



“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

**Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053**

## “The Fruit of the Spirit”

Chuck Northrop

Before a person can understand *the fruit of the Spirit*, a person must understand the context of Galatians 5 where the fruit of the Spirit is revealed. In this chapter, Paul exhorts Christians not to allow their liberty to degenerate into a “yoke of bondage.” Some individuals in the Galatian church had “fallen from grace” because they sought to be “justified by the law.” The Judaizing teachers were binding the old law upon the church and, by such, had hindered some in obeying the truth (verse 7). These false teachers of Judaism were troubling the church (verse 12). Christians have been called to liberty — liberty from the old law, from sin, and from the bondage of sin. Thus, Paul exhorted, “only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh” (verse 13). One reason Christians ought not use liberty as a license to sin is because “we walk in the Spirit” (verse 16). To “walk in the Spirit” means to walk according to the Spirit’s teaching through His sword “which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17). This is the same as being “led of the Spirit” (verse 18), and it is the opposite of walking after the flesh. The Spirit and the flesh are at odds (verse 17). They are in constant conflict. They are opposed to one another. To further illustrate this conflict, Paul contrasted “the works of the flesh” (verses 19-21) with “the fruit of the Spirit” (verses 22-23).

In verse 16 of Galatians 5, Paul commanded, “Walk in the Spirit.” Let us be sure, there are certain results of walking in the Spirit.

There is the benefit of not fulfilling the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). The same thought is declared by David in Psalm 119:11, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” When people engraft God’s word upon their hearts, it will protect them against the fiery darts of Satan. Jesus knew this lesson when He was tempted of the devil (Matthew 4). Jesus guarded

Himself from each temptation by the word of God. He answered the tempter’s temptation with “it is written” (Matthew 4:4,7,10).

Also, if we walk in the Spirit, we are “not under the law” (Galatians 5:18). “The law” in this verse is the Mosaic law. Earlier in chapter 5, Paul’s readers were instructed: Christ had become of no effect unto those who justify themselves by “the law” (verse 4). To return to the Mosaic law is to abandon the law of Christ and is to fall from grace. Some believe this means men are not under any law. However, all men are under “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” which frees men from “the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2). Christians are to “fulfill the law of Christ” by bearing one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2). In addition, men are to look into “the perfect law of liberty” (James 1:25). Also consider: since “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4), to say a person is not under law is to say a person has not nor cannot sin. Clearly, all men are under law — the law of Christ, but all men are not under “the law” — the law of Moses.

Further, the fruit of the Spirit results from walking in the Spirit. Again, when people engraft God’s word upon their hearts, the fruit of the Spirit will be seen within them. The qualities of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance will characterize them. The Spirit will produce these qualities within a person by the word He inspired.

The fruit of the Spirit is the produce of the Spirit. In other words, it is the product which is produced by the Spirit’s influence. The fruit of the Spirit is not a Christian nor the fruit of a Christian which some have mistakenly taught. In fact, the fruit of a Christian is more than just a Christian. It is true in the natural world. Mankind, animals, and plants produce after their kind. Christians should also produce after their kind, and in this sense, the fruit of a Christian is another Christian. However, Christians produce other fruit besides Christians. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught, “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20). Within the context, Jesus spoke concerning false teachers who come “in sheep’s clothing” but inwardly are “ravening wolves” (Matthew 7:15). To illustrate how a person can know a false teacher, He taught a good tree produces good fruit, whereas an evil tree produces evil fruit. Is the only fruit of a false teacher other false teachers? Of course not! False teachers cause division, false hope, and disillusionment to name a few. So, it is with Christians. Christians should evangelize, but there are other fruits which they should bare, and one such fruit is “the fruit of the Spirit.”

Since the fruit of the Spirit is the product of the Spirit, then how does the Spirit produce the qualities of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance? The Spirit influences men by the Spirit-inspired word. Peter wrote, “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21). It is this word which will make us “wise unto salvation” (2 Timothy 3:15) and “is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Romans 1:16). It provides “all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). Thus, nothing else is needed because it is all sufficient and will produce the right fruit.

In the parable of the sower, Jesus taught a sower sowed seed by the way side, upon a rock, among thorns, and on good ground (Luke 8:5-8). Later, Jesus explained what the seed represented. He said,

## *Observations and Concerns*

April 24, 2024

“The seed is the word of God” (Luke 8:11). So, the word was sown in the hearts of men, but sadly the hearts of some men were like the soil of the way side, the rock, and the thorny ground. Thankfully, when the word of God is sown in other men whose hearts are like the soil of the good ground, it “brings forth fruit with patience,” that is with constant perseverance (Luke 8:15). What is the fruit of the Spirit? It is what the word provides and produces in the good soil of a person’s heart.

Contrasted to the Spirit produced fruit, “the works of the flesh” are “the unfruitful works of darkness” (Ephesians 5:9,11). In other words, “the works of the flesh” do not yield a valuable or desirable fruit. “The works of the flesh” are the evil fruit of the evil tree. They bring forth no blessings and no real benefits.

Please take careful note: unlike the plural “works of the flesh,” “the fruit of the Spirit” is singular. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance are not separate fruits but are characteristics or attributes of the singular “fruit of the Spirit.” Besides these nine characteristics, Paul added “all goodness and righteousness and truth” in Ephesians 5:9. Thus, giving men a total of eleven attributes of the fruit of the Spirit — all of which are virtues of the highest moral and spiritual qualities.

These qualities or characteristics will be manifested in the lives of those “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:1,4; Galatians 5:16). Like the graces of 2 Peter 1, if the fruit of the Spirit “be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful” (2 Peter 1:8). In contrast, if they are not manifested in our lives, then we are not being “led of [or ‘by’] the Spirit” (Galatians 5:18; Romans 8:14). Like the graces of 2 Peter 1, if they are lacking, then we are “blind, and cannot see afar off” (2 Peter 1:9). Thus, the proof of the tree is in the fruit. Jesus said, “the tree is known by his fruit” (Matthew 12:33); and “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20). So, let us determine to always “walk after the Spirit” by following His word in order that we may manifest these marvelous traits — **the fruit of the Spirit.**

**Little Things Are Important.** People are influenced more by big events than little occurrences. But it’s the little things in life that are really important.

**Did You Know?**

- Termites destroy more property than do earthquakes.
- Rodents are more destructive than tornadoes.
- More fire losses are caused by matches than volcanoes.
- More sorrow is caused by little words and deeds of unkindness than by open facts of dislike.
- More character is damaged by small evils than by flagrant violations of morality.

**You See, Little Things Are Important.**

**Welcome Visitors!** You are our honored guests!

**Praise in Psalm:** “O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory” (Psalm 108:1).

**Declaration of Appreciation:** It is far too easy to be critical of one another. Instead, let us be thankful for one another.

**VBS – June 9-12, 2024.** This year’s theme is “**Jesus: Eternal God.**”

This year’s Summer Series theme is “**Beatitudes of the Old Testament.**”

**Remember in Prayer:**

- ▶ **Dana Campbell** has been ill with pneumonia, but we are thankful she is doing better now.
- ▶ We are grateful to God that **Dicie Jackson’s** tests came back clear.
- ▶ **Darla Smith** had several tests scheduled for this week.
- ▶ **Pat Taylor** is scheduled for surgery on her carotid artery in May 14th.
- ▶ **Glen Beaman**, brother of Dicie Jackson, is scheduled for surgery on May 13th for prostate cancer.
- ▶ **Mary Hass** had surgery on her shoulder and is recovering well.

May birthdays: 2 - **Andy Hudson**; 3 - **Pat Taylor**; 13 - **Jody Northrop**; 15 - **Lynn Dilks**; 19 - **Caroline Swearingen**; No anniversaries this month.

Schedule of Services	Assignments		
	Wednesday, April 24	Sunday, April 28 AM	Sunday, April 28 PM
Bible Classes . . . . . 9:30 AM	Chris Nelson	Chuck Northrop	Doyle Jackson
Worship . . . . . 10:30 AM	Chris Nelson	Chuck Northrop	Doyle Jackson
Worship . . . . . 5:00 PM (except 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday – 2 PM)	Ross Swearingen	Doyle Jackson	Bill Dilks
Lord’s Supper (speaker)		Ross Swearingen	Chris Nelson
Lord’s Supper		Chris Nelson	
Lesson	Chuck Northrop	Bill Dilks	Chuck Northrop
Prayer	Doyle Jackson	Chris Nelson	Ross Swearingen
Door Attendant	Doyle Jackson	Chris Nelson	Ross Swearingen

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 Sundays  
 Bible Classes . . . . . 9:30 AM  
 Worship . . . . . 10:30 AM  
 Worship . . . . . 5:00 PM  
 (except 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – 2 PM)  
 Wednesdays  
 Bible Classes . . . . . 7:00 PM  
 Website: oologahcofc.org