**The Fruit of The Spirit**

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**Galatians 5:22-26**

**Wednesday Evening**

**September 21, 2022**

**Galatians 5:22-26**

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

**22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.**

Saints, Paul’s introduction of the word fruit is filled with meaning. By it Paul conveyed the meaning of a full harvest of virtues. Fruit is a by-product; it takes time to grow and requires care and cultivation.

The Spirit produces the fruit; our job is to get in tune with the Spirit. Believers exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, not because they work at it, but simply because the Holy Spirit controls their lives.

The fruit of the Spirit separates Christians from a godless, evil world, reveals a power within them, and helps them become more Christlike in their daily lives.

In contrast to the list it follows, Paul did not describe these characteristics as obvious. The previous ones reside in us; the following ones come as a result of the Spirit’s presence.

Again, the characteristics fall into categories. The first three are inward and can come from God alone:

**1. Love—Love as shown by Jesus**

Saints, His love is self-sacrificing and unchanging, and as demonstrated by God who sent his Son for sinners.

**Romans 5:5**

“Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us”

Saints, Love forms the foundation for all the other fruit listed. Elsewhere, Paul breaks love itself down into various components, so that “love” turns out to bear little resemblance to the emotional meaning so often given to the word.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-8**

4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;

6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails.

**2. Joy—An Inner Rejoicing that Abides despite Outer Circumstances**

Saints, this characteristic has little to do with happiness and can exist in times of unhappiness. It is a deep and nourishing satisfaction that continues even when a life situation seems empty and unsatisfying.

The relationship with God through Christ remains even in the deserts and valleys of living.

**3. Peace—An Inner Quietness and Trust in God’s Sovereignty and Justice, even in the Face of Adverse Circumstances**

**Philippians 4:4-7**

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be anxious for nothing, 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 minds through Christ Jesus.

Saints, this is a profound agreement with the truth that God, not we, remains in charge of the universe.

The next three concern each believer’s relationships with others:

**4. Patience—Patiently Putting up with People who continually Irritate Us. The Holy Spirit’s work in Us Increases Our Endurance**

**Colossians 1:9-14**

9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;

12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love…

**5. Kindness—Acting Charitably, Very Kindly toward Others, as God did Toward us**

**Romans 2:4**

“Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance”?

Kindness takes the initiative in responding to other people’s needs.

**6. Goodness—Reaching out to do Good to Others, even if they don’t Deserve It**

**Psalm 107:21-22**

21 Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness,

And for His wonderful works to the children of men! 22 Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, And declare His works with rejoicing.

**Romans 2:4**

“Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”

Saints, Goodness does not react to evil but absorbs the offense and responds with positive action.

The last three present more general character traits that ought to guide a believer’s life:

**7. Faithfulness—Reliable, Trustworthy**

**Psalm 89:1-4**

I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever; With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations. 2 For I have said, "Mercy shall be built up forever; Your faithfulness You shall establish in the very heavens."

3 "I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 4'Your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations.' "

**8. Gentleness—Humble, Considerate of Others, Submissive to God and His Word**

**1 Timothy 6:11-12**

11 But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Saints, even when anger is the appropriate response, as when Jesus cleared the Temple, gentleness keeps the expression of anger headed in the right direction. Gentleness applies even force in the correct way.

**9. Self-Control—Mastery over Sinful Human Desires and their Lack of Restraint**

**Proverbs 25:28**

“A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls”

Saints, ironically, our sinful desires, which promise self-fulfillment and power, inevitably lead us to slavery. When we surrender to the Holy Spirit, initially we feel as though we have lost control, but he leads us to the exercise of self-control that would be impossible in our own strength.

God gave the law to make people aware of their sin and to restrain evil. But no one would make a law against these fruit (virtues), for they are neither sinful nor evil.

Indeed, a society where all people acted thus would need very few laws at all. Because God who sent the law also sent the Spirit, the by-products of the Spirit-filled life harmonize perfectly with the intent of God’s law.

A person who exhibits the fruit of the Spirit fulfills the law far better than a person who observes the rituals but has little love in his or her heart.

**24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.**

Saints,Paul made it clear that the sinful nature and the Holy Spirit oppose each other. Believers, while receiving the Holy Spirit, also have sinful desires within.

So how do believers gain the victory?

The answers lie in these last three verses. Those who belong to Christ Jesus (believers) have victory over the sinful desires to the degree that they have crucified the passions and desires of their sinful nature.

Believers know that this does not mean our sinful nature really dies—life would be so much easier if it did!

Instead, our sinful human nature continues to persuade and seduce us. Like a real crucifixion, the death of our sinful human desires is slow and painful . . . and lifelong.

In many ways, our sinful human desires may need to be “recrucified” daily. But the picture conveyed by this “crucifixion of the sinful nature” shows us that God has broken the power of sin at work in our body.

That remains a fact even when it may not feel that way to us. We need no longer live under sin’s power or control. God does not take us out of the world or make us robots; we will still experience the temptation to sin, and sometimes we will sin.

Before we were saved, we were slaves to our sinful desires, but now we can freely choose to live for Christ.

**Colossians 2:11**

“In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ”

**Colossians 3:9-11**

9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him…

Saints, but what happens when we sin?

Christ’s death made forgiveness available to us. As believers continue to repent of sin, they will always receive God’s forgiveness—all because of Christ’s death on the cross on our behalf.

We can experience victory over our sinful human desires because we are united with Christ in his death, having “crucified” that sinful nature.

Our evil desires, our bondage to sin, and our love of sin have been nailed to his cross. Now, united by faith with him, we have unbroken fellowship with God and freedom from sin’s hold on us.

Our conduct and attitudes change, and the fruit of the Spirit grows within us because of what Christ did for us.

**25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit**

Saints, because it is the Holy Spirit who gives new life, believers ought to follow the Holy Spirit’s leading in every part of their lives.

Apart from the working of the Holy Spirit, a person cannot please God. When the Holy Spirit leads, believers must follow. Since believers have been made alive by the Holy Spirit, he ought to direct the course of their lives.

Unless we actively pursue contact with the Holy Spirit and obey his leading, we will be unable to resist the passions and desires of our flesh.

**26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.**

Saints, this verse seems like a last-minute addition to a section that could have easily ended with verse 25. Paul probably focused on particular problems in Galatia.

He explained that if they would “follow the Holy Spirit’s leading,” step-by-step, they could solve any attitude problems in the church. Perhaps even living by the Spirit might be used by some as an occasion for pride.

Saints, in closing out this chapter,

The apostle mentioned three particular problems. They are the opposite of serving, and they remain three prevalent sins in the church today.

**1. Some were being conceited; they had an excessively favorable opinion of their own ability or importance**

Saints, it could be that those who had not fallen prey to the Judaizers were acting this way, or those who had followed the Judaizers were acting conceited because they believed they were “more spiritual.”

In any case, conceit causes problems where it flourishes.

**2. Paul did not want them to irritate one another; they were causing annoyance and anger, the opposites of the virtues the Holy Spirit desired**

Saints, some people can’t resist starting verbal fights in church.

**3. Finally, they were jealous of one another; they wanted to have what others had earned or achieved, whether recognition, status, money, or even spirituality**

Saints, this also could do nothing more than divide the believers and ruin the church’s unity in Christ. Don’t give in to envy.

Pride makes us perpetually vulnerable to temptation. When Satan can’t stop our spiritual growth, his tactic immediately changes to using pride.

As soon as we notice progress, we should expect pride to set in. This will especially be true if we measure our growth against the progress others are making.

Growth should be cause not for pride but for humility and thanksgiving because it comes from God.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

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**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**