

2. Spiritual Fruitfulness

Introduction

What would you think if you planted a fruit tree *but it never bore any fruit*? At best you would be disappointed. At worst you would probably be thinking, *“Now where is that axe?!”* Fruit trees are supposed to bear fruit, and *those that don't fail to fulfill their intended purpose!*

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.”

John 15:16

- ✓ Underline the reason Christ chose us in *John 15:16* above.
- ✓ Frame (draw a box around) the kind of ‘fruit’ Christ wants us to bear.

Christians are new creations in Christ, recreated to glorify Him through *fruitful lives!*

Description of a Fruitful Life

Fruit has been described as *“The outward expression of the inward nature.”* In other words, *apple trees produce apples, not oranges!* So what kind of fruit are Christians supposed to produce?

Since the inward nature of Christians is Christ, the **fruit** of Christians is the expression of the *Person of Christ* and *His Work!*

I. Expressing the Person of Christ

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

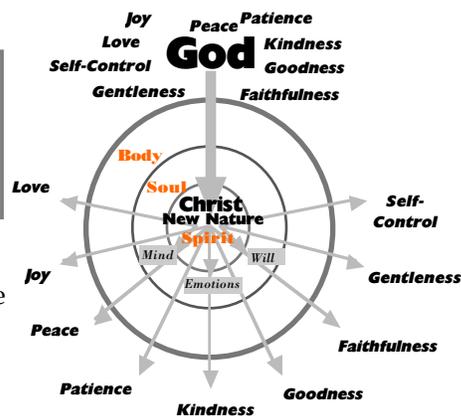
Galatians 5:22-23

The fruit of the Spirit is the expression of the **Person of Christ** in our lives! Note that the word *fruit* is singular indicating the unity of all the qualities.

- ✓ Circle and Recite each character quality listed in *Galatians 5:22-23*.

Examine each quality with their descriptions below .

- Love:** God's *unconditional love* characterized by *self-sacrifice* .
- Joy:** God's joy *not based on material things* but on *spiritual blessings*.
- Peace:** the *tranquility* based on *God's sovereign love* and *acceptance*.
- Patience:** *enduring unfair treatment* by other people, as Christ did.
- Kindness:** treating others with the same kindness *God has shown us*.
- Goodness:** expressing the *moral purity* and *righteousness* of God.
- Faithfulness:** being as *trustworthy* as God.
- Gentleness:** displaying *God's humility* in our dealing with others.
- Self-Control:** experiencing *God's control* over our fleshly desires.



2 Corinthians 5:17
Ephesians 2:10

Galatians 2:20

Definition of Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

► What is significant about the phrase “against such things there is no law”? Examine each quality of the Fruit of the Spirit and ask yourself, “How evident is this quality in my life?”

Application:

Memorize *Galatians 5:22-23*.
Meditate on these character qualities.
Pray for each quality to become a reality in your life.

2. Expressing the Work of Christ

The **Christian Faith** is **not** a *Passive Faith* but an *Active one*. We are not only called to *Believe*, but also to *Obey!* **True Faith** produces **Loving Obedience**. So besides expressing the **Person** of Christ, Christians are to express His **Work!**

► Christ's Work

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

Luke 19:10

"just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matthew 20:28

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

John 10:10

- ✓ Underline the *Reasons Christ came*.

The **primary reasons** Jesus came was to *give His life as payment for sin, to rescue sinners from eternal death, and proclaim the Gospel of God's grace.*

► Our Work

"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Mark 16:15

In **Mark 16:15**, Jesus gives us a job to do.

- ✓ Underline our *Job Description* from Jesus.
- ✓ Frame *two phrases* that describe the *extent* of our job.

We were **born to live** as God's children to glorify and obey Him. Our time on earth must be spent completing Christ's work of teaching others about God's forgiveness that they might escape the coming judgment.

► Key to Fruitfulness



"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

John 15:5

- ✓ Visualize the metaphor Jesus presents in *John 15:5*.
- ✓ Underline Jesus' *condition* for fruitfulness.
- ✓ Circle the word that describes what we can *do without* Christ.

Application

Remain in Christ by :

- ✓ **Confessing** all sins and claiming 1 John 1:9.
- ✓ **Allowing Christ to fill every part of your life!**



Christ was born to die as God's sacrifice for our sins,

and to bridge the gap between a Holy God and Sinful Man. His time on earth was spent teaching others about the good news of God's salvation, and warning them of the judgment to come.

◀ Memorize



- How does fulfilling the work of Mark 16:15 glorify God?

◀ Memorize

- How is the Vine and Branches a good illustration of our relationship with Christ?

Hindrances to a Fruitful Life

2 He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: 3 " Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times."9 Then Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

13 Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? 14 The farmer sows the word. 15 Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. 16 Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. 17 But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. 18 Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; 19 but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. 20 Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown."

Mark 4:2-8, 13-20

In the **Parable of the Sower**, Jesus uses the image of a farmer scattering seeds to illustrate the various responses of people to **God's Word**.

- ✓ Frame what the farmer sows in vs 14.
- ✓ Frame *each place* on which the farmer's seeds fell from *verses 13-20*.
- ✓ Underline the *interpretation* of each soil in *verses 13-20*.

The Four Soils

1. **The Path** ▶ **A Hard Heart:** A Person *hardened by sin* so that God's Word is not received.
2. **The Rocky Soil** ▶ **A Superficial Heart:** A Person who relates to God *superficially*, with *no depth of faith* in His Word.
3. **The Thorny Soil** ▶ **A Distracted Heart:** A Person *preoccupied* by the *cares* and *worries* of the world.
4. **The Good Soil** ▶ **A Devoted Heart:** A Person who *Receives, Trusts and Obeys* God's Word!

**"Only One Life Will Soon Be Past,
Only What's Done for Christ Will Last!"**

- ▶ How is a *seed* a good illustration of the Word of God?
- ▶ How does Satan take away God's Word from us? Why does he do this? Describe the person in vs 15.
- ▶ What does it mean that some do not have roots? Describe the person in vs 16-17.
- ▶ How do the things mentioned in vs 19 hinder a fruitful life for God? Describe the person in vs 18-19.
- ▶ What do you think the 'crop' is? How does your explanation relate to 'thirty, sixty or even a hundred times'? Describe the person in vs 20.

Application

- ▶ Examine your life in terms of the Parable of the Sower.
- ▶ Which soil best represents your life right now.
- ▶ What must be done for your life to become like The Good Soil.
- ▶ Trust God to make your life a Fruitful one!

Affirmation

1. My life is an expression of the Person of Christ!
2. I live to do Christ's work.
3. Christ's life flows through me.
4. I am the good soil and bear much fruit.

A Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are the Vine and I am a branch. You alone possess life, and all that is good flows from You. May Your life flow through mine that I may display You, and Your works, through me.
Amen"