace given to us
- Jn 14:27 (ESV)** Peace I leave with you; *my peace I give to you.* Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

- 1). As we live that connected – yielded life – this fruit is given and starts to flourish

Question: Does the Spirit use anything to produce this fruit – we know we must remain connected
But there are things He will use so this fruit will flourish

- A. He uses truth – He gives us understanding of His Word
- 1). Just like truth is necessary for joy – it is necessary for peace
 - a). The truth is like that plant food you put around a plant so it has nutrients
The plant takes that and uses it for greater fruit
 - 2). Truth (promises) brings peace – God is sovereign – He is in control – why should I worry?
- B. Because it's based on truth it is not altered by adverse circumstances
- 1). Remember – this fruit is His peace given to us – and He is not worried
Jn 16:33 (ESV) I have said these things to you, *that in me you may have peace.* In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”
 - a). In this world you will have trouble
 - b). But take heart my peace is not shaken by that! Not altered by that!
- D. Like our joy that is inexpressible - this peace is beyond understanding
- Php 4:6–7 (ESV)** do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁽⁷⁾ *And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,* will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- 1). This wonderful tranquility that cannot be shaken is possible

- a). It is God's serenity given to the one that is surrendered to Him

Thought: I know when I'm walking in the Spirit - I have this peace of God - there is a serenity in my life

- A. I also know when I've begun to give control back to my flesh - this peace leaves

- 1). The solution is always to fix my eyes back upon Him – draw near to Him

3. Here is when the Spirit filled life shines the brightest - in times of trouble

- A. When we still love - still have joy and peace

- 1). All because we have been brought into a relationship with a living God

- B. The world sees us in times of trouble and thinks that is “other worldly”

Do you see why Jesus said? Jn 15:8 (ESV) By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

- 1). When we are living closely to Him – yielded – connected – we live that exchanged life

- 2). That life really shines in times of adversity

- a). When your natural anxiety is exchanged for His incredible peace
 - When your natural despondency is exchanged for His joy
 - When your natural selfishness is exchanged for His love

Point: Some very powerful things happen when that is happening to the watching world

- A. The Father is glorified – But did you notice how?

- 1). It shows that you are His disciples – “Oh they are like that because they follow Him”

Jn 15:8 (ESV) By this my Father is *glorified*, that you *bear much fruit* and so *prove to be my disciples*.

- 2). Your much fruit glorifies Him by proving you're His disciple

- a). Those wonderful virtues they wish they had are a result of following Him

CONCLUSION

1. This is Christianity lived out as it should be – victorious - overcoming

2. This is what you need - don't settle for anything less

- A. Doesn't a life filled with love - a passionate love for God - a love for man sound good?

- B. Doesn't a life filled with joy - a joy that can't be touched by this world's circumstances sound good?

- C. Doesn't a life filled with peace that is beyond understanding sound good - a serenity

Point: Aren't you tired of the daily stress... worried about everything...being miserable

- A. You're in desperate need of the exchanged life – His power for your weakness

- 1). That is what the Spirit wants to do

- a). He took up residence in you - to bring Christ to you and to live Christ through you
 - b). Believe me that is an UPGRADE from the life your living now!

- B. Next week we'll continue our look at the fruit of the Spirit