

Week 4 - Singular Fruit in the justified person (Seed) – Love, Joy and Peace.

Prayer:

Introduction: The Christian Character formed by the Spirit are listed in nine ways in Galatians chapter 5. Life immersed in the Spirit celebrate God who gives us freedom to live well. When the “Love of God” in the heart of people is absent, a resulting intense self-focus can lead into self-serving rather than solidarity with others through love. The Spirit guided person is not under any impulse of fear, legalism, or determinism due to human desires. These human desires appear in disruption of relationships with community at times under the disguise of faith, politics, cultural awareness or distinctions of privilege.

Paul in the letter to the Galatians insist that the Christian life is already immersed in the Holy Spirit. This Spirit immersive life empowers Christian communities to thrive in variety of prevailing world distinctions. The value of living outside of the works of the flesh (guided by selfish determinations away from God) is life that produces fruit. Paul describes the maturing of the Christian as located with the Fruit of the Spirit.

There are variations to the understanding of the Fruit of the Spirit. I have heard of fruits of the Spirit. There is variety of fruit of the Spirit. There have been illustrations depicting an orange with the skin removed and describing each segment (pegs) as integral to the fruit. For this study I will focus the metaphor of “Fruit of the Spirit” of all nine attributes are aspects of the Christian missional priority. The Christian is to reflect in life the very essence of the presence of God that is transformative inwardly and externally. I will in the next few weeks look at the fruit in its organic nature as having seed, fiber (some may prefer content), and the cover (skin or outer layer). The fruit will be (for illustrative purposes) divided in three blocks of three qualities of the transformed holy life or the fruit thereof.

Singular Fruit has seed: Love, Joy, and Peace.

The seed of every plant placed in fertile soil and with water present, will grow and produce of its kind. This is generally the way of nature. The same is true of the Christian development for transformative ministry. The seed as life potential begins in faith in Christ Jesus who comes to all humanity with love of life. God comes and offers grace or invitation to participate in life

with God. God is near the unawaken consciousness of persons to love and in the power of the Holy Spirit constantly stirs the conscience towards God. This is prevenient grace in the Wesleyan heritage. This is God's love that continually pursues you. The awakened conscience then acknowledges separation from God's love by repentance of sin and accepting God's invitation of forgiveness. Divine forgiveness liberates us from the power of sin for relationship with God and humanity in what Methodists call Justification. All this time the Spirit of God is reforming minds and priorities toward God prompting change in practices that live out those priorities toward God's love. The priority to live with the love of God is toward Sanctification or generally called Holy living. Love, Joy and Peace is the core relationship that God shares with the world.

God's love is utmost in the life of the justified person. The bible says much about God's love toward us. A few references are listed below.

1 Chron 16:34

2 Chron 20:21

Psalms 5:7; 13:5; 23:6; 25:6; 51:1; 85:7; 136:1-2; 138:2.

Lam. 3:22

Hosea 6:6

Micah 6:8

We are admonished to put God's love first for our very being

Duet: 6:4; Lev. 19:18; Matthew 3:17; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:10;

Romans 13:8; 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11; 1 John 4:7-8, 11-12.

Paul, the writing Apostle, uses phrases to encourage the love as the kernel of the seed. In prayer or in call for unity or in exhortation Paul sought after a people fully immersed in Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

2 Thess. 3:5

1 Thess. 3:12

Colossians 3:23

Colossians 3:14

Philippians 2:1-12

1 Corinthians 13:13

Romans 12:9-10

hearts express God's love and Christ's endurance

increase and enrich your love for each other and

do it from the heart for the Lord and not for people

over all these things put on love...bond of unity.

any comfort in love, any sharing in the Spirit...

the greatest of these is love.

Love should be shown without pretense...

What is observed in the Paul's usage of love in the above verses?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What do we understand about **love and holy living** according to scriptures?

Joy and Peace are important as aspects of the seed.

Joy is the heart expressing great pleasure and gratitude to God. Joy refreshes in meaningful connections that nourishes belonging in communion with God and with people.

Psalm 4:7; Proverbs 10:28.

Matthew 5:12 Great will be the joy in faith future reward

Luke 6:23 joy at the coming of the Lord

Luke 10:21

John 16:20 sorrow will turn into joy

Phil. 2:2, 29

Name the human connections that give your joy. Then name sources of joy within the church family that inspires serving in some area of the church.

If this source was moved from you, where would your joy come from?

Peace, like joy, is a fruit that grows from our relationship with God and others. It is more than the absence of conflict; it is a wholeness and harmony that settles deeply within, even amid life's turbulence. True peace roots itself in trust—a confident assurance that God holds all things and works through every situation for good. When we seek reconciliation, extend forgiveness, and cultivate unity, we become channels of the peace Christ gives. Consider moments when you have experienced peace that transcends understanding. In what areas of your life, family or community, do you long to see God's peace flourish? How might you become a peacemaker in the places God has planted you?

Peace is space for renewal and growth. Peace is the outcome of unity within the Pauline churches like the Galatians. The disruption of peace was due to contending teaching about the priorities of Christ. Was faith plus practices of circumcision necessary or only faith by the grace of God was enough? Peace then sets the ground for quiet growth and life. God gives us peace in hearts and lived spaces in a world that is not at peace.

Judges 6:24	The Lord makes peace
1 Samuel 1:17	Then go in peace. And may the God of ...
Matthew 5:9	Blessed are the peacemakers
Matthew 10:34	to bring peace but a sword. [difficult text]
John 14:27	Peace I leave with you.
Romans 5:1	we have peace with God...
1 Corinthians 14:33	not disorder but of peace
Ephesians 1:2	Christ is our peace.
Ephesians 2:17	Good news of peace...

God was the One of peace for the world unable to broker peace for itself.

The seed of Love, Joy and Peace is the crucial to living the holy life liberated from the confines of societal priorities. The seed of Love, Joy and Peace is in full relation with God in Christ Jesus. May this seed grow in our hearts. And may the love of God, grant us joy and peace into creative new ways of belonging to Christ in the world.

How can you use the insistence of Paul the apostle, that God is the One of peace, to reconcile faith differences in our small groups or among believers?

Wesley Hymn:

Love divine all loves excelling
 joy of heav'n to earth come down;
 fix in us thy humble dwelling;
 all thy faithful mercies crown!
 Jesus thou art all compassion,
 pure, unbounded love thou art;
 visit us with thy salvation;
 enter every trembling heart.

Breathe O breathe thy loving Spirit
 into every troubled breast!
 Let us all in thee inherit;
 let us find that second rest.
 Take away our bent to sinning;
 Alpha and Omega be;
 End of faith as its beginning,
 set our hearts at liberty.