



## FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

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**Galatians 5:22** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, <sup>23</sup>meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

There are nine fruits of the spirit that must be cultivated and developed in us that will reflect Jesus Christ! Remember, these are the Spirit's fruits, not just our natural abilities. When we cultivate them, these fruits will develop Christ like nature and character in us. Christ like character is what God is after! It is impossible to have Godly character without having these fruits developed in us.

These fruits will determine our actions, our speech and our attitudes towards God and man. In order for these fruits to grow in us, we must over-turn the soil and pull out the weeds of bitterness, resentment and others from our heart. It will take discipline and effort for these fruits to be cultivated in us. Remember, people will know our character by these fruits. If these fruit are not cultivated and developed in us, we will have a distant relationship with God and with others.

**#1 Love:** The God kind of love. The primary key to everything is love. That's the reason it is such a challenge to love. Along with temperance (self-control, the last listed fruit), love is the bookend that helps hold the other fruits in place. It surpasses human understanding.

**1 Corinthians 13:4** *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup>It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup>Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup>It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. <sup>8</sup>Love never fails.*

**Agape:** (Greek word) is a Christian term referring to love, "the highest form of love, the love of God for man and of man for God. God is Agape, love! **1 John 4:8** *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

**#2 Joy:** The emotion of great delight, peace or happiness caused by our delight to walk with God! Joy gives spiritual strength. His joy is our strength in weakness!

**Nehemiah 8:10** *Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."*

**#3 Peace:** Primarily, peace with God. When we are sinners doing the works of the flesh, we are rebels against God. When our rebellion ends and we are forgiven, then we are at peace. This kind of peace doesn't come through laying around on vacation, entertainment, drugs, alcohol, sex or wealth. The spiritual fruit of peace results from being justified by faith.

**Romans 5:1** *Therefore, since we have been justified [made right; declared innocent or guiltless] through faith [in what Christ accomplished for us on the cross], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

We must learn to maintain **peace** in three important relationships:



1. With God 2. With our fellow man 3. With ourselves.

We maintain peace with God by believing and trusting Him and by not sinning. We maintain peace with our fellow man by not allowing strife to be a part of our relationships with other people. We maintain peace with ourselves by being happy with who we are and by refusing to live in guilt or condemnation.

**#4 Longsuffering:** Long and patient endurance of injury, trouble, or provocation. Like when someone keeps making you angry or picking on you, but you just let it go and you maintain control. **Longsuffering is love on trial.** It enables you to be emotionally strong and forgive others.

**Colossians 3:13** *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."*

**#5 Gentleness:** Being moderate, kind; the absence of harshness or severity. The Apostle Paul spoke of and illustrated their gentleness to the Thessalonians by the example of a mother feeding her babies. Mothers are not harsh in feeding, but gentle!

**1 Thessalonians 2:7** *But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:*

**Additional notes.**

Each of these fruits of the spirit must be cultivated and developed in us. That takes discipline, time and patients. The fruit of the Spirit develop character in us so that the Christ nature can be seen in us. Fruit trees don't grow in stony, shallow soil. The soil for cultivating fruit must be plowed, rooted and prepared. That is what has to happen in the soil of our heart.

Establish relationships with people based on their fruits, which has developed character! A person can look one way on the outside and be completely different on the inside! The fruit of the Spirit will reveal what is on the inside. Godly fruit don't lie!

**#6 Goodness:** Moral excellence; virtue. God is the ultimate example of goodness. Goodness is holiness put into practice and results from knowing God. Goodness enables you to do good to those who dislike you (**Luke 6:27**) as well as those of the household of faith (**Galatians 6:10**).

It is the goodness and grace of God that leads people to repentance. That's why we need to be good to all people. Our witness won't have any power unless we demonstrate the goodness of God to others.

**Galatians 6:10** *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

**#7 Faith:** A better translation is faithfulness, the act of being faithful. Doing what you say you are going to do. Being known as someone people can trust because you are reliable. Christianity and the church need faithful people!

Webster's Dictionary defines faithful as "maintaining allegiance; constant; loyal; marked by or showing a strong sense of duty or responsibility; conscientious; accurate; reliable; exact.

**1 Corinthians 4:2** *Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.*



**#8 Meekness:** Humble and patient. Meekness is not being mousy or weak, but rather a servant-like submission to God and others in your care. Your spirit is free from rebellion and pride. Meekness or humility is defined as "freedom from pride and arrogance; modest estimation of our own worth." Humility or meekness is the opposite of pride. **1 Peter 5:5** *God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.*

**Psalms 37:11** *plainly states that; the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*

**#9 Temperance:** Self-control; Moderation or self-restraint in action or statement; It is control over your entire being (spirit - soul and body). A person who has self-control is mild and calm, avoids extreme behavior, and exercises self-restraint in both actions and speech.

**Proverbs 25:28** *Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.*

After all, temperance and love are the bookends that hold all the other fruit in place. Temperance can save a marriage, a family, your job or even your life! Temperance can save friendships and relationships.

A person without self-control is like a city with broken down walls. It leaves access to the enemy.