



Galatians

Greet:

- Spend a minute getting a 30-60 second update from each student on what they are doing with their time, how they are feeling, etc. Within reason, be strict with the 30-60 seconds!
- Set proper expectations of how the group needs to operate so everyone can have a chance to talk and to not talk over each other.
- Ask someone to pray as y'all begin.

Opening Question/Thoughts:

- Ask your small group: what are some ways you would describe a Christian? Have each person share one word that comes to mind. Have a student make a list of all the answers.

Being a Christian is not about being good. It is also not about following a list of rules. It is actually the opposite of both of those things. It is about bad, sinful people coming into a relationship with Jesus. As people come into a relationship with him, they can give the appearance of being “good” or “rule following” people. . . but something much deeper than what has happened on the surface.

Everyone has desires - things that we want or crave to have. They can be tangible things like money, clothes, beauty, or muscles. But they can also be things we cannot see: significance, popularity, fame, freedom, approval, and much more. Some of these desires aren't necessarily bad, but these desires can lead us to doing things that are sinful.

The core of the Christian life is these desires - except something has happened to them. When someone starts a relationship with Jesus, his Spirit comes and lives on the inside of them (another person living inside of you. . . weird I know). But it's for real. A Christian has another person living on the inside of them - the Spirit. And the Spirit gives them new desires and changes the way they live. But a believer still has to choose whether or not they are going to listen and follow the Spirit's guidance - the Bible call's that “walking by the Spirit”.

Now, the life of someone who is “walking by the Spirit” should be very evident and easy to recognize. In Galatians 5, Paul calls this evidence, “the fruit of the Spirit”. This “fruit” is what is produced in the life of a believer as they make decisions according to the Spirit's guidance.



Let's see what the fruit looks like.

Dive-In:

Read Galatians 5:22-26

22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control.** There is no law against these things!

24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. **25** Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. **26** Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.

- How does that list of character traits compare to the list you made at the beginning of group? What is missing? What might be a little off the mark?
- Are those virtues things that you desire to be in your life? How do you know if you actually desire them or if you just know they are a good idea but don't really want them?

The very beginning of verse 22 is very important. The *Holy Spirit* produces this fruit, not us.

- Is it possible for you to desire and produce this fruit without the Holy Spirit in your life?

This is not a list of things we should go try and do on our own. It is the evidence that comes when the Holy Spirit is working and guiding our life.

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This week let's take a few minutes to talk about the fruit of *love*.

- What are some things that you think about when you hear the word love?

Love is one of, if not the most powerful virtues in the world. But a lot of times we want to make it an emotion or a feeling we have. Or we think that love is purely romantic and in movies. But the fruit of love that the Spirit produces is very different than our normal idea of love. One time, a man asked Jesus how he should love his neighbor. Jesus tells a parable about love to teach him about the kind of love his followers should have for others.



Read Luke 10:25-37

25 One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?”

26 Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?”

27 The man answered, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”^[a]

28 “Right!” Jesus told him. “Do this and you will live!”

29 The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

Parable of the Good Samaritan

30 Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.

31 “By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. **32** A Temple assistant^[b] walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

33 “Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. **34** Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. **35** The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins,^[c] telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’

36 “Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked.

37 The man replied, “The one who showed him mercy.”

Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”

- How would you describe the love the Samaritan showed to the wounded man?
- Why would it have been strange for a Samaritan to care for a Jew?
- Is love more of a feeling or a choice in this story?

**Apply:**

The kind of love the Spirit cultivates in the life of a believer is not really about feelings or romance. It is placing the other person's needs, feelings, and desires over your own. Love is the idea that you matter more than me. It is sacrificial.

- How does this definition of love change the way I think?
- How does God display this kind of love himself?
- Do you feel like the Spirit is cultivating a desire to place others needs before your own? How do you know?
- If you do not feel the desire, what does that mean about the Spirit's role in your life?
- The Samaritan chose to love the Jew even though it would have been hard for him to love him. Who are people who are hard to love in your life right now? What makes it hard to love them?
- Do you think that you can be a difficult person to love?
- How can you sacrificially love your parents this week? Your siblings?
 - Write down each person's action item and text throughout the week for accountability.

Pray:

- Pray for God to expose your desires so that you can see them the way he sees them.
- Thank God for the way that Jesus sacrificially loved you.
- Ask God to give us the desire to love people the way he has loved us.
- Ask God for courage and strength to sacrificially love the people around us this week.