

Galatians 5:22-26 (TLB) ²² But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control; and here there is no conflict with Jewish laws. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ have nailed their natural evil desires to his cross and crucified them there. ²⁵ If we are living now by the Holy Spirit's power, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. ²⁶ Then we won't need to look for honors and popularity, which lead to jealousy and hard feelings.

The Holy Presence of God lives inside of every believer in Jesus Christ. Before Jesus ascended into heaven to be right next to God the Father, He promised that He would not leave the disciples and future believers in Jesus Christ that he would not leave them as orphans.

John 16:7-11 (TLB) ⁷ But the fact of the matter is that it is best for you that I go away, for if I don't, the Comforter won't come. If I do, he will - for I will send him to you. ⁸ "And when he has come he will convince the world of its sin, and of the availability of God's goodness, and of deliverance from judgment. ⁹ The world's sin is unbelief in me; ¹⁰ there is righteousness available because I go to the Father and you shall see me no more.

Paul explains it this way. **1 Corinthians 2:9-16 (TLB)** ⁹ That is what is meant by the Scriptures which say that no mere person has ever seen, heard, or even imagined what wonderful things God has ready for those who love the Lord. ¹⁰ But we know about these things because God has sent his Spirit to tell us, and his Spirit searches out and shows us all of God's deepest secrets. ¹¹ No one can really know what anyone else is thinking or what he is really like except that person himself. And no one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit. ¹² And God has actually given us his Spirit (not the world's spirit) to tell us about the wonderful free gifts of grace and blessing that God has given us. ¹³ In telling you about these gifts we have even used the very words given to us by the Holy Spirit, not words that we as men might choose. So we use the Holy Spirit's words to explain the Holy Spirit's facts. ¹⁴ But the man who isn't a Christian can't understand and can't accept these thoughts from God, which the Holy Spirit teaches us. They sound foolish to him because only those who have the Holy Spirit within them can understand what the Holy Spirit means. Others just can't take it in. ¹⁵ But the spiritual

man has insight into everything, and that bothers and baffles the man of the world, who can't understand him at all. ¹⁶ How could he? For certainly he has never been one to know the Lord's thoughts, or to discuss them with him, or to move the hands of God by prayer. But, strange as it seems, we Christians actually do have within us the mind of Christ.

1. In order to understand and accept God's truth, it requires the Presence of the Holy Spirit living inside of you. You must have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of you to understand things of the Spirit. God's truth is absolute foolishness and folly to those who do not have ears to hear or eyes to see for they do not have God's Holy Presence residing within. You have to have the Holy Spirit in order to understand anything and everything of God. God's truth is meaningless to those who do not have the Presence of God living in their souls.

This is why the non-Christian world thinks we are nuts when we try to explain God's truth to them in general, and the importance of the ministry and work of Jesus in particular. Our sinful minds, the old nature in us, our flesh cannot comprehend anything of God. It takes the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in us for anything of God to make sense. This is why we ask for the help of the Spirit in sharing our faith with the non-believer, asking the Holy Spirit to take away the blindness and deafness of the non-believer toward God. Lord, "give them ears to hear and eyes to see." **2. It takes an inbreaking of God's Holy Spirit into a person's life for a person to accept what God says.**

These days there is such anger and hatred toward Bible believing Christians because we refuse to accept their worldly, secular, pagan ways of thinking and living. I think such disgust toward Christians is there because God is convicting them of their sinful ways, and they can't stand it and they take out their utter frustration on those who stand for Christ.

So how are we to live as Bible-believing Christians? **3. We live every day purposefully for Jesus. Our reason for getting out of bed every morning is to walk in the Spirit in such a way that glorifies Christ.** We are placed on this earth to bring glory to Jesus and to enjoy His

Presence in our lives. A few weeks ago, I preached in my home church. A lot of the people still remember my parents and grandparents for that matter. One person came up to me with a huge smile and said, "Your father was the most excited and on fire Christian I have ever known." "I saw Larry Breum in the pulpit today." She meant this as a complement. She saw a familial resemblance.

Paul is telling us that what God's Spirit produces in the lives of every believer. If you want to know what Jesus was like on the inside, Paul gives you the right answer. Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit had an inner life namely that of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. All of those traits describe the Lord Jesus to a tee. Yes, there were times that Jesus displayed anger, not mentioned in these traits, but his anger was perfectly and righteously justified in every way. In his anger, Jesus never sinned. On the other hand, Jesus displayed the personal character qualities of God Himself. When you looked at Jesus you saw God. Jesus said, "He who has seen me as seen the Father. I and the Father are one." Those familial traits have been passed onto every person who has been saved by grace through faith, born again, born from above. It is the family traits God Himself wishes to see in all of us, namely the fruit of the Spirit.

On a side note, please do not confuse the fruit of the Holy Spirit with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They are not the same thing, nor should they be considered the same thing. The gifts of the Spirit are given by the Holy Spirit to build up the church. The Bible mentions 27 gifts and all believers have at least one of those gifts to be used of God in some form of ministry wherever God has placed you. The fruit of the Spirit produced inside of you by the Holy Spirit changes you on the inside so people can recognize the family trait that you are rightly related to Jesus. Paul says we could have all the gifts of the Spirit but if we do not operate out of love, the gifts are useless. God wants us to display great patience and gentleness when we are using our

spiritual gifts. We want to operate the gifts of the Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit. If that is confusing, please see me and I will do a much better job explaining this.

Paul begins the list of the fruit of the Spirit with love, for all the other fruit is an outgrowth of love. God fills our hearts with His love (Romans 5:5) and 1 Corinthians 13 defines that love. When you are filled with God's love it produces joy inside of you, the joy of the Lord. Joy is an inner confidence knowing that whatever happens to you occurs for your good and for the greater glory of God. This is why we are told to rejoice in our sufferings. Love and joy together produce peace, the peace of God that passes all understanding despite the outward circumstances. It is the peace of God that enables you to keep going in spite of difficulties.

The next three, patience, kindness, and goodness deal with the horizontal direction of the cross, our relationships one to another. Patience can be defined as courageous endurance without quitting. Another word for patience is long suffering, the ability to keep trusting in God and waiting on God to act before we react in the flesh. Patience is the ability to endure unpleasant people or circumstances for a higher cause.

As I was writing this sermon it hit me how patient God Himself is being today. God sees all the evil of our day and it bothers Him much more than it bothers us. God could wipe it all out instantly like He did at the flood. But God promised never to destroy mankind again as He did then. God is being patient giving more time for people to repent, not wanting any to perish and descend into hell. God's patience is amazing. We get ticked off if we have to wait in line buying food at a drive through. The anger in our country these days means people's patience has been spent. One day, the evil of this world will reach a point where the patience of God will be completely spent. The Lord Jesus comes. Judgment day is coming. All evil will be gone, destroyed forever. While we are on earth, we are asked by God to patiently endure all things. This is how the Holy Spirit keeps us from going over a dangerous edge.

The fruit of gentleness is kindness in action and goodness is love in action. Warren Wiersbe writes, "The Christian who is patient will not avenge him or herself or wish difficulties on those who oppose him. He or she will be kind and gentle, even with the most offensive, and still sew goodness where others sew evil. Human nature can never do this on its own; only the Holy Spirit can" (Warren Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, pg. 720. I rely on his work for many insights into this passage).

The final three are faithfulness, which means dependability. Gentleness, which is strength under control, refusing to use one's position as a bully and not trying to control people through intimidation. Self-control is the ability to resist immediate gratification for the sake of a higher goal. Proverbs 25:28, "Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control. In the ancient world what protected the cities from great harm were its walls. What protects those people around you and yourself from the great harm inflicted by yourself is that of self-control. At work a person loses his or her temper, explodes and ends up making a complete fool of oneself and as a result loses all credibility. When you exercise self-control, you are protecting those around you and yourself from the harm your sinful nature so easily produces.

Christian baptism signifies that we died with Christ on the cross and we were raised to new life on the cross. Our old sinful nature was crucified with Christ. What this means for us is we no longer have to let our sinful natures rule our lives. We died with Christ and were raised to new life with Christ. Christ is our life. We no longer live for ourselves to please our sinful nature; we live to please Christ. Christ lives through us displaying the fruit of the Spirit. We can actually see a family resemblance to Jesus. It is called walking in the Spirit and the Spirit inside of you, God's Holy Presence, producing the fruit of the Spirit. Amen and Amen