



# FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

## Study Guide

There are 9 major characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22, 23. Its cultivation in our lives counters “the works of the flesh...uncleanness, lewdness...hatred...jealousies...selfish ambitions” (Galatians 5:19-20). The fruit represents the sanctifying work of the Spirit in our lives. It’s part of our ongoing walk with Him; it is not a special gift or manifestation. The very terminology “fruit” depicts this; fruit grows as a result of life.

“Being filled with the Spirit calls us as much to the character as it does to charismatic activity. The Holy Spirit’s fruit is to be grown in our lives every bit as much as His gifts may be shown through us.”

How do we get this fruit?

**Read John 15:1-11 and answer the following:**

1. What is a necessary prerequisite in our lives before the fruit can even begin to be developed? (v.3)

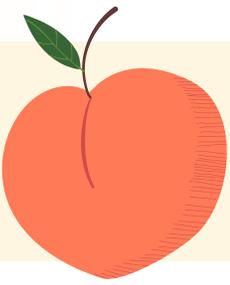
2. What act of ours is absolutely essential to its development? (vv. 4, 5)

3. What crucial element is part of the Father’s process for cultivating the fruit in our lives? (v.2)

4. What is the Father’s will regarding the fruit in our lives? (v. 8)

The fruit of the Spirit then develops only as we stay in close association with Jesus Christ.

Encouraged by the fact that Jesus is remaining in union with us (v.4), we’re called to remain in close union with Him. This alone enables us to bear “much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (v. 5)



# LOVE

“Love”-“agape” in Greek. Agape denotes an undefeatable benevolence and unconquerable goodwill that always seeks the highest good of the other person, no matter what he does. It is the self-giving love that gives freely without the other person, no matter what he does. It is the self-giving love that gives freely without asking anything in return and does not consider the worth of its object. Agape...refers to the will rather than the emotion. Agape describes the unconditional love God has for the world.

Agape love is God’s special attitude leading to benevolent action; the very quality He wants to be perfected in His children; a major pillar upon which the Christian life is built. The obvious importance of “love” in the Bible is seen in the fact that “God is love” (1 John 4:8), that He “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16) and that “the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor. 13:13)

## **Characteristics of love listed in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.**

1. “Love suffers long and is kind” (v.4) longsuffering and kindness
2. “Love does not envy” (v. 4) the idea of not being motivated by rivalry or competition.
3. “Love...is not provoked” (vv. 4, 5) Not being easily provoked to anger by others
4. “Love ...thinks no evil” (vv. 4, 5) the Idea of not keeping a record of a wrong done to me by someone else
5. “Love...does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth” the idea of morally aligning oneself with the truth of the gospel, of refusing to be delighted by any kind of evil
6. “Love...bears all things...endures all things” (vv. 4, 7) the idea that love can face anything at any time.
7. “Love ...believes all things, hopes all things” (vv. 4, 7) the idea that love never stops believing in the mercy of God at work in life and its circumstances.
8. “Love never fails” (v. 8a)

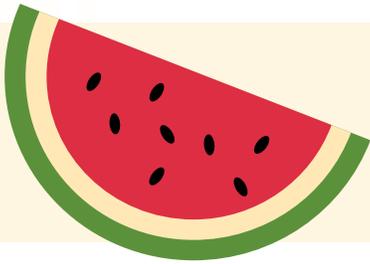
## **Read the following to see what more we can learn about love.**

Luke 6:27

Col. 3:14

1 Pet. 4:8

1 John 3:18



# JOY

Joy is that ever-deepening awareness that our lives are hidden in Christ and that we can be led by the Spirit through anything. Afflictions, trials, pressures, or frustrations may come, but they cannot destroy us; so we experience joy. We may genuinely hurt (2 Cor. 1:8), we may weep (John 11:33-35), we may be tempted (Heb. 2:18), we may not understand what God is allowing to come our way (James 1:2-5); but none of this causes us to lose God's focus in our life. We can even look beyond our own circumstances during difficulties and minister to the need of others. "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). This is biblical joy.

In the New Testament, "Joy (chara)" is found only in a relationship with Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:11). It is not the joy that comes from earthly things, still less from triumphing over someone else in competition. It is a joy whose foundation is God (cf. Psalm 30:11; Romans 14:17, 15:13; Philippians 1:4, 1:25). It is the assurance that we are members of God's family regardless of what positives or negatives life brings (Luke 10:17-20; Rom. 8:38, 39). It is closely aligned with hope, which is the confident assurance that God is ultimately in control and will someday right all wrongs with the return of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

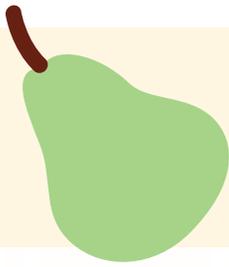
What other virtues does Paul associate with joy in Colossians 1:11?

What role did joy play in Jesus' crucifixion? (Heb.12:2)

What strengthens joy? (James 1:2)

What is the one thing that brings about "Joy inexpressible"? (1 Pet. 1:8)

What is one way this sure foundation of joy can express itself? (2 Cor. 8:2)



# PEACE

A state of rest, quietness, and calmness; an absence of strife; tranquility. It generally denotes perfect well-being. "Eirene" includes harmonious relationships between God and men, between people, nations, and families. In contemporary colloquial Greek, this word (eirene) had two interesting usages. It was used of the serenity which a country enjoyed under the just and generous government of a good emperor; and it was used of the good order of a town or village. Villages had an official who was called the superintendent of the village's eirene, the keeper of the public peace. Usually in the New Testament, eirene stands for the Hebrew shalom and means not just freedom from trouble but everything that makes for a person's highest good. Here, it means that tranquillity of heart which derives from the all-pervading consciousness that our times are in the hands of God. It is interesting to note that Chara and Eirene both became very common Christian names in the Church.

What is God's provision for peace in our lives? (Col. 1:20)

What must we truly love to experience great peace?(Ps. 119:165)

**READ the following scriptures and note where God wants peace to be found:**

Rom. 12:18

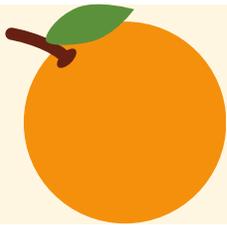
1 Cor. 7:15

1 Cor. 14:33

What is Paul's command concerning peace in Romans 14:19?

What does Jesus promise those who strive for peace? (Matt. 5:9)

Peace then has to do with personal wholeness and beneficial relationships. It is an inward assurance that because we are positionally righteous with God by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, we have access to His powers to touch all facets of our lives. Hence Hebrews 13:20, 21 says, "Now may the God of peace... make you complete in every good work to do His will," so that life's relationships and circumstances reflect God's intent rather than that of selfish flesh.



# PATIENCE

Patience, Makrothumia. From makros, “long,” and thumos, “temper.” The word denotes lenience, forbearance, fortitude, patience endurance, longsuffering. Also included in makrothumia is the ability to endure persecution and ill-treatment. It describes a person who has the power to exercise revenge but instead exercises restraint. It characterizes true, godly love, for “love suffers long” (1 Cor. 13:4). The writer of 1 Maccabees (8:4) says that it was by makrothumia that the Romans gained control of the world, and by that he means the Roman persistence which would never make peace with an enemy even in defeat, a kind of conquering patience. Generally speaking, the word is used of patience not in relation to things or events but in relation to people.

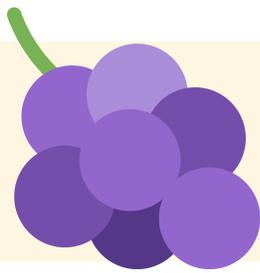
The fourth-century bishop and preacher John Chrysostom said that it is the grace of those who could revenge themselves and do not, people who are slow to anger. The most illuminating thing about it is that it is commonly used in the New Testament of the attitude of God towards men and women (Romans 2:4, 9:22; 1 Timothy 1:16; 1 Peter 3:20). If God had been like us, he would have wiped out this world long ago; but he has that patience which puts up with all our sinning and will not reject us. In our dealings with one another, we must reproduce this loving, forbearing, forgiving, patient attitude of God towards ourselves.

What does each of the following scriptures teach about God’s or Jesus’ longsuffering? Study Rom. 9:19-26, especially v. 22; 1 Tim. 1:15, 16; 2 Pet. 3:9

God’s longsuffering knows how to balance justice and mercy and always redemptive in nature, with the goal of bringing people to repentance (Rom. 2:4). According to 2 Cor. 6:3-10 and 2 Timothy 3:10, 11, in what life circumstance are we likely to find an understanding of what it means to be longsuffering?

Do you have a special promise from God for which you are waiting? What does Hebrews 6:12, 15 teach about the process often involved in inheriting such promises?

A key to understanding the New Testament concept of longsuffering is the Old Testament’s understanding of God’s hesed, Hebrew for “steadfast love, mercy or demonstrations of faithfulness based on covenant agreement.” In the longsuffering the Spirit wants to develop in us the same longsuffering repeatedly seen in God. The way in which God extended and still extends Himself to us in Christ is how we are to extend ourselves to each other in Him. It’s inseparable from love (Eph. 4:2), and it knows how to balance “justice and mercy.” In short, it’s a work of the Spirit whereby we long to gain insight into another’s actions and respond with that insight in mind rather than responding hastily in judgment.



# KINDNESS

Kindness, chrestotes. Goodness in action, sweetness of disposition, gentleness in dealing with others, benevolence, kindness, affability. The word describes the ability to act for the welfare of those taxing your patience. The Holy Spirit removes abrasive qualities from the character of one under His control.

According to Romans 11:22, who receives God's kindness?

According to Ephesians 2:7, what is one way in which God will show "the exceeding riches of His grace" toward believers "in the ages to come?"

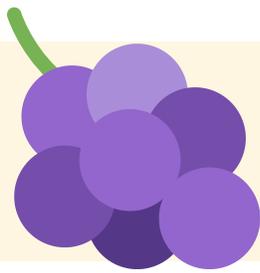
According to Titus 3:4, 5, what is one way God's kindness is manifest?

What can we learn from Romans 3:12 about kindness and unredeemed humankind?

According to Colossians 3:12, 13, what applications are the redeemed to make of the kindness developed in them by the Spirit?

According to Ephesians 4:31, 32, what are some ways we can demonstrate kindness or graciousness toward others?

What does Luke 6:35 teach us about the kindness of God that serves as a model to our interfacing with ungracious or selfish people who might appear to be our enemies?



# KINDNESS

Kindness and goodness are closely connected words. For kindness, the word is *chrestotes*. It, too, is commonly translated as goodness. The Rheims version of 2 Corinthians 6:6 translates it as sweetness. It is a lovely word. The Greek historian and philosopher Plutarch says that it has a far wider place than justice. Old wine is called *chrestos*, mellow. Christ's yoke is called *chrestos* (Matthew 11:30), that is, it does not cause discomfort or irritation. The whole idea of the word is a goodness which is kind.

The word Paul uses for goodness (*agathosune*) is a word peculiar to the Bible and does not occur in secular Greek (Romans 15:14; Ephesians 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:11). It is the widest word for goodness; it is defined as 'virtue equipped at every point'. What is the difference? *Agathosune* might, and could, rebuke and discipline; *chrestotes* can only help. The nineteenth-century Bishop of Dublin, R. C. Trench, says that Jesus showed *agathosune* when he cleansed the Temple and drove out those who were making it a bazaar; but he showed *chrestotes* when he was kind to the sinning woman who anointed his feet. Christians need that goodness which at one and the same time can be kind and strong.



# GOODNESS

Goodness, agathosune. Compare “Agatha” and possibly “agate.” Beneficence, kindness in actual manifestation, virtue equipped for action, a bountiful propensity both to will and to do what is good, intrinsic goodness producing a generosity and a Godlike state or being. Agathosune is a rare word that combines being good and doing good.

Who alone is our Source of goodness? (Matt. 19:16, 17)

What do 1 Chronicles 16:34 and 2 Chronicles 5:13 further teach us about the nature of God?

According to Nahum 1:7, why is “the Lord...a stronghold in the day of trouble?”

The goodness of God always leads to action in human history as evidenced by the fact that He gave Israel “many good things” (Neh. 9:35) and by the fact that “every good gift and every perfect give is from above, and comes down from the father of lights” (James 1:17).

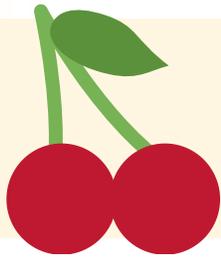
According to Romans 7:19, what do we need to remember whenever we want to do acts of goodness?

According to Ephesians 2:10, why should we expect ourselves to do many acts of goodness?

According to Romans 15:14, how did the Romans in part bring satisfaction to Paul?

According to Matthew 12:35, from whence do good works come from?

According to Matthew 5:16, what results from our doing good works?



# FAITHFULNESS

Faithfulness, *pistis*. *Pistis* has a wide range of meaning. It can refer to a body of truth which we believe; the basic trust which one has in God for salvation; or the dynamic power which realizes the energy contained in the promises of God. It can be translated conviction, confidence, trust, belief, faith, reliance, trustworthiness, faithfulness, or persuasion. Thus, the idea of “faithfulness” reflects a fullness and steadfastness of such trust and trustworthiness as a character trait of the believer. The focus is on one’s reliability because God is faithfully dependable, the Holy Spirit is able to develop dependability in God’s people. The statement regarding the early apostles and their colleagues undoubtedly holds true for all Christians: “It is required in stewards that one be found faithful” (1 Cor. 4:2)

**READ the following New Testament passages and note what is attributed to God’s faithfulness:**

1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Cor. 10:13

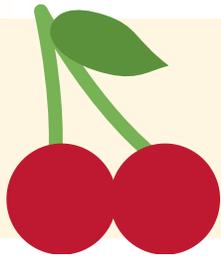
1 Thes. 5:23, 24

2 Thes. 3:3

1 John 1:9

EACH of the following persons is a biblical example of faithfulness. READ these passages and note how their faithfulness was demonstrated.

Moses (Heb. 3:1-6)



# FAITHFULNESS

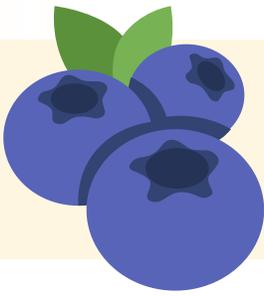
Epaphras (Col. 1:7, 8; 4:12)

Onesimus (Col. 4:9; Philemon 11-13)

In 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul gives a command to pastors if they want to best invest themselves in people.

What is that command?

According to Revelation 2:10, to what extent should we be willing to be faithful?



# GENTLENESS

Gentleness, *praotes*. A disposition that is even-tempered, tranquil, balanced in spirit, unpretentious and that has the passions under control. The word is best translated “meekness,” not as an indication of weakness, but of power and strength under control. The person who possesses these quality pardons injuries, corrects faults, and rules his own spirit well. *Praotes* is derived from an ancient Gothic root meaning “to love.” A social virtue of high value, it was popular in ancient Greek culture and philosophy. Aristotle saw *praotes* as that happy medium between passion and no feeling at all.

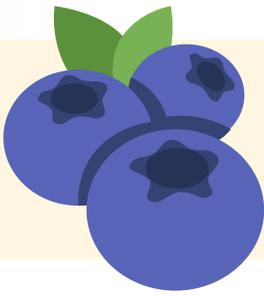
*Praotes* is the most untranslatable of words. In the New Testament, it has three main meanings. (1) It means being submissive to the will of God (Matthew 5:5, 11:29, 21:5). (2) It means being teachable, being not too proud to learn (James 1:21). (3) Most often of all, it means being considerate (1 Corinthians 4:21; 2 Corinthians 10:1; Ephesians 4:2). Aristotle defined *praotes* as the mid-point between excessive anger and excessive angerlessness, the quality of the person who is always angry at the right time and never at the wrong time. What throws most light on its meaning is that the adjective *praus* is used of an animal that has been tamed and brought under control; and so the word speaks of that self-control which Christ alone can give.

Moses is described as being “very humble” (or “gentle,” Num. 12:3). What kind of response did this enable him to display when faced with undeserved criticism? (Num. 12:1-16, especially v. 13)

How did Moses display this “gentle humbleness” when confronted with Israel’s sin with the golden calf? (Ex. 32:15-20)

According to Matthew 5:5, who alone will receive ultimate vindication on the Day of judgment and find rulership in the consummated kingdom of God?

According to 1 Peter 3:4, what gives a godly woman “incorruptible beauty?”



# GENTLENESS

According to 1 Peter 3:15, what manner is necessary to properly witness to unbelievers, especially those hostile to the gospel?

According to James 1:21, what attitude is necessary to effectively have God's word implanted in our hearts?

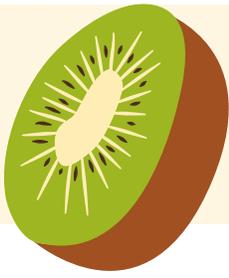
According to Galatians 6:1, what practice is a sign of spiritual maturity in helping people to overcome besetting sin?

According to 2 Timothy 2:24, 25, how should a church leader go about dealing with those who oppose the truth of the gospel?

According to Titus 3:1, 2, what is to be our overall attitude toward people with whom we live, especially "rulers and authorities?"

It becomes clear therefore that gentleness is not a personality type; rather, it is a heart attitude that controls our disposition toward others. In the James 1:21 passage, it stands in direct contrast to the "bitter envy and self-seeking" of James 3:14, demonstrating a willing submission to God and His word. In the Matthean, Petrine and Pauline passages, it connotes consideration toward others, especially in terms of controlling one's anger.

The works of the flesh listed in opposition to the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5 make it obvious that mankind in general does not want to bridle his passions-especially his sexual ones. This is where self-control enters the picture. The final fruit of the Spirit has to do with controlling our sensual passions. It doesn't have to do with denying them through false ascetism; rather, it's bringing God-given passions under His domain and control rather than that of the flesh or the devil.



# SELF-CONTROL

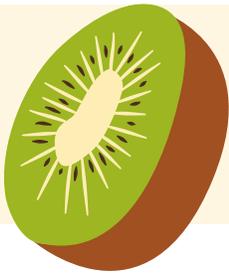
Self-control, *enkrateia*. *Enkrateia* was used by the ancient stoics to define the person who's able to morally restrain himself when tempted by evil pleasures, so as to maintain his ethical freedom. Plato refers to it in terms of self-mastery. It is the spirit which has overcome and controlled its desires and its love of pleasure. It is used in the context of an athlete's discipline of the body (1 Corinthians 9:25) and of the Christian's control of sex (1 Corinthians 7:9). Secular Greeks also used the word to refer to the virtue of an emperor who never lets his private interests influence the government of his people. It is the virtue which enables people to have such control of themselves that they are fit to be the servants of others.

It was Paul's belief and experience that Christians died with Christ and rose again to a life, new and clean, in which the evil things of the old self were gone and the lovely things of the Spirit had come to fruition. In the New Testament it refers to allowing the Holy Spirit to empower a person so that he/she is able to voluntarily abstain from anything (especially out-of-control sexual passion) which might hinder ultimately fulfilling his/her divinely appointed task. It stands in Galatians 5:23 in contrast to the gross sins of the verses 19-21.

What can we learn from 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 about the place of self-control in our overall spiritual growth?

What place does Paul assign self-control in Titus 1:7-9?

A major stumbling block to the integrity of biblical self-control is the religious tendency to associate it with false asceticism or pharisaical righteousness. How does Paul address this false view in Colossians 2:16-23, and what does he propose as the proper route to biblical self-control?



# SELF-CONTROL

Paul's list of "the works of the flesh" and his list of "the fruit of the Spirit" are examples of his major premise: "The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish" (v. 17). The list of vices emphasizes self-centeredness and egocentricity; the list of virtues emphasizes Paul's earlier command: "Through love serve one another" (v. 13). As such, each of the fruit finds its Model in Jesus Christ who "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45)

The conclusion is therefore clear: with Christ our Model and the Holy Spirit the source of our enablement, "Let us... walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25).