

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

WEEK 01

INTRODUCTION

“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” - Galatians 5:13

Works of the Flesh

- Opportunities for the flesh (vv. 19-21):
 - **Sins of immorality**
 - Sexual immorality
 - *Porneia* – prostitution/fornication
 - Impurity
 - Uncleaness
 - Medical & ceremonial connotations
 - Defilement of sexual sin
 - Sensuality
 - Promiscuity/debauchery
 - Total loss of limits, lack of restraint, decency & self-respect
 - **Sins of idolatry**
 - Idolatry
 - Elevating the created to the level of the creator
 - Sorcery
 - Witchcraft
 - Occult/demonic control
 - **Sins of animosity**
 - Enmity
 - Hatred
 - Opposite of love
 - Romans 8:7
 - Describes the hostility of the sinful mind to God

- Strife
 - Being pulled apart by petty bickering & pride
 - Jealousy
 - Wants what other people have
 - Same Lemma as “zealous”
 - Fits of anger
 - A passionate outburst of anger or hostile feeling
 - Rivalries
 - “Selfish ambition”
 - Office seeking/canvassing for office
 - Self-promotion & self-service rather than service of others
 - Dissensions
 - Carries political overtones in the ancient world
 - Suggests the cultivation of a party spirit or exclusive elite within the church
 - Divisions
 - Root word is “to choose”
 - The result of intentional choices to walk in the way of selfish pride, envy, and bickering
 - Envy
 - Plural envious desires
- **Sins of intemperance**
 - Drunkenness
 - Alcohol abuse
 - Orgies
 - Always linked with the sin of drunkenness
 - Carousing & wild parties
- Anything similar
- These will not inherit the kingdom of God,
 - The only other option is eternal separation from God in hell.
 - Eternal death

Fruit of the Spirit

- Those who walk in the Spirit of God will inherit the Kingdom of God & eternal life in Christ Jesus
 - The fruit, singular, of that life is manifested in 9 graces
 - Believers possess the ability to display all of the fruits of the Spirit
 - There are not certain fruits that you are incapable of living out
 - Some maybe easier to you than others because of personality or maturity, but you have all of them & are expected to bear all of them consistently
- Fruit of the Spirit
 - Love
 - *Agape*
 - The source & fountain from which all of the other graces flow.
 - Serving/giving/sacrificing love
 - Devoted love
 - Joy
 - Closely related to grace & hope
 - Christian joy is lived out in the midst of suffering.
 - Marked by celebration & expectation of God's ultimate victory over the powers of sin & darkness
 - Peace
 - Hebrew *shalom* referred to a condition of wholeness & well-being that includes both a right-relationship with God & loving harmony with one's fellow human beings.
 - Peace with God & peace of God
 - Christians are called to be peacemakers
 - "The fabric is built up, story upon story. Love is the foundation, joy the superstructure, peace the crown of all."
 - Patience
 - To take everything in good part & not to be easily offended.
 - It is the ability to put up with other people even when that is not an easy thing to do.

- Patience in this sense, of course, is preeminently a characteristic of God, who is “long-suffering” with his rebellious creatures. He is the loving Lord who in the face of obstinate infidelity and repeated rejection still says of his people, “How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel?” (Hos 11:8).
 - Paul’s point is clear: if God has been so long-suffering with us, should we not display this same grace in our relationships with one another?
- Kindness
 - Like patience, kindness is a characteristic of God intended to be reproduced by the Spirit in God’s people.
 - Kindness is not sentimentality
 - Paul frequently appealed to Christians to “be kind to one another” and to clothe themselves with kindness (Eph 4:32; Col 3:12). Where was this Christian grace to be seen among the Galatians who were biting, devouring, and consuming one another?
- Goodness
 - Found only four times in the New Testament (and only in Paul).
 - Conveys the idea of benevolence and generosity toward someone else, a going the second mile when such magnanimity is not required.
- Faithfulness
 - Faithfulness, fidelity, that is, the quality of being true, trustworthy, and reliable in all one’s dealings with others.
 - For those who are called to serve as leaders of God’s people, now as then, faithfulness should be a far more coveted mark of ministry than temporal success, ecclesiastical recognition, or popular acclaim.
 - After having served in India for eight years with few visible results to show for his efforts, William Carey wrote to his friend John Williams, “Pray for us that we may be faithful to the end.”
- Gentleness
 - A submissive and teachable spirit toward God that manifests itself in genuine humility and consideration toward others.
 - As an expression of the fruit of the Spirit, gentleness is strength under control, power harnessed in loving service and respectful actions. One who is gentle in

this sense will not attempt to push others around or arrogantly impose one's own will on subordinates or peers. But gentleness is not incompatible with decisive action and firm convictions.

- Self-control
 - Refers to the mastery over one's desires and passions
 - A Christian without self-control, he intimates, is like a racer who runs aimlessly from one side of the course to the other or a boxer who merely pummels the air, never landing a blow.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Which of the works of the flesh do you tend to struggle with in your own life?
2. How has giving into the works of the flesh impacted your life & relationships with other people?
3. Why do you think you struggle with them?
4. What concrete steps can be taken to help you resist the works of the flesh & instead, produce the Fruit of the Spirit?