



Homes of H.O.P.E. Prayer and Study Guide 9/15  
Based on sermon: “The Fruit of the Spirit is . . . Jesus”  
Preached September 12, 2009

1. Read Galatians 5:16, 17. Paul says that the Spirit and the “flesh” or sinful nature are in conflict with each other. Describe how this conflict plays out in your own life. Give examples of how you get pulled one way or the other in everyday experiences.

2. Verses 19-21 describe self-centered living which is the opposite of Spirit-filled living. Note that the first fruit of the Spirit is “Love.” According to verses 13 and 14 how does Paul define “love”? (Compare 1 Cor. 13:4-7.)

3. Paul says that “those who live like this (vs. 19-21) will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Gal. 5:21) Discuss why this is so. Should such people be shut out of heaven? Is this too harsh? Unloving?

4. Paul contrasts the “acts” of the sinful nature with the “fruit” of the Spirit in verses 22, 23. The Greek word for “fruit” is *kar-pos'* which means fruit (already plucked as opposed to still on the tree or vine), “Mature, ripe, and ready-to-eat. What does this tell you about the nature of characteristics listed? (Compare with Mark 4:28, 29.)

5. Consider the nine aspects or facets of the fruit of the Spirit:

- **Love** (Agape, “unconquerable benevolence which means that no matter what a man may do to us by way of insult or injury or humiliation we will never seek anything else but his highest good” [Barclay])
- **Joy** (“calm cheerfulness in spite of challenges”)
- **Peace** (contentment and prosperity of soul because one is reconciled with God. You know you are accepted of God and have eternal life – 1 John 5:11-13)
- **Patience** (longsuffering—the ability to have self-restraint in avenging oneself – 1 Pet. 2:23)
- **Kindness**
- **Goodness** (active goodness from right motives)
- **Faithfulness** (a deep, abiding conviction about and reliance on Christ for salvation)
- **Gentleness** (meekness or humility=power under Christ’s control)
- **Self-control** (opposite of self-gratification).

Which of these are you most challenged by in your current Christian experience? Which need the most developing? Which can you readily see in your life? Share your answers in groups of two and pray together with your partner for God to be your “gardener” and supply your lack.

6. Read Isa. 27:2-3. How does this speak to your spiritual growth?

7. The fruit of the Spirit is a unified whole and each aspect will be seen in every true believer’s life. Agree or disagree? What spiritual difference does it make that the “fruit” is singular?

8. The phrase “fruit” of the Spirit” shows that the power of fructification belongs to whom? Why is this important?

9. G.G. Finlay says that the fruit described in Galatians 5:22, 23 “is the religion of Jesus put in practice.” It is actually a description of Christ’s character. What’s your reaction to the assertion that Christians have craved Christ’s acts and power more than His character? Discuss this in light of Matthew 7:15-23. Is this a danger for us today? How can we avoid this trap?

10. Read the following from *The Desire of Ages* - “All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God, as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.” (DA, p. 668)

According to this statement, what is the main outcome of this work of the Spirit?

11. Do you agree or disagree with the following: “You can believe that if we are filled with the Spirit and possess the *character* of Christ, the acts and the power of Christ will naturally follow. Character of Jesus must come first! This is our only safeguard against fanaticism, false religion, false doctrine, and a false revival!”

12. Read Galatians 5:24-26 and answer the question, “How do we get or obtain the fruit of the Spirit?” What would this look like in your life?

13. What emotions, convictions, or desires has this teaching stirred in you? What will you do about it?