

# Show Me Your Fruit

And I'll Know Your God

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**Galatians 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

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# **Show Me Your Fruit & I'll Know Your God**

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## Week 1 - Significance of Fruit: Leaders Guide

**Group Question:** Who can tell us how many fruit there are according to Galatians 5?

Answer: There is only one fruit, HIS fruit, HIS character. It is singular- it's not *the fruit(s) of the spirit are* but *the fruit of the spirit is*. It's not our fruit, it's His character. All 9 attributes listed in Galatians are a part of what our Christian character should reflect.

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### Leader Introduction

**Context for Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia-** Paul's letter to the Galatian church was meant to address false teachings coming from Jewish Christians who were leading Gentiles astray into believing the Mosaic Law must still be observed. He sought to remind the saints that the Law of the old covenant could only demand legalistic external behavior but the new covenant of grace through Jesus empowered believers to live a transformed life due to the Spirit's work in them. The evidence of this transformation was the Fruit of the Spirit.

Over the next few weeks we will take a close look at the 9 attributes of fruit Paul emphasized to the Galatian church. Together we'll explore how to these spiritual qualities are grown, their purpose in our lives, and gain insight to the profound impact they can have on those around us. To begin, let's lay a foundation for our study by taking a holistic look at what the Bible says about fruit.



## Week 1 - Significance of Fruit

Over the next few weeks we will take a close look at the 9 attributes of fruit Paul emphasized to the Galatian church. Together we'll explore how to these spiritual qualities are grown, their purpose in our lives, and gain insight to the profound impact they can have on those around us. To begin, let's lay a foundation for our study by taking a holistic look at what the Bible says about fruit.

**Key Scriptures:** Gal 5:22-23, Prov 20:4, John 15: 2 & 4, Matt 7:16-20, 1 John 3:24, Ezek 47:12

**Galatians 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

The Living Bible words it a bit differently - ***But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, He will produce this kind of fruit in us:*** love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. *Here there is no conflict with the law.*

While we are called to be **content with what we have, we should never grow content with where we are** in our spiritual journey; rather we must continuously strive to bear fruit.

**Prov 20:4** The lazy man will not plow because of winter; He will beg during harvest and have nothing.

**John 15:2** He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

**As Christians, the fruit in our lives serves as our witness to the world.** It's the evidence of spiritual maturity and enables us to respond to people and circumstances with Christlike character. Anyone can say the right words, words that sound like truth, but it's our lifestyle that is telling whether or not we live a life crucified with Christ and walk in the Spirit (**Matt 7:16-20**).

We are called is to be reflections of God, to image Jesus. One way we do this is by intentionally seeking to grow fruit in our lives. Like natural fruit, the Fruit of the Spirit grows from its root, which is the character of God. If it can only be grown spiritually, how do we develop this fruit? **John 15:4 & 1 John 3:24** gives us insight.

**Growing the Fruit of the Spirit:** This process can be can be likened to gardening—it requires intentional care, patience, and effort, so does nurturing spiritual growth.

Tilling the ground = **Prayer**; preparing our hearts to receive God's word

Planting seeds = **Reading the Bible**; sowing God's Truth in our hearts

Weeding out hindrances = **Making changes**; removing distractions & sin that stunt growth

Watering = **Worship and fellowship**; refreshes and strengthens

Harvesting = **Bearing fruit**; using it to feed and bring healing to others

**Ezekiel 47:12** And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. **Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.”**

**Favorable Fruit:** Because of our unique personalities and life experiences, certain aspects of the Fruit of the Spirit often come more naturally to us, while others may feel more challenging to cultivate. For example, some may find it easy to embrace love, offering kindness and compassion to others, but struggle with self-control in their words or actions. Others may excel in walking in peace, maintaining a sense of calm and steadiness in their lives, but find it difficult to extend gentleness or understanding in relationships. Faithfulness, while a strength for some, can be practiced with such rigid zeal that it overshadows the gentleness and kindness required to balance it.

This tendency to focus on what comes easily can lead to spiritual imbalance. However, the Bible teaches us that the Fruit of the Spirit is one unified fruit with interconnected virtues, each reflecting the character of God and working together to form a holistic testimony of Christlike living.

When we recognize the truth of a singular fruit -**His fruit**- we must accept that we can't pick and choose the attributes we prefer or which behaviors we choose to honor or ignore.

### **Group Discussion**

- How does the wording of Galatians 5:22-23 in The Living Bible help us better understand the Holy Spirit's role in producing fruit in our lives?
- Read Matt 7:15-20 in the NLT– How does this connect to the idea that the fruit in our lives serves as our witness to the world?
- Based on John 15:4 & 1 John 3:24, what insights do these verses provide about cultivating spiritual fruit in our lives?
- What are daily practices or non-negotiable habits that keep you rooted in Jesus? Are there other disciplines you'd like to develop or become more consistent with?
- How does focusing only on the “favorable fruit” hinder our growth?
- Which aspect of the Fruit of the Spirit do you find most challenging in this season of your life? Why do you think that is?

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**Reflection:** Growing fruit is a lifelong journey, even when we believe we can taste and see some of it in our lives, there is always more to be grown.

**Personal Application Challenge:** Make a list of the 9 attributes of His fruit, noting which you want see grown more in your life. At the end of this study go back to the list and reflect on how you've seen each develop over the course of this study.

## Week 2 - Living In Love: Leaders Guide

**Review Questions:** Last week we reviewed Paul's message of fruit to the Galatians and discussed the evidence that shows it's growing in our lives.

Can anyone share what evidence of a fruitful life looks like?

Our actions- do we show love, kindness, etc.?

Do we have Christlike reactions in our daily relationships and circumstances?

We also discussed how some characteristics of the fruit naturally align with our individual personalities, making them easier to develop, while others require intentional effort and the guidance of the Spirit to nurture and grow.

What are the consequences if we don't take time to work with the Holy Spirit to grow the fruit we find difficult?

Limits the ways we can show Jesus to others

Leaves gaps in our character and hinders our spiritual maturity

Can result in strained relationships

Does anyone recall any of the verses we reviewed that gave instruction on how we can become fruit bearers?

John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me

1 John 3:24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

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### Leader Introduction:

Today our focus will be on Love's role in developing spiritual maturity and how it's the catalyst to all other attributes of Fruit.

Before we begin, let's read John 15:9-17 together

"As the Father has **loved** me, so have I **loved** you. Now remain in my **love**. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my **love**, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his **love**. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: **Love** each other as I have **loved** you. **Greater love** has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: **Love each other**."





## Week 2 – Living In Love

Today our focus will be on Love's role in developing spiritual maturity and how it's the catalyst to all other attributes of Fruit. Before we begin, let's read John 15:9-17 together.

**Key Scriptures:** 1 John 4:16, 1 Cor 13:4-7, Matt 22:37-39, John 13:35, Matt 5:44, Col 3:12-15

Unless we first grasp who Jesus is and what He has done for us, we cannot fully embody the fruit described in Gal 5, because Jesus Himself is the **definition of Love**.

**1 John 4:16** We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.

**"God is love"** In the original Greek, the phrase "Ho Theos *agapé* estin" is strikingly emphatic, declaring that love is not merely an action God performs or emotion He expresses, it is intrinsic to His very character.

*Agapé*, the Greek word used throughout scripture to describe God's love, is unlike other types that are rooted in romance, natural familial affection, or sentimentality. Instead it signifies a love that is selfless, sacrificial, unconditional, and everlasting.

### His character - His fruit - His love

Love is at the root of all God wants to cultivate in our lives. Some linguistic scholars have even translated Gal 5 with a colon after the word, seeing it as the foundation upon which all fruit is built and believing that Paul listed it first deliberately, defining it as THE fruit with many characteristics.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is **love**: joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

This brings an interesting perspective when paralleling Gal 5: 22-23 with 1 Cor 13:1-7

**1 Cor 13:4-7** Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Galatians 5:22-23	1 Corinthians 13:4-7
Joy	Rejoices with the truth
Peace	Not irritable or resentful
Patience	Patient
Kindness	Kind
Goodness	Does not rejoice at wrongdoing
Faithfulness	Bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things
Gentleness	Not arrogant or rude
Self-Control	Does not envy or boast

Just like Jesus, compassion moves us to action. This passage can help us in serving as a checklist for how love manifests in action.

Cultivating love is more than a goal to strive after, it's a *command* from God (**Matt 22:37-39**). Love is not only essential for building healthy relationships, fostering unity, and fulfilling the Great Commission—it's the distinguishing mark of discipleship. It's God's love that sets the believer apart from the unsaved and transforms our lives into a testimony of His grace and power.

**John 13:35** By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

**Loving as God loves is not easy.** Agape love requires us to extend grace and compassion even in the face of rejection, betrayal, or hostility. It demands that we put aside personal pride, preferences, and grievances to prioritize the well-being of others while expecting nothing in return. One of the greatest tests of godly love is forgiving those who have wronged us—it can feel counterintuitive. Yet Jesus' command to forgive is inseparable from His call to love (Matt 5:44).

Despite the challenges of embodying God's love, the rewards are immeasurable. Love makes a way for joy in the midst of grief, peace in chaos, patience during trials, kindness toward the undeserving, goodness that seeks the well-being of others, faithfulness when faced with doubt, gentleness in the face of conflict, and self-control when tempted. **Agapé transforms both the giver and the receiver.**

Just as love is the answer to cast out fear (1 John 4:18), it's the unifying force essential for nurturing the growth of all other characteristics of the fruit of the spirit.

Read together **Col 3:12-15**

### Group Discussion

- How do the verses in John 15 & Col 3 tie love into the growth of other fruit?
- In John 15:10 & 12, Jesus links love with obedience. Why do you think this connection is significant?
- John 15:13 speaks on the sacrificial nature of love. Are there people in your life whom you find challenging to love?
- What are some practical ways we can show sacrificial & unconditional love in our families, communities, or workplaces?
- Has there been someone in your who has shown you godly love? What impact has it made on you?

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**Reflection:** Are there specific relationships or situations in your life that God is calling you to approach with greater love?

**Living in Love Challenge:** Identify one person to intentionally show selfless love this week. Reflect on how demonstrating love impacts your relationship with them.

**Additional Scriptures on Love to read:** Romans 5:8, John 3:16, 1 John 4:18

## Week 3 – Journey to Joy: Leaders Guide

**Review Questions:** Last week we focused on *Love* as both the starting point and the sustaining power of a Spirit-filled fruitful life. We explored its biblical meaning as well as what it looks like in action.

How does God's love set the believer apart from those who do not abide in Him?

It is the testimony of His grace and power working in our lives.

We could not produce an agapé type of love naturally or on our own.

What are the characteristics that make agape love different from other types?

Selfless, Sacrificial, Unconditional, and Everlasting

Does anyone recall in John 13:35 how we are perceived as long as we carry His love?

As His disciples

We were given a Love Challenge to attempt over the past week

Would anyone like to share how they shared selfless love with someone?

or

How by showing them love, it impacted the relationship with that person ?

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### Leader Introduction:

Today our focus will be on Joy—how we can differentiate it from happiness, examples of it in scripture, and actions we can take to see it flourish in our lives.

Although we all have much to be thankful for, the pace and the pressure of everyday life has the potential to drain any Joy from us. So how do we allow Joy to be cultivated in our lives? We need to look no further than the ministry of Paul and the book known as the “Epistle of Joy”, Philippians.



## Week 3: Journey to Joy

Today our focus will be on Joy—how we can differentiate it from happiness, examples of it in scripture, and actions we can take to see it flourish in our lives.

**Key Scriptures:** James 1:2, Ps 16:11, Phil 1-4, Prov 15:23

Unlike happiness, which is often based on external temporary circumstances, biblical joy is a deep, abiding sense of contentment rooted in God's presence, promises, and character. Joy transcends fleeting emotions and reflects a state of the soul that is anchored in faith.

Aspect	Joy	Happiness
Source	Rooted in God and spiritual truth	Rooted in external circumstances
Depth	Internal, abiding, and soul-centered	Surface level, external feeling
Endurance	Lasts through trials and hardships	Fleeting and conditional
Focus	Christ-centered and eternal	Self-centered and temporal

Joy does not mean the absence of sadness, rather the bible tells us it's found through God's presence, even during the most difficult trials.

**James 1:2** Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.

**Ps 16:11** You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

We often search for joy in various temporal ways—acquiring possessions, taking vacations, working towards promotions, or filling our time with social activities. However, these pursuits do not provide a lasting emotion and are better defined as leaving us in state of happiness.

Joy is a deliberate choice to adopt a godly perspective, one that allows us to rejoice in times of sorrow, give thanks in the midst of storms, and worship because of His unwavering faithfulness.

Paul's letter to the church of Philippi was written during his imprisonment in Rome, yet the tone is overwhelmingly positive with a recurring emphasis on joy, thankfulness, and rejoicing.

**Phil 1:3** I *thank* my God every time I remember you.

**Phil 1:12,18** Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel... and in that I *rejoice*.

**Phil 2:17** But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I *rejoice* and share my *joy* with you all.

**Phil 3:1** Finally, my brothers, *rejoice* in the Lord...

**Phil 4:4** *Rejoice* in the Lord always; again I will say, *rejoice*.

The fact that Paul could write such words while enduring persecution is astounding. Imagine being able to pen such joyful encouragement during one of your darkest hours! This attitude is contrary to human nature and can only be attributed to a supernatural ability granted by the Holy Spirit. By keeping his focus on Jesus, Paul was able to experience and exemplify a profound, God-given joy that transcended his circumstances.

Another striking example of Paul's perspective can be found in Acts 26, during his imprisonment in Caesarea. After two years of confinement under unjust charges, Paul is brought before King Agrippa II to speak on his own behalf. Astonishingly, his opening words are, "***I think myself happy.***" Why? How?

Paul refused to dwell on his temporal suffering and instead saw his trial as an opportunity to share his testimony—to share Jesus! His perspective was rooted not in his immediate hardship but in the eternal impact of his words and actions.

**Prov 15:23** "A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!"

Paul challenges us to rejoice always, reminding us that true joy stems from a Christ-centered mindset, gratitude for God's provision, and a focus on eternal realities. His life is proof that that joy is both possible and sustainable, even in the midst of trials.

### Group Discussion

- How does joy differ from happiness, both in its source and its nature?
- How does practicing gratitude help sustain joy in our lives?
- What does Phil 2:17 teach us about sacrificial service and its connection to joy?
- What are some common circumstances or challenges in life that steal your joy?
- How can you use your personal hardships as opportunities to share your testimony and glorify God, just as Paul did?
- Proverbs 15:23 highlights the power of words and attitudes in reflecting joy, even during tough times. Have you seen to be true in your own life?
- Can you recall a time when you experienced joy despite difficult circumstances? What made that possible?

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**Reflection:** Can we truly understand what Joy feels like unless we first walk through a season of grief? Would others describe you as joyful? Do you criticize & complain more than encourage & compliment?

**Obtaining Joy Challenge:** Start each day this week by thinking of at least one blessing you're thankful for. Then, reflect on how gratitude shifts your perspective and brings joy.

**Additional Scriptures on Joy to read:** Nehemiah 8:10, Romans 15:13, John 16:24

## Week 4 – Perfecting Peace: Leaders Guide

**Review Questions:** Last week we explored Joy as a source of our strength, drawing inspiration from Paul's writings. We reflected on joy's enduring nature and its power to transform our perspective, even in the face of trials.

Can anyone tell us some differences between Joy & Happiness?

Joy flows from a deep-rooted relationship of trust with God

It is an internal lasting emotion

It is steadfast even in the face of trials

It is Christ-centered, focusing on God's sovereignty and the hope of salvation

Happiness is tied to experiences or events

It is an external fleeting feeling

It is dependent upon our circumstances

It is Self-centered, focused on personal comfort or immediate gratification

What are some things Joy allows us to do in the face of adversity?

Rejoice in sorrow

See hardships as opportunities

Be thankful in trials

Worship in storms

Testify of God's love

Endure with hope

Receive strength

Remain steadfast in faith

What are some ways we can incorporate more joy in our lives?

Memorize scriptures on joy

Reflect all God had done for us

Serve others in need

Practice gratitude by focusing on His blessings

Spend time in worship, inviting God's presence to renew your spirit

Seek opportunities to share your testimony and inspire others

We were given a Joy Challenge to attempt over the past week

Would anyone like to share their experience with practicing gratitude and whether it led to an increase in joy?

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### Leader Introduction:

Today we'll discuss the definition of biblical peace—the kind that empowers us to face life's challenges with a steadfast confidence. Then we'll explore its different dimensions and learn how to prepare the ground of our hearts for it to flourish in our lives.





## Week 4 – Perfecting Peace

Today we'll discuss the definition of biblical peace—the kind that empowers us to face life's challenges with a steadfast confidence. Then we'll explore its different dimensions and learn how to prepare the ground of our hearts for it to flourish in our lives.

**Key Scriptures:** Isa 26:3, Eph 2:13-14, John 14:27, 1 Thes 5:13-15, Matt 5:9

Peace means much more than the absence of conflict or tension. The fruit of peace represents a state of tranquility and order, wholeness and contentment. It reflects harmony with and trust in God, resulting in a gift of rest that surpasses all understanding.

***Isa 26:3** You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.*

Peace has to do with the condition of our mind. When we fix our sights on God through reading His Word, daily prayer, and maintaining faith in His character—we experience an inner calm, much like the peace Jesus displayed when He slept through the storm.

**Dimensions of Peace:** Throughout scripture we see varying types of peace that encompasses spiritual, emotional, and relational harmony.

**Peace with God** (Vertical Dimension) - a sense of spiritual order through reconciliation made possible by Jesus and the foundation to other dimensions.

***Eph 2:13-14** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace.*

**Peace of God** (Internal Dimension) - a sense of emotional order offering a profound sense of inner calm that flows from *Peace with God*.

***John 14:27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*

**Peace on Earth** (Horizontal Dimension) - a sense of relational order that reflects the *Peace of God* in us; as believers are called to be peacemakers. It involves fostering unity, love, and reconciliation in our interactions with others.

***1 Thes 5:13-15** ...Be at peace among yourselves...See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.*

***Matt 5:9** Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

To grasp a peace where anxiety fades, and rest carries us through life's storms—a peace that enables contentment regardless of circumstances—we need only look to Jesus as our perfect example. Throughout His ministry, He never worried, doubted, rushed, or feared. While He experienced the same human emotions we do, He refused to let them dominate or steal the peace within Him.

But how do we invite this God-given peace into our spirit in the midst of life's chaos—the demands of raising children, managing a home, nurturing marriages, and everything else that fills our days?

**Recipe for Peace:** We begin by learning to trust in God, followed by growing our knowledge of Him through daily reading His Word and constant communication in prayer—keeping our minds steadfast on Him. Add to this a heart of submission, discipline, and obedience while guarding against offense. Combine with intentional actions: doing good, rejoicing always, giving thanks, and seeking reconciliation with others.

***Isa 26:3** You keep him in perfect peace whose **mind is stayed** on you, because he **trusts in you**.*

***2 Pet 1:2** May God give you more and more grace and peace as you **grow in your knowledge** of God and Jesus our Lord.*

***Ps 119:165** Great peace have they which **love thy law**: and **nothing shall offend** them.*

***Heb 12:11** No **discipline** seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of **righteousness** and peace for those who have been trained by it.*

***1 Thes 5:13-18** ...Be at peace among yourselves...See that **no one repays anyone evil** for evil, but always **seek to do good** to one another and to everyone. **Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks** in all circumstances; for this is the will of God*

***2 Cor 5:18** All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the **ministry of reconciliation***

By faithfully following this recipe, we align ourselves with God's will and create an environment for His peace to flourish in our hearts and lives.

### Group Discussion

- What does peace look like in your life?
- How does trust in God impact the condition of our mind and heart and help us sustain peace in our lives?
- Read Phil 4:4-7; What pathways to peace are we given?
- What areas of your life feel most overwhelming or chaotic? How can you surrender them to God and invite His peace to take over?
- According to Isaiah 26:3, what can cause a lack of peace? Why is this principle so significant?

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**Reflection:** Fruit is grown not to be admired or displayed but consumed and shared. If you are someone who walks in God's peace, it has been given to you to give to others—you can bring it into situations and environments, influencing atmospheres and those around you.

**Perfecting Peace Challenge:** Take time this week in prayer or journaling, reflecting on whether you've been living in Christ's peace. Identify specific areas in your life where you need God's peace and ask Him for it.

Memorize a promise on peace (scripture) and speak it aloud during stressful moments.

**Additional Scriptures on Peace to read:** Romans 5:1, Colossians 3:15, Psalm 29:11