

**AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Study Series: The Fruit of the Spirit
Lesson 1 - Introduction to the Fruit of the Spirit

Wednesday, June 14, 2023
Facilitator: Pastor Jide Lawore

Galatians 5:16-23 “So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (NIV)

What is the Fruit of the Spirit?

The fruit of the Spirit is the result of the Holy Spirit's presence and working in the lives of maturing believers and is itemized in Galatians 5:22-23. In the context of these verses, the singular fruit of the Spirit is contrasted with the plural works of the flesh (5:19-21). Neither listing is exhaustive, as is clear from Paul's ending of his list of the works of the flesh with the phrase, "and things like these, " and his statement at the close of his itemizing of the fruit of the Spirit that "against such things there is no law."

The Difference Between the Gifts and The Fruit of The Spirit

One of the most common confusions among Spirit-filled believers is confusing the gifts of the Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit. Perhaps this is because the Bible lists nine gifts and nine elements of the fruit of the Spirit. It could also be because they sound similar, or most people can't distinguish between gifts and fruit. Hence, it is important to clear up this confusion before moving forward.

	Gifts of the Spirit	Fruit of the Spirit
1	Variety of the gifts of the Spirit which each believer can exhibit from.	One fruit of the Spirit that must be exhibited by every believer.
2	The gifts of the Spirit are spiritual capabilities given to us for the service of the Lord	The fruit of the Spirit has to do with a person's spiritual character for those in the Lord
3	The gifts of the Spirit are given instantly for the purpose of ministry. 1 Corinthians 12:7	The fruit is developed gradually as believers abide in Christ and yield to the working of the Holy Spirit.
4	Gifts are product of the grace of God (1 Corinthians 12:11)	Fruit of the Spirit is a product of spiritual growth and maturity.
5	The gift of the Spirit is received by faith and sensitivity to the move of the Holy Spirit.	The fruit of the Spirit is a result of our yielding to the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.
6	The gifts of the spirit can be faked and duplicated by the devil.	The fruit of the Spirit cannot be faked, hence why Jesus says we know true servants of God by their fruit not gifts. (Matthew 7:15-20)
7	Gifts are a thing given willingly to someone without payment; a present	A fruit is a product of plant growth or the effect of many (usually unseen) actions or operation.

One important thing we should know is that regardless of our various giftings, believers are called to abide in Christ and develop the same fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control ~ Galatians 5:22-23). Christians may receive different spiritual gifts; however, we should each be known by the same fruit of the Spirit.

Question 1: *Why do people confuse fruit with the gifts of the Holy Spirit?*

Question 2: *Which one is more important or should be more desirable; fruit or gifts of the Holy Spirit?*

The Fruit of the Spirit versus the Works of the Flesh

In Galatians 5:16-25, the Apostle Paul contrasts the products of our natural instincts (works of the flesh) with that of the Holy Spirit's leading in the lives of faithful Christians (fruit of the Spirit). Every believer has a choice; to follow their flesh (producing the works of the flesh) or the Spirit (producing the fruit of the Spirit).

Works of the flesh: The works of flesh implies the actions the flesh produces or what happens when a believer surrenders to the dictates of the flesh. The Flesh? (From the Greek word *sarx*) denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence.

The fruit of the Spirit: A fruit (From the Greek word *karpòs*) is something produced over time. Much of what takes place is out of sight, but as we see the fruit growing and maturing, we know those other processes are working quietly. This fruit is the "natural" outgrowth of living God's way. According to Expositor's Bible Commentary, the word *karpòs* is singular, showing a unity of these terms—like a bunch of grapes or the segments of an orange—rather than individual and separate fruits.

Question 3: *Given that Paul powerfully contrasted the natural works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5, how can we avoid the first and grow in the second?*

The Fruit of the Spirit is Produced through our Relationship with the Holy Spirit

In this passage, Apostle Paul uses three action words; walk, led, and live to describe the kind of relationship with the Holy Spirit that will produce the fruit of the Spirit and prevent us from the works of the flesh.

1. **Walk by the Spirit: Gal. 5:16** *"So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.* What does it look like to "walk by the Spirit"? The word "walk" refers to how we comport ourselves, our behavior.
2. **Be "led by the Spirit": Gal. 5:18** *"But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law."* The difference between "walking by" and being "led by" the Spirit may seem slight, but if you're going to "walk" by the Spirit's enabling, you must have a sense where He will take you and be willing, even *committed*, to go because the path may not be easy. It may require humility, tough work of forgiveness and reconciliation and recognizing God's providence in your life.
3. **Live by the Spirit: Gal. 5:25** *"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."* This is a reminder that our Christian life is a product of the work of the Spirit. It is by the work of the Holy Spirit that we have been given new life. We were made alive by the Spirit's regenerative powers. Hence, if it began by the Spirit, then all our subsequent life ought to be carried out by the Spirit. (Galatians 3:1-5)

The Nine Elements of the Fruit of the Spirit		
1	Love	Love (Agape) is the kind of love God has for His creation. It is pure, selfless and self-sacrificing; seeking the best for others (even enemies) at all times, at all costs.
2	Joy	The joy here is much deeper than a sense of happiness or gladness from life's circumstances. It is a profound delight and rejoicing that comes from knowing and serving God.
3	Peace	Peace is an unshakeable inner calm that can be a rare quality in turbulent times.
4	Forbearance	Also called longsuffering, forbearance has the common synonym "patience." It also means to delay repayment of a debt.
5	Kindness	Kindness is looking beyond our interests to the interests of others.
6	Goodness	This fruit of the Spirit is an attribute of action. It means living one's life with good morals and motives as well as doing good things for others.
7	Faithfulness	Faithfulness is steadfastness, constancy, or allegiance; it is carefulness in keeping what we are entrusted with.
8	Gentleness	Gentleness is the quality of being kind and careful. The way a Christian engages with others is what the fruit of gentleness is all about.
9	Self-control	Ability to control our thoughts, emotions, and actions.