



DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Fruitful Life – Part 3
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Main Idea – Each attribute of the Fruit of the Spirit is dependent on those that are listed before it. Everything good began with God's love. The attributes of longsuffering (patience), kindness, and goodness are what we demonstrate to others because of what God has given to us.

Be planted for the Holy Spirit to produce fruit

- For the Holy Spirit to work through us, it is best if we are planted in one place, in a particular house of God.
- It is from being planted in good soil, and being nourished with the necessary rain and fertilizer, that the best fruit is produced.
- Every tree (and every human) is created to produce something.
- Every Christian desires to be useful to God, to have Him produce good fruit through him or her.

God's Law is automatically fulfilled through the Fruit of the Spirit

- **Galatians 5: 16-18 – I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.**
- There is a constant conflict going on in our souls between what is good and what our fallen natures want to do. Likewise, in the unseen spirit world, there is continuous battle between good and evil.
- **Galatians 5: 22-23 – But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.**
- We do not need to worry about breaking any Commandment, or secular law, when we are displaying the Fruit of the Spirit.
- Law is man's attempt to be like God. But, the Holy Spirit *actually fills us* with God.
- This fruit is produced by the Holy Spirit, for the benefit of others. The Fruit of the Spirit is produced through us so that other people will be blessed.

Three sets of three

- Galatians 5: 22-23 lists nine attributes of the Fruit that can be separated into three sets of three.
- Love, joy, and peace are gifts to us from God that cause an inward change in us.
- Longsuffering, kindness, and goodness are our gifts to other people that are made possible because there has also been an outward change in us.
- Faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are what we demonstrate as our appreciation to God. Our focus is upward.
- Love, joy, and peace are received individually, but are experienced communally with other believers.
- Love, joy, and peace remain strong even during difficult times.
- **Philippians 4: 6-7 – Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**
- **Mark 4:39 – Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.**
- Love, joy, and peace must be fully received before the Holy Spirit can produce the other six attributes through us.

Longsuffering (patience)

- Patience is a decision, not a feeling.
- One must make a conscious decision ahead of time to be patient during tough circumstances.
- God has demonstrated longsuffering (great patience) with His creation; holding back His final judgment until every called person has been brought into the Body of Christ.
- **Romans 9: 22-23 – What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory**
- **Romans 3: 23-26 – for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.**
- For more than just ourselves, God’s patience makes it possible for additional people to be saved.

- Believers should demonstrate that same type of longsuffering in our relationships with others.

Kindness

- Kindness is an attitude, a disposition, a mindset.
- It is independent from the human condition.
- Kindness is of the Holy Spirit, and makes possible good acts.

Goodness

- Goodness is the visible, quality result of kindness.
- Goodness is a beneficial act that comes through kindness.
- Kindness is; goodness does.
- **Romans 15:14 – Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.**
- Each attribute of the Fruit of the Spirit appears from the previous one.
- Each succeeding attribute is only possible by using the attributes that came before.
- It all starts with God's agape Love.

Reflective Questions for The Fruitful Life, Part 3

1. The Bible says that there is no law against the attributes of the Fruit of the Spirit. What does that mean? Do you think that is true?
2. Longsuffering (patience) is a decision, not a feeling. Why is that encouraging to you?
3. It is possible, perhaps, for someone who is not kind to do something that has a good effect. However, why is it almost guaranteed that goodness (as defined above) will come from someone who possesses kindness (as defined above)?