



FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Galatians 5:22–23

COMPARISON

- the term "fruit of the Spirit" is a double metaphor: the Holy Spirit is compared with a vine or fruit tree and the nine Christian virtues are compared with grapes or fruit
- this metaphor invites us to meditate and discover the similarities between fruit on vines or trees and these nine Christian virtues
- we must think about fruit first and then transfer what we observe to the spiritual realm (*meta* 'over' and *pherein* 'to carry')—metaphors help us understand the invisible spiritual world by observing the known and visible world around us
- fruit of the vineyard (1 Cor 9:7) and "fruit of the womb" (Luke 1:42) refers to the *production* of grapes and babies
- the relationship between the Holy Spirit and fruit is clear: one *produces* the other
- as fruit trees produce fruit and vines produce grapes these nine virtues are produced by the Holy Spirit
- the Spirit of God produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in believers
- elsewhere love and joy are said to come from the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5; 1 Thess 1:6)
- the Holy Spirit came to help produce these things in you: producing fruit is one of His post-salvation ministries

IMPLICATIONS

- these nine virtues are the result of spirituality (the Holy Spirit's work in your life), not the *cause* of spirituality
- the production of fruit is something God the Holy Spirit does for you, not something you do for Him
- acting happy doesn't make you spiritual; pretending to be happy makes you a hypocrite—a sorry attempt to appear Christlike
- joy is a result of being spiritual and does not depend on pleasant circumstances like human joy
- the Holy Spirit will produce these nine qualities in your life just as easily and naturally as a tree produces fruit: you don't have to

encourage a good tree to produce fruit, and you can't stop a good tree from producing fruit—it just comes!

FRUIT

- why are these virtues called fruit? instead of "the *fruit* of the Spirit is" why not "the Spirit *produces*"? to (1) capture our attention, (2) make them unforgettable, (3) force us to slow down and meditate, (4) communicate things that cannot be communicated in any other way (a metaphor deliberately compresses many meanings into a single picture)
- fruit is pretty to look at and sweet to the taste (apples, oranges, grapes, cherries, blueberries, peaches, plums, pears)
- most fruits are sweet—they have fructose (fruit sugar) in them—and make delightful desserts (pies, cobblers, turnovers, fritters)
- most fruits are colorful—bright shiny reds, greens, yellows, oranges, blues, purples, maroons, and blacks
- most fruits are desirable—pretty to look at and good to eat
- in the same way the fruit of the Spirit is beautiful to look at and sweet to the soul—all nine are desirable
- most people like fruit—they see them in the market, in a field, on a bush, or on a tree and want them for themselves
- when you see Christian love or joy or patience in action, aren't they beautiful to behold? Aren't they sweet to your soul?

GROWTH

- fruit grows slowly and steadily until ripe
- fruit increases slowly in size and ripeness—from fragrant blossoms to green fruit to ripe fruit
- fruit is best when ripe and we usually wait for it to ripen; green fruit is also good (green apples, green oranges, green tomatoes)
- likewise, the fruit of the Spirit grows slowly and steadily to maturity: love grows slowly but surely, as does joy, inner peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control
- they're best when fully mature yet beautiful and desirable at any stage of growth (even orange and cherry blossoms are fragrant)

TREE

- fruit doesn't exist without a tree; and the fruit of the Spirit doesn't exist without the Holy Spirit's presence
- the Spirit only produces fruit in people He indwells; if He's not living in you, no fruit will be produced

- the fruit of the Spirit is found only in believers
- a good tree produces lots of fruit—the more a tree produces the better the tree
- the Spirit wants to produce lots of fruit in you; He's like a grafted tree: He can produce nine kinds of fruit in every believer!
- trees that don't produce aren't much good; they're cut down and replaced with better ones (Luke 13:6–9)
- a tree is known by its fruit (Matt 12:33; cf. 7:17–19; Luke 6:43)
- when people see the fruit of the Spirit in action, they learn something about the Holy Spirit—they learn something about God when they see what He has produced in your soul

MENTAL ATTITUDES

- the fruit of the Spirit is produced in the mind
- the fruit of the Spirit are all mental attitudes: many Christians confuse the fruit of the Spirit with the production of good works
- these attitudes result primarily from the Holy Spirit's teaching ministry; good works result from these attitudes (since attitudes usually express themselves in deeds)
- the sequence is: gospel hearing, faith, salvation, indwelling, Bible teaching, confession, spirituality, spiritual growth, production of fruit, Christlikeness, good works, and rewards

CHRISTLIKENESS

- the Spirit came to help you change on the inside by producing new things in your soul—attitudes you've never had before
- through filling and bombardment with God's Word, you change slowly and steadily as the fruit of the Spirit forms in your soul
- you become more and more like Christ—a mature Christian
- the Holy Spirit came to help you become more like Christ—to become more loving, patient, happy, peaceful, gentle, and self-controlled
- you can be a beautiful person with the character of Jesus Christ abiding in you

EXAMPLE OF LOVE

- the Holy Spirit produces God's love in our hearts (Rom 5:5): (1) "the love of God" is the love God has for others; (2) "has been poured out" shows this love can be transferred from God to us; (3) "within our hearts" is the destination of this love—our souls; (4) "through the Holy Spirit" indicates the agent who transfers God's love to our souls; and

(5) "who was given to us" says we must be indwelt with the Spirit before he can transfer this love to us

- we can have the same kind of love for others that God has!
- love motivates us to pray for one another—especially for our spiritual leaders (Rom 15:30–31): note the apostle's prayer request for deliverance from persecution and for acceptance by the saints in Jerusalem (the Greek verb *sunagonizomai* 'fight or contend along with someone, then also gener. *help, assist someone*' implies using prayer as a weapon in spiritual warfare)
- the Holy Spirit helps us love "all the saints" (compare Col 1:4 with 1:8)