

# The Fruit of the Spirit

Written by admin

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By David Ingram

Galatians 5:22-23 lists the fruit of the spirit as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. In the Bible, the word "fruit" is frequently used to refer to the results of someone's labor, behavior or attitudes. Thus, the fruit of the spirit consists of those traits which manifest themselves in believers' lives as a result of leading a Spirit-filled life and continually seeking after God. In John 16:7-15, Jesus explains that He is about to send His Holy Spirit as an advocate and guide to the believers until Jesus' return. Guided by the Holy Spirit, each of our lives can begin to display all nine characteristics of the fruit of the spirit.

## Emotional Health Love, Joy, Peace

When asked to list the greatest commandment in the law, Jesus answered in Matthew 22:37-39, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself," quoting Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18. The ability to love others is a sure sign that Christ is at work in someone's life.

Philippians 4:4 reads, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" Joy is a crucial component of a healthy emotional state, superseding temporary circumstances to keep believers truly at peace, resting in the assurance of God's grace and free to truly experience unbridled joy.

In what has come to be known as the Beatitudes, Jesus promises that peacemakers will be blessed by being called the sons of God (Matthew 5:9). Those who have love in their hearts and joy in their lives can extend love and joy to others, promoting peace everywhere they go.

## Christian Duty Patience, Kindness, Goodness

In Matthew 18:22, Jesus answers Peter's question of how many times one should forgive another by saying "...not seven times, but seventy times seven." Jesus modeled perfect patience for us on Earth, patiently enduring persecution and the pain of the cross for our sake, for the forgiveness of humanity's sins. Long-enduring patience is a sure sign of the Spirit at work in someone's life.

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Paul urged the church at Ephesus to be kind and tender to one another just as God in Christ is kind to us (Eph 4:32). Hurting others or doing downright mean things takes on a new light when we consider that Christ gave his life for our sins, rising from the dead three days later to assure our eternal salvation in His kingdom. Contemplating the depth of God's love and kindness can cause kindness to manifest in our lives, as well.

The Bible does not use the word "goodness" more than a few times, depending on the translation, leaving only a few verses to analyze. In Psalm 31:19, the psalmist declares "O, how abundant is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you and worked for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of the children of mankind!" (ESV). Experiencing God's goodness first hand can cause a believer to manifest goodness and decency in his or her own life.

Christian Integrity Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self Control

Proverbs 28:20 encourages readers that a faithful man will abound in many blessings. Ephesians 2:8 encapsulates the entire New Testament by asserting that "by grace you have been saved through faith." Faith is the foundation of Christian doctrine. Salvation through Jesus Christ comes through faith alone, so that no one has any right to boast except in the Lord (Jer 9:23-24).

Gentleness is grouped with mercy and peace in James 3:17, reiterating the fact that true gentleness can only come through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and a genuine seeking after God.

The famous saying "turn the other cheek" has its origins in Matthew 5:38-39, where Jesus encourages all people to display self control in interpersonal conflicts. Self-control is the end result of combining all eight traits mentioned above, making it the ideal final entry in this list. Self-control is the result of a mature faith, love for God and people, inner joy and peace, patience, true kindness, goodness, gentleness and faith in Christ.

*Dave Ingram writes for multiple online publications, focusing on Bible Studies and issues in Business Management.*

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