

Fruit of the Spirit

Today we will talk about the fruit of the Spirit as is mentioned in Gal.5:22. In our text we will see they are pitted up against, contrasted with, and compared to the deeds of the flesh. Let's see what Paul has to say about and see what the Christian life should look like and what it should be producing.

Read Gal.5:16-23 PRAY

Verse 16 gives us the command, and as always God's word gives us a reason why to follow the command that, Paul gives us in verse 17. God's commands are always for our good and often for our survival. We love the promises He gives us and should always desire to accept those words. But if we are going to accept some of God's words, we have to accept all of God's words. After all, they are all inspired by Him through the Holy Spirit. So, if we have confidence in the promises, we must also have obedience to the commands. Paul says we must walk by the Spirit, and we will not carry out the desires of the flesh. The Greek word for desire shows, "to see one's heart upon something, having a desire for, lusting after, or coveting." If we let our hearts go after the world, the flesh, and the devil, we will not walk according to the Spirit. In verse 18, it says we must be led by the Spirit so we will not carry out the desires of the flesh. Having the Spirit is essential. Of all the blessings that are ours in Christ, is there any greater than the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is received by the washing of regeneration, an act of God in us as Titus 3:5, "He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit." You can also see this in Ezekiel 36:25-27. We see the Greek word for renewing only one other time, that in Rom.12:2, "renewing of your mind." Regeneration or being born again, refers to God's act of making a person alive spiritually. This is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which sinners are given new spiritual life enabling them to relate to God in faith, love, obedience and delight. John says that flesh begets flesh, Spirit begets Spirit. One illustration, the life of an infant came as a result of the act of a human father, similarly Christian's breath spiritually, (exhaling-repentance, inhaling-faith) because they have already received life from a heavenly Father. Romans 8:14, "All who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God."

As we see the words, deeds, or the desires of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit, we see a similar contrast of the fig and the vine, and the thorns and the thistles. Jesus lets us know in Math.7:16 how the world will recognize us as Christians. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor are figs gathered from thistles; the fleshly person will not produce fruit as the Spirit will in the believer. The Holy Spirit Himself is the author and giver of all spiritual good. Those who are led by the Spirit not only do not do the deeds, desires, or works of the flesh, but they alone bring forth the fruit of the Spirit. Math.7:18, Jesus said, "A good tree..." "The surest way to conquer any strong desire or emotion is to bring some other into operation. (Another Helper). Allos/Heteros, Greek for another, John 14:16, Gal.1:6

3 things today: 1) The effects of the Spirit, 2) The different fruit of the Spirit, 3) The practical examples of walking in the Spirit.

I Read John 15:5-8 It will not be an easy task to live walking by the Spirit, we will feel many desires to walk otherwise, but the text does not say that we won't feel them, but that we do not fulfill them, the desires of the flesh. This is God's plan and anecdote to not fulfill the desires of the flesh, and that is to walk in the Spirit. This will suppress and subdue our natural humanity and its distracting desires. 1John 4:4, "Greater is He that is in me, than he who is in the world." These fruits which we will talk of shortly, grow from the seed of the Word, the seed of truth sown in our hearts. The Divine Physician has taken out the heart of stone, (Ezk.36:26) for the seed will not grow on rocky soil, the sun will scorch it for it has no depth of soil and has no root and would thus wither. But He has replaced it with a heart of flesh, (Ezek.36:26) where it has good soil, where He has weeded out the thorns that would choke it, but waters it and causes the heat from the Sun of Righteousness and breathes new life into it. The Divine Cultivator prepared the soil for the seed to take root and affect a crop, some hundredfold, some sixty-fold, and some thirty-fold. Thus, the Spirit begins a work of

steady, constant, progressive sanctification conforming us more into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ. We must be made good in order to do good. And this with the new strength we are given, we are able to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God who is at work in us, to will and to do according to His good pleasure. He is the ultimate One who will help us produce this fruit. He enables us to love and obey His truths. Prov.10:4, "Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, but the hand of the diligent makes rich." Our diligence in these spiritual matters shows a sign of His grace reigning in us. If we are idle and negligent in such things, these show a sure sign of His absence. 1Peter 4:11, "Whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever." If therefore we would obtain what God promises us, we must love what God commands us.

II The Fruit- There are in the text of the 22nd verse 3 triads of fruit, 9 in all. And before we look at the fruit, a couple of things to hone in on. Though all are fruit, we will call them attitudes since fruit is singular, one fruit with multiple attitudes in this fruit. All Christians will be filled with this fruit, and it's 9 attitudes, but we will all be at different levels of them, one may have more joy, but be less filled with self-control, and vice versa. But all believers will produce, inhibit, and exhibit them, all to one degree or another. Peter sums this up and assures us exceptionally well with a parallel statement in **2Peter 1:5-11, READ LATER**

LOVE-The first attitude, grace, trait of the Spirit, the very first of the first of 3 sets of 3. At least 3 Greek words for love in English, this here is AGAPE, the highest, best, purest form of the word love. It is a love that gives. John 3:16. Jonathon Edwards states, "Love is the first outgoing of the renewed soul to God. It lies at the very foundation of Christian character, we are rooted and grounded in love. It is the path in which all true children of God are found; they walk in love, they are knit together in love, they are made perfect in love, they have put on the breastplate of love, that by which they may become like their Father in heaven and fitted for His presence." There's no taking here, nothing expected in return. It is as John MacArthur explains, "It seeks the highest good for another no matter the cost, demonstrated supremely by Christ's sacrifice on our behalf." It is the stem from which the rest hang, God being the Author of it. 1John 3:16, "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." The Christian loves God because of His holy excellence, and that he is so indebted to Him, and he loves the brethren, for they are beloved by their Father in heaven, and he loves his neighbor as God has commanded him to do as God loved the world. Jonathon Edwards Love is the fulfilling of the law, Gal.5:14, the whole law is fulfilled in one word, you shall love your neighbor as yourself; also Romans 13:10, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfillment of the law," and Romans 13:8, "We should owe nothing to anyone except to love one another, for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law." 1John 4:16, "God is love and the who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in Him." Faith, hope and love Paul says are some good things that He gave us, but the greatest of these is love. And how do we know for sure this love is in us, Romans 5:5, "The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us." The Greek word for poured, same Greek word used by Jesus describing the blood He poured out for us. Math.26:28

JOY-It is a feeling of inner gladness, delight, or rejoicing. It is joy in the Holy Spirit, Romans 14:17, "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Verses the world's view of joy, based on and dependent upon what happens. Spurgeon says, "Joy and peace seem to blossom and ripen out of love, he who has love, has joy and peace, and he possesses a deep delight, a secret cellar of the wine of joy that no one else may taste." Jesus is our wellspring of joy. It's a deep down, inner sense of wellbeing that abides in the heart of a person who knows all is well between him and the Lord. Jesus in John 15:11, "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that joy may be made full." Puritan Matthew Henry states, "The matter of a Christian's joy is the remembrance of the happiness laid up for him." There need not be certain outward circumstances or great happenings in a Christian life that would make him joyful, having been already filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit. Solomon states in Prov.15:13, "A joyful heart makes a cheerful face." The Christian basks in the joy of knowing his Lord has infinite power,

directed by infinite wisdom, infinite wisdom directed by infinite goodness, and infinite goodness directed by infinite truth. And how did we obtain this joy? Luke 2:10, "God brings us good news of a great joy." Thomas Watson, "Here joy begins to enter into us, there we shall enter into fullness of joy. What joy the soul shall have, when it bathes itself forever in the pure and pleasant fountain of God's love. How should all this set us a longing for the place where sorrow cannot live, and joy cannot die?"

PEACE-The gospel is called the gospel of peace, (Eph.6:15), God is called the God of peace (Phil.4:9), and the Son is called the Prince of Peace (Isa.9:6) Jesus welcomed people with "Peace be unto you", and blessed them as they left, "Go in peace." Only a believer can obtain. John 14:27, "My peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you, not as the world gives." Be at peace like Christ, how about His actions or lack of actions when in the boat being swamped with the Apostles. He is the great peace giver, and the Christian possesses this grace or attitude as well. Isa.48:22, and Isa.57:21, state, "There is no peace for the wicked." Peace is a condition of freedom from disturbance, outwardly toward others at odds, or inwardly as enmity of the soul with God. Eph.2:16, 'He might reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, by it, having put to death the enmity. The prior verse in 15 stating thus establishing peace." Col.3:15, "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts." Peace does not come from an absence of trouble, but from the presence of God. REPEAT. Man can have peace in his heart, his conscience, and his mind. And he can also be at peace with his fellow man. 1Thess.5:13, "Live in peace with one another." Romans 12:18, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men." It is generally a sad sign of a Christian's temperament when he is frequently getting into quarrels. Prov.20:3, "Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, but any fool will quarrel."

PATIENCE-It has the idea of having an attitude of long-suffering towards those who afflict, cause injuries, upset us, and it sustains the believer through long periods of labor, trial, and toil. Alexander MacLaren states, "If we come forth from the blessed fellowship with God, where love, joy, and peace reign unbroken, and are met with a cold gust of indifference or with an icy wind of hate. It takes two to quarrel and no man living under the influence of the Spirit of God can be one of such a pair" The miracle of Spirit filled patience shines brightest in moments that test patience. We must not grow weary of well-doing before the reward of our eternal inheritance is given. God is patient, it is a grace we can own and do have. Romans 9:22, "What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction. "It is a wonder that He hasn't already tossed us into hell. He is a God slow in anger and abounding in lovingkindness, the Psalmist says. Jesus, the most patient man who ever lived shows it in 1Peter 2:23, "When He was reviled, He did not revile in return, when suffering, he uttered no threats." Where did this patience come from? The next phrase, "He kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously." There was a joy set before Him, He would redeem, and save His people from their sin, and now He awaits in heaven for their sure entrance. How patient Noah must have been to build that ark for 120 years before, the promised flood finally came. Paul prays for the Colossians, (1:11), "To be impatient is to doubt God's wisdom or His love." James 5:7, "Therefore be patient brethren until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains." One gentleman stated, 'Patience commends us to God, and keeps us His, patience is the guardian of faith, the preserver of peace, the cherisher of love, and the teacher of humility."

KINDNESS-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?" How lenient is God, and how lenient should we be with one another? Have you seen any acts of kindness lately? Repeat. Maybe not, it is not in the DNA of the world, but it is in the Christian that is Spirit filled, it's one of the 9 that are in the Christian. Kindness is gentleness, it gives a soft answer. It is a mildness of temper, a calmness of spirit, an attitude of treating others with politeness. The miracle of Spirit- filled kindness sparkles most where we expect to find irritation and rudeness. The unregenerate cannot do this, Romans 3:12, "There is none that does good." The word kindness in Romans 2:4, and the word good in Romans 3:12 are the same Greek word. The Spirit makes the heart kind, not irritable, to make us as happy as possible. Luke 6:35, "Jesus taught us to love our neighbor, do good, lend, for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men." Expositors call it God's pitying

kindness that prompts Him to bestow forgiveness and blessings." We Christians should show kindness by treating others as God has treated us. Hard to find it to be long suffering. Edwards puts it in perspective for us, "First do you think the injuries you have received from your fellowman are more than you have offered to God? Has your enemy been more base, more unreasonable, more ungrateful, than you have to the High and Holy One? Have his offenses been more heinous or aggravated, or more in number than yours have been against your Creator, Benefactor, and Redeemer? Have they been more provoking and exasperating than your sinful conduct has been to Him who is the Father of all your mercies, and to whom you are under the highest obligations?" (Pause) One man stated, "Would that more of us were tenderhearted as we are thin-skinned, as impulsive in kindness as explosive in anger." Kindness is a quality shown in the way a person speaks and acts.

GOODNESS-In modern language today, it would be a word such as virtue, it is a behavior showing great moral standards, like patience is a virtue. God is good and does good, oh taste and see that the Lord is good. It is a sincere desire for the happiness of others, expressed by conduct given over to advance that happiness. Jer.32:41. The Lord has not treated us as our sins deserve. It is like mercy, mercy makes its aim to the unworthy, while goodness makes no such distinction. Jesus always went around doing good, and we can certainly radiate that goodness to others having been filled with the Spirit, in our interactions with others. Jesus could not look upon 5,000 hungry people without providing something for them to eat, could He? He could not look upon a broken-hearted widow without doing a great healing, could He? and He could not look upon a hopeless race of perishing people without dying on the cross to ransom their souls and redeem them from hell, could He? Acts 10:38,"Jesus went about doing good." Gal.6:10,"Do good to all men and especially the those who are of the household of faith." We can always be doing good, for there are many poor to feed, sorrowful to be comforted, young to be educated, strangers to be led, new Christians to be disciplined, sick to be taken care of, and so many souls to be saved. Psalm 31:19,"How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear you, which You have wrought for those who take refuge in You, before the sons of men."

FAITHFULNESS-Slightly different than faith, belief in someone or something, but in the keeping, fulfilling, and doing of something we are asked to or said we would accomplish, finishing a project, fulfilling a commitment, keeping a promise. It is primarily fulfilled in our faithfulness to follow God, to trust His promises and obey His commands, and fulfill our duties to our fellow man who God has put in our path. Lam.3:23,"Great is Your faithfulness." It is a virtue or grace in the Christian that makes a person one who others can rely upon, dependability, trustworthiness, loyalty, reliability, devotedness. One who keeps his word, his promises, his vows. In the Scriptures, the frequent occurrence of this word signifies the abandonment of oneself, not looking to your merits but the merits of One who brought you out of darkness, into the kingdom of His beloved Son in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Casting yourself solely upon God in Christ. The Holy Spirit will be your great aid to be faithful in serving, doing, encouraging, praying, etc. If we are faithful in a few things, our God will put us in charge of many things. (Math.25:23.) The Apostle Paul in Col.1:7, calls attention to Epaphrus, "A faithful servant of Christ," Col.4:7, Tychicus a faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, Col.4:9,"Onesimus, faithful and beloved brother." Could the great Apostle Paul make this assertion of us?

GENTLENESS-May be translated meekness. It describes a quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance, but meekness, accommodating another's weakness, restrained patience, patient trust in God in the midst of difficult circumstances. It points to a submissiveness of spirit which does not lift itself up against opposition, but bends like a reed in the wind before the storm hits. An example in the LL World series baseball game where a batter was hit in the head with a pitch. Explain the story. 1Tim.2:25,"With gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth." It is submission God-ward, and meekness man-ward. Spurgeon says, "Familiarity with Christ soon begets congeniality of disposition and spirit, for those who are much with Christ become, much like Christ. He who lies on a bed of spices will naturally find his garments smell of the same." the Greek word "Prantes" describes power under control, just as wisdom is the right use of knowledge, so gentleness is the right use of authority and power. Remember your Lord, gentle and humble in heart.

SELF-CONTROL-May be translated temperance. It is the ability to literally holding of one's self in or the ability to take a grip of one's self, of the old slang, get a grip, restrain the passions, the appetites, and lusts of, and have origins from the old self. Having a mastery over fleshly impulses or desires that would be completely impossible without the Holy Spirit's control. 1Cor.9:25,"Everyone who competes in the games, exercises self-control in all things, they then do it to receive a perishable gift, but we an imperishable gift." Prov.16:32,"He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who captures a city." We must, with the power and help of the blessed Helper, the Holy Spirit, to master our emotions or be mastered by them. John Newton story

III-To finish, Prov.4:23,"Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life." This means paying attention to what your treasures and affections gravitate toward, what your grandest desires are, or what your dearest affections are. Psalm 73:26, quote it. Above all else, we must do that, for it affects everything we do. Commentator Alexander MacLaren states, "In order to bear fruit you must be grafted into the rich root of the olive tree, Romans 11:7, John 15:5, he who abides in Me and I in him, bears much fruit, but apart from Me you can do nothing. He continues, our current nature must receive the indwelling of an incorrupt nature. The Spirit must permeate every branch and it's appendages. No self-effort can accomplish this. We cannot labor in the impossibility of two tasks, making our bad selves good, or getting good fruit from our bad selves." Obedience shows that the tree and the fruit are real. Psalm 103:18,"To those who keep His covenant and remember His precepts to do them." 3 questions for us - Have we any more of Christ's beauty in our character, have we any more of Christ's grace in our hearts, have we any more of Christ's truth in our minds? Then one year ago, then 5 years ago, then 10 years ago? Peter's words from 2Peter 1:5-11, "Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. Therefore brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you, for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble, for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you."

THE ACCUSER OF OUR BROTHERS - A theological point of interest as told by D.A. Carson, the night of the First Passover. "Picture two Jews by the name of Smith and Brown, remarkably Jewish names. The day before the first Passover, having a little discussion in the land of Goshen, and Smith says to Brown, 'Are you a little nervous about what is going to happen tonight?' Brown says, 'God told us what to do, thru His servant Moses, you don't have to be nervous. Haven't you slaughtered the lamb and daubed the two doorposts with blood and put blood on the lintel? Haven't you done that, you all packed and ready to go? You going to eat the Passover meal with your family? Smith replies, 'Of course I've done that, I'm not stupid. It's still pretty scary when you think about all the things that have happened around here recently, frogs, flies, river turning to blood, pretty awful and now there's a threat of the first born being killed, it's all right for you, you've got 3 sons, I've only got one, I love my Charlie and the Angel of Death is passing through tonight you know, I know what God says, I put the blood there, but it's pretty scary, I'll be glad when this night is over. Brown responds, 'bring it on! I trust the promises of God.' That night the Angel of death swept through the land. Which one lost his son? Pause... The answer of course is... neither... because death doesn't pass over them on the ground of the intensity or the clarity of the faith exercised but on the ground of the blood of the Lamb! That's what silences the accuser. The blood silences the accuser as he accuses us before God. He silences our consciences when he accuses us directly. How many times do we writhe in agony asking if God can ever love us enough, if God can ever care for us enough after we've done such stupid, sinful, rebellious things, after we've been Christians for 40 years. I have no other argument, I need no other plea, it is enough that Jesus died, and that He died for me. We overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, there is the

ground for all human assurance, there is the ground of our faith. Not the intensity of the faith, but the object of the faith. They overcome Him on the ground of the blood of the lamb.

Jesus said, "unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus is author of this faith we talk about, the only way to heaven by what He has accomplished on the cross, the perfect righteousness that he can impute to us, and the Spirit then can begin this fruit producing life that honors and pleases the Father. John 3:19, READ. Men shun the light and desire the darkness. The reason men love the darkness is that they desire the things which the light condemns. G. Campbell Morgan states, "The light is shining. Shall we come to it and walk in it? Or shall we shun it and walk in darkness? The choice is personal, but the verdict is already found. Our answer depends on whether we are condemned or justified."

Lastly, at the end of Luke in 24:50, As Jesus left their presence, He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Morgan comments, "Whether in life or death, in adversity or prosperity, in sorrow or in joy, we know that by that token (His hands lifted up) that we are safe. While we hear His voice pronouncing the blessing, it matters not what voices slander or curse, we know that our peace and joy are assured. He ever lives, with hands that argue our safety outstretched, and with words that ensure our blessedness upon His lips."