



Introduction

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-24)

When we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit is given, and we are empowered to live our lives free from the works of the flesh. We simply need to learn how to walk in the Spirit. In order to live in this freedom, God develops the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives which allows our character also to be developed.

The purpose of this study is to guide each person in looking at each aspect of the fruit of the Spirit and to learn how to allow the Lord to develop that fruit in our lives and to build a relationship with our Savior.

I am convinced that the key to becoming all that the Lord wants us to be, serving Him and operating in our Spiritual gifts is in understanding the Fruit of the Spirit. No one would like to live in a house equipped with all the modern conveniences, but not using them. As we journey through this study together, my prayer is that we will experience growth and power to live the Spirit-filled life and that our families, our churches and the world will see and experience God through us.

Pastor Carl E. Harvey, Sr.

TURNING POINT BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH
Introduction Activity Date _____

PUTTING OTHERS FIRST

Take time in the coming week to identify one person you need to love by putting that person's interests and needs before your own. Decide exactly how you will express love to that person by putting him or her first.

To whom will you be expressing love? _____

What will you do to put that into practice? _____

When will you do it? _____

Who will be praying for you and keeping you accountable? _____

How will you be remembered?

I remember attending the funeral of a man some years ago. One of the things said about him during the eulogy was, "He put others first". All the way through that funeral, the Spirit put a mirror of reflection in front of me which caused me to wonder, "What are they going to say about me at my funeral? He was intense? He was a leader? I hope people will say, "He loved others. He put others first?"

Take time for honest and prayerful reflection and answer the following questions:

If you were to die today, what do you think people would say about you and the impact your life has made? _____

What would you like people to say about you after you are gone? _____

A Thought to think about: *The motto of Cornell University is "Freedom with Responsibility." Rev. Neville Koch, who made up this rating form on fruit of the Spirit, is reminding us that although these character traits are a by-product of living for God, they carry with them a responsibility of thought, willingness, and action. These virtues are not meant to simply reside in our mind to make us feel good, but to put to action and share with others. (James 2:14-17)*

Greatest of These Is Love

We talk about it. We read about it. We sing about it. We praise it. We seek it, and we long for it. LOVE. "The fruit of the Spirit is love..." God's kind of love is foreign to us. How can we love the unlovely— not endure them, but love them? How can we genuinely desire the best, not for ourselves or our friends, but for our enemies? Love challenges us. It frightens us, and it embraces us. Ultimately only God's love can change us so that we become people who love.

How do you feel about practicing Agape love? Circle as many as apply:

- Overwhelmed
- Challenge
- Confident
- Skeptical
- Unattainable
- Uncomfortable
- Encouraged
- Positive Thinking
- Apprehensive
- Pleased
- Committed
- Mature
- Uneasy
- Equipped
- Enthusiastic
- Sensitive
- Peaceful
- Fulfilled
- Uncomfortable
- Loved
- Not Sure
- I Believe I Can

How Much Do You Know About Yourself? Fruit of the Spirit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control: against such there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).

Galatians 5:16-23

1. What two forces are constantly fighting in your life?
2. Why does Paul say that if you follow the Holy Spirit, you are no longer subject to Moses' law? (5:18)
3. How do you behave when you follow your own (selfish, sinful) desires?
4. Why do you follow your own desires when you "know" that you should not?
5. What is the ultimate consequence of following your own desires? (Gal. 5:21)
6. Rate yourself honestly on the Fruits of the Spirit in your life on a scale of 1-10. A **"10"** means this is the way I act today and a **"1"** means I have a long way to go on this item.

_____ **LOVE.** Love is preeminent in my life. I see all people through the eyes of Christ. I have a deep compassion for the lost, the lonely, the weak and the poor. I am magnanimous towards those who "get in my hair." I keep no record of wrongs. I give selflessly, sometimes till it hurts. I go the extra mile. I would rather forgive 20 injuries than avenge one. God always comes first.

_____ **JOY.** People know me for my joyful disposition even when there is a cause to grieve. There is a contagious radiance about me because "the joy of the Lord is my strength." I remain strong and positive when things go wrong because I trust in God. I am quick to see the brighter side of things. I know that for my shattered plans, God has better plans. My contentment springs from the knowledge that God is sovereign and Jesus is coming, again.

_____ **PEACE.** The peace of God rules my heart and mind. I stay calm in disturbing situations because my eyes are fixed on Jesus. With few exceptions (and I'm working on these) I enjoy wholesome and beautiful relationships all round. Whenever relationships are strained or fractured, I take the initiative in moving toward healing and restoration. I can see the dark spots in my own life and am quick to confess them. I am willing always to pay the price of being a peacemaker in a world of bruised relationships.

_____ **PATIENCE.** I never make hasty judgments or speak hasty words. I am not quick at jumping to conclusions. I am patient with people when they fail or fall. I face opposition and discouragement with composure. I never give up. I keep cool while others are hot. I am not irritable or easily angered. My "tolerance level" is extremely high. I can put up with a lot. I accept people for who they are and not for how they perform. When I confront others, they feel I do so because I care!

KINDNESS. People feel "love's touch" when they're around me. I am blessed with a M-I-L-D disposition (though, occasionally, I do turn that "M" upside down). I let God deal with the bitterness, anger and malice in my heart. A deep respect and consideration for others, coupled with a forgiving spirit, makes relating to people such a pleasure! The kindness of Jesus is seen in me.

GOODNESS. The goodness of God touches my life and then overflows into the lives of others. I am a caring person, a friend and neighbor to many. A genuine benevolence characterizes my life. When I see a need, I respond to it in the compassion of Christ. I am sensitive to the evil and suffering around me and seek to be an instrument of God's liberating touch. Uplifting the quality of people's lives is a major concern to me.

FAITHFULNESS. I make promises and I keep them. I am a man/woman of my word. People can count on me. There is no gap in what I say and what I do. Fidelity is the hallmark of my marriage and other commitments. I do not flirt with the world or with anyone. I am true to the Lord, to my spouse, to people, and to causes that God entrusts to me. They are all sacred to me!

MEEKNESS. I am willing "to go under" any yoke that God wants me to be SUBMISSIVE to God and to one another out of our mutual reverence for Christ. I freely and willingly accept all that God, in His providence, gives or withholds from me. I am willing to step "under the yoke" with Christ and my co-workers in kingdom service. I am willing to step aside when it is time to do so. I bring myself under the authority of Christ and His Church. I can "glory in my infirmities so that the power of God may be made manifest in me." I bear provocation without being inflamed by it. I give a soft answer when angry words are spoken. I respect my own rights and the rights of others, willing to give up mine if the Lord so guides me. I am a pro-actor not a reactor. I relate to others as one among sinners never arrogantly.

SELF-CONTROL. The key to my life is self-mastery. I am temperate in my thoughts, words, and actions. I live a disciplined life-in private and in public. I have complete mastery of my body, my mind, my emotions and will, my time, my possessions, my desires and appetites. I never lose control. I don't eat too much, drink too much, work too much, play too much, or sleep too much: no excesses whatsoever! Jesus is Lord over every area of my life!

BUT THE REAL PURPOSE OF THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS FOR OTHERS.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT STATEMENT?

DO YOU AGREE _____ OR DISAGREE _____ ?

- Here is my definition of "fruit" in a believer's life. But first, these nine traits are characteristic of one fruit.
- Good fruit is the product of the seed of God's Word, sown in your heart, producing a result that is a blessing to someone else.
- This fruit is always for somebody else.
- Trees do not partake of their own fruit. Apple trees give apples for others, not for itself.
- It is the seed of God's Word sown in the human heart that produces fruit.
- The Bible will produce the same types of fruit in everybody.
- Anyone that has the seed of the Word sown in their heart and properly cultivates it, will bear fruit. (John 15:1-8)

What types of fruit will the Word produce in your life?

The following lessons guide us in examining each of the nine characteristics of a fruitful believer.

SESSION ONE: THE FRUIT OF LOVE (AGAPE-UNCONDITIONAL LOVE)

As one begins examination of the fruit of the Spirit, it is only natural that the virtue of "love" should head the list.

1. Where does love come from? And what is love? (1 John 4:7-8)

2. Love is the greatest virtue of all. How do you do that? (1 Corinthians 13:13)

3. How does God's love motivate you to love others? (vs.11-12)

4. What place does it have in the life of the Christian? (1 Corinthians 13:4-8a)

5. What basis do we have for the assurance of love? (vs.13-16)

6. Based on your response to questions 1-4, write a one-sentence description of love.

7. What significance does this kind of love have for you?

8. How can we best demonstrate our love toward God and man?

THE DEFINITION OF "LOVE"

1. THE GREEKS HAD FOUR WORDS WHICH WE TRANSLATE "LOVE"

a. **EROS** - carnal, sexual love

b. **PHILIA** - the love of close friendship

c. **STORGE** - the love of family relationships

d. **AGAPE** - that love which seeks only the highest good of others

i. Paul mentions this love in the text and defines it in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.

ii. Jesus uses the same word in Matthew 5:43-48.

2. TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT PERFECT LOVE ILLUSTRATION "AGAPE"...

- a.** "Agape has to do with the mind: it is not simply an emotion which rises unbidden in our hearts; it is a principle by which we deliberately live. Agape has supremely to do with the will." (Barclay)
- b.** It is not an uncontrolled reaction of the heart, but a concentrated exercise.
- c.** It is a caring love, one which becomes involved with the needs of others.
- d.** It is not dependent upon the one being loved having to earn such love.
- e.** It is not an exclusive love...
 - i.** Expressed only to select few
 - ii.** But an all-embracing benevolence, shown toward all. (2 Corinthians 13:11)
- f.** It loves regardless of feelings—whether a person feels like loving or not.
- g.** It loves a person even if the person does not deserve to be loved. (Romans 5:8)
- h.** It actually loves the person who is utterly unworthy of being loved.
- i.** His love is an inseparable love. (Romans 8:35-39)
- j.** Jesus has fully demonstrated such love. (John 15:13)
- k.** His love is a great love willing to save sinners! (Ephesians 2:4-7)
- l.** Jesus' (selfless) love was demonstrated on the cross.
 - i.** He loves the ungodly (Romans 5:6), unworthy sinners (Romans 5:8), and undeserving enemies (Romans 5:10).
- m.** Therefore, we learn what love really is when we look at Jesus Christ. (1 John 3:16)

LOVE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN

1. It is to be the "atmosphere" in which the Christian walks. (Ephesians 5:1-2)
2. It is to be the "tie that binds" the "garment" the Christian is to put on. (1 Corinthians 3:12-14)
3. It is to be the "universal motive" for all that we do. (1 Corinthians 16:14)
4. It is to prevent our Christian liberty from turning into destructive selfishness. (Galatians 5:13)
5. It is to characterize our preaching and teaching of the truth. (Ephesians 4:15)

APPLICATION /QUESTIONS/CONCLUSION

1. What does it mean that God loved us at our worst? Ro. 5:8; How does that make you feel?

2. We can now live above Moses' Law. _____ True ___ False (Galatians 5:14; Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 32:25; Matthew 5:44)
3. We must love man and obey God? _____ True ___ False
4. Why must we love one another? _____ (1 John 4:7)
5. Do we really love God? What is our attitude toward keeping His commandments and loving the brethren? (1 John 4:20-21) _____

6. Love for others must go beyond loving those who love us. Do you ___ agree or ___ disagree?
7. We have spoken of God's wonderful love for us; have you yet responded to that love? Romans 2:4-5

8. Shall not the one born of God and walking by the Spirit manifest love? (Romans 2:4-5)

9. How will you put God's love into action today? _____
10. Who do you need to ask for forgiveness and show love? _____
11. Jesus predicted that in the last days, because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. What are your thoughts? (Matthew 24:12)

12. Yet the Bible teaches that God is love (1 John 4:16) and that Christians are to be known by their love for one another (John 13:34-35). What's your take on this?

SESSION TWO: THE FRUIT OF JOY (CHARA...GLADNESS, DELIGHT)

Joy is more than happiness; Joy is a much-needed commodity in the body of Christ, today.

1. Many believers spend half their days walking around on their lower lips, moaning about the circumstances they're having to deal with.
2. When you are manifesting the fruit of joy, nothing bothers you. You can laugh at the Devil.

[But what is joy? How can Christians be filled with joy? As we seek to produce the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, let's take a closer look at "joy"...]

THE DEFINITION OF "JOY"

What is Joy?

Joy is a condition of deep happiness or contentment which only can be known truly and experienced by the child of God who has faith in Him.

1. This true joy, of which the world knows nothing, is full in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (1 John 1:4).
2. It is abundant and overflowing in our hearts (2 Corinthians 8:2).
3. It is everlasting (Isaiah 5:11).
4. And, so profound and awesome is that joy, that sometimes it is unspeakable (1 Peter 1:8).
5. Joy is a much-needed commodity in the body of Christ, today.

What causes Joy?

To experience Joy, one must be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit (John 15:1-5). To abide in Christ is to live in dependence upon Him, recognizing that it is His life, His wisdom, His resources, His strength and His ability operating through you, which enable you to live according to His will. Joy is a result of true faith alone (1 Peter 1:8) and comes from the Holy Spirit as He clears our understanding of the darkness of sin and enables us to know the deep things of God. He gives joy in assuring us of the forgiveness of sins (Psalm 51:8,12).

Joy is a supernatural force operating in human life. *Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything (James 1:2-4).*

- Why should you produce the fruit of joy when you encounter a trial (vs. 4)?
- It's the fruit of joy that enables you to stand until you get the victory; but this must be real to you.
- Joy is an inner gladness, a deep-seated pleasure. It is a depth of assurance and confidence that ignites a cheerful heart. It is a cheerful heart that leads to cheerful behavior (Romans 14:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:6).

APPLICATION /QUESTIONS/CONCLUSION

The wonderful joy of the Lord is open to all who would receive it through such things as:

- a. Faith in Christ
- b. Obedience to His Will
- c. Forgiveness through His blood
- d. Fellowship with His disciples
- e. Service in His Kingdom

-- And it is the kind of joy that can sustain us through life, as Nehemiah told Israel: "The joy of the Lord is your strength" -Neb. 8:10

2. Certainly those who are...

- a. Born of the Spirit
- b. Walking in the Spirit
- c. Being led by the Spirit

...will be involved in all these things, and therefore will bear the fruit of the Spirit which includes "joy"

3. Why not begin experiencing this joy today by...

- a. Obeying the gospel of Christ
- b. Receiving the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ
- c. Participating in the fellowship of Christian love while bringing others to salvation in Christ (Acts 2:38-42)

Questions on Joy

1. What is the difference between joy and happiness? _____
2. Are we happy in the Lord, or are we content with the happiness the world affords? _____
3. How can I experience joy in my Christian life? _____

4. What is the joy of the Lord? _____
5. How can I find joy during trials? _____
6. What are some encouraging Bible verses? _____
7. What does the Bible say about sadness? _____

8. Is there anything I can do to increase my joy? _____
9. How will you seek the Lord more to experience His joy? _____

10. When will you start experiencing this joy? _____

Therefore, one who is led by the Spirit, and walking by the Spirit, will be someone filled with much joy in his or her life!

SESSION THREE: THE FRUIT OF PEACE (QUIETNESS, REST, SET AT ONE AGAIN)

Peace is a state of assurance, lack of fear, and sense of contentment. It is fellowship, harmony, and unity between individuals. Peace is freedom from worry, disturbance, and oppressive thoughts. Peace is something sought after by all people, and all hearts are restless, said Augustine. Until they find their rest in God. Peace of mind is found only in the Christian who has learned to trust in God. Unfortunately, and to our shame, we as Christians often fail to avail ourselves of this gracious gift because we let our hearts be troubled and afraid.

What is the source of peace?

It comes from Jesus, who came to bring peace (Romans 14:19). The only source of true peace is our triune God. Christ said "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

1. It was prophesied He would be the "Prince of peace". (Isaiah 9:6-7)
2. When He came, He came preaching peace. (Acts 10:36)
3. We are told that peace is of God and that it passes all understanding. (Philippians 4:7)
4. Indeed, He offers peace...
 1. That the world is not able to give. (John 14:27)
 2. That one can possess even during tribulation. (John 16:33)

How do believers obtain this peace?

Peace for believers comes as a result of the reconciliation made by Christ. Colossians 1:20 says that Christ has made peace through the blood of His cross. Peace is therefore a consequence of our justification. We are told in Romans 5:1, that "*being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" But how do we obtain it? We are promised in Isaiah 26:3 that "*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusts in thee.*" *We lay hold of this peace by faith in Jesus Christ* (1Corinthians 14:33).

Like each trait of the fruit, peace, although already belonging to the Christian, is something we are to strive after and cultivate if we are to fully appreciate and have a sense of it. We are reminded of this in the following scriptures:

1. Be at peace and the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11)
2. Pursue righteousness, faith, love and **peace**. (2 Timothy 2:22)
 - a. **Peace with God** – Romans 5:1-11
 - i. which comes when we are "justified by faith" (Romans 5:1)
 - ii. which is made possible by the loving sacrifice of Jesus' blood (Romans 5:6-9)
 - iii. and continues by virtue of His resurrected life (Romans 5:10-11; Hebrews 7:25)
 - b. **Peace with man** – Eph. 2:11-22
 - i. a peace that allows access by one Spirit to the Father. (Ephesians 2:18)
 - ii. a peace where all can be fellow citizens with the saints. (Ephesians 2:19)
 - iii. a peace where all can be members of the family of God. (Ephesians 2:19b)
 - iv. a peace where all can be a temple in the Lord, His habitation in the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:20-22)

c. **Peace with self**

i. Peace within one's own self is mostly a by-product...

1. Of being at peace with God
2. Of being at peace with those around us—So when Jesus brings us peace with God and man (see above), peace within naturally follows! (Philippians 4:7)

There is an enemy of peace.

The very fact that we are to strive for and cultivate peace also to warn us that there are enemies of peace. The three greatest enemies of peace are *envy, fear and guilt.*

1. Envy eats up our insides. (Proverbs 14:30)
2. We will never have peace of mind if we are constantly planning how to acquire the next thing.
3. Fear is the result of failing to trust God, to take Him at His word or to claim His promises. (Proverbs 29:25)

APPLICATION /QUESTIONS/CONCLUSION

But one might ask...

1. What is this "peace" enjoyed by those who walk in the Spirit? _____

2. How does one come to have this peace? _____

3. How can we be sure to preserve this peace, and enjoy it to its fullest extent? _____

4. How can we hope to make peace with others when we are not at peace within? _____

5. What will you do to experience this peace? _____

SESSION FOUR: THE FRUIT OF PATIENCE (SUFFERING, BEARING)

There is the fruit of longsuffering: but we know it better as a quality called **patience** (Job 1-42). Patience is slowness in avenging wrongs. It is the quality of restraint that prevents believers from speaking or acting hastily in the face of disagreement, opposition, or persecution. *Patience is bearing pain or problems without complaining.*

1. This fruit literally describes the ability to be constant in the face of changing circumstances. In other words, consistency. ____ agree or ____ disagree
2. No matter how much pressure is on you, you remain the same when you have the fruit of patience. You're what the Bible calls "firmly rooted and ground." Not moved by circumstance (Psalm 1:1-6). How is that possible? _____
3. It's a calm assurance that God's going to produce the answer in your life and you're going to wait on Him until hell freezes over if necessary ____ agree or ____ disagree
4. Bearing and suffering a long time, perseverance, being constant, steadfast, and enduring. Long-suffering never gives in; it is never broken no matter what attacks it. ____ agree or ____ disagree
5. It is Love that "suffers long" -1 Cor.13:4-8a; unless we love those who have wronged us, there will not be sufficient motivation to bear with them. ____ true or ____ false
6. Pressure and hard work may fall upon us, but the Spirit of God helps us suffer long under it all. ____ true or ____ false
7. Disease or accident or old age may afflict us, but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it. ____ true or ____ false
8. Discouragement and disappointment may attack us, but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it. ____ true or ____ false
9. Men may do us wrong, abuse, slander, and injure us; but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it all. ____ true or ____ false

Two significant things need to be noted about longsuffering:

1. *Longsuffering never strikes back.* Why is that? _____
_____ (Proverbs 14:29; 15:18)

2. *Longsuffering is one of the great traits of God.* Why did God give us patience? _____

APPLICATION /QUESTIONS/CONCLUSION

1. How does God tell us to handle suffering? _____

2. How will you plan on handling patience the next time it is upon you? _____

SESSION FIVE: THE FRUIT OF KINDNESS (USEFULNESS)

THERE IS THE FRUIT OF KINDNESS.

It is an eagerness to put others at ease. It is being kind and good, useful and helpful, gentle and sweet, considerate and gracious through all situations no matter the circumstances. (2 Samuel 9)

David showed kindness to Jonathan's son Mephibosheth.

SINCE GOD IS KIND, SO HIS CHILDREN SHOULD BE KIND...

1. Kindness is part of the Christian "garment" we are to put on. (Colossians 3:12)
2. Kindness is to characterize our treatment of one another. (Ephesians 4:31-32)
3. Do we act with kindness toward others?
 - a. So that others are "at ease" in our presence? _____ Yes _____ No
 - b. So that others feel they can draw close to us? _____ Yes _____ No

Remember that kindness is the "sympathetic kindliness or sweetness of temper which puts others at their ease".

1. "This Christian kindness is a lovely thing, and its loveliness comes from the fact that Christian kindness means treating others in the way in which God has treated us." (BARCLAY)
2. If we truly desire to be "sons of the Highest", then we must imitate the kindness of God Luke 6:35-36
3. Speaking of the kindness of God...
 - a. What is in store for those who reject His kindness? (Romans 2:4-11) _____
 - b. What about those who do not continue in His kindness? (Romans 11:22) _____

Have you responded to the kindness of God in accordance with His will? ___ Yes or ___ No

4. How does joy differ from happiness? _____
5. Read James 1:2-12. It seems strange that we should "consider it pure joy ... whenever [we] face trials of many kinds" (vs. 2) Why are we to be joyful? _____
6. What is perseverance? _____
7. Read Galatians 6:1-10. What instructions does Paul give concerning someone who is caught in a sin? _____
8. How would you feel if you were "caught in a sin" by members of your church? _____
9. Why is gentleness extremely important in the response to someone caught in sin? _____

SESSION SIX: THE FRUIT OF GOODNESS (VIRTUE, BENEFICENCE)

Goodness is the selfless desire to be open hearted and generous to others, above what they deserve.

1. Generosity is a powerful fruit of the spirit. You could start out the stingiest person that ever lived, but once the seed of God's Word is sown in your heart, it will change you. ___ True or ___ False
2. If you cultivate it, you will find yourself becoming a generous person. A person God can control, gives. Give an example from the bible or real life of goodness. _____

3. The person who displays goodness is not like the person who is simply just or fair.
 - a. The person who is simply just or fair gives only to another he has earned.
 - b. The person who is good is generous to give what was not deserved.
 - i. Do you _____ agree or _____ disagree? Why?
4. The person who displays goodness is not like the person who is evil.
 - a. The person who is evil begrudges everything they have to give.
 - b. The person who is good is open-hearted and open-handed, generous.
 - i. Do you _____ agree or _____ disagree? Why?

APPLICATION /QUESTIONS/CONCLUSION

Goodness means...

1. That one has a good heart and God behavior.
2. That one is good and does well.
3. That one is a quality person.

It has been said that goodness "is easier to recognize than to define". With that in mind, consider...

1. Barnabas was a "good" man (Acts 11:24). Gives examples of how he was good. _____

2. Dorcas was a "good" woman (Acts 9:36-43). Give examples of how she was good. _____

3. Surely goodness and (mercy) love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever (Psalm 23:6). What comes to mind when you read this verse? _____

4. All those who are truly led by the Spirit of God will produce the quality of "goodness" Ephesians 5:8-9 What do these scriptures mean, living as children of the light? _____

5. How did God, who is our Father, demonstrate His own "goodness" (Titus 3:3-7)? _____

6. How will you put goodness into practice after studying about the fruit of goodness? _____

SESSION SEVEN: THE FRUIT OF FAITHFULNESS (TRUSTWORTHY)

Faithfulness means "committed to a task" or "loyalty."

It means to be faithful and trustworthy, to be loyal and steadfast in devotion and allegiance.

Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, learned about faithfulness the hard way. He began his reign by faithfully obeying God's commands (2 Chronicles 17:3-9). But he entered a military alliance with Ahab, king of Israel, against God's will. The results were disastrous and God was displeased. No wonder Jehoshaphat was anxious when invading armies approached his kingdom! In his desperation, he cried out to God. God's answer, recorded in this passage, is an amazing illustration of faithfulness.

Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-30. What made King Jehoshaphat Give in to King Ahab? _____

A faithful person denies and sacrifices themselves—all they are and have—and trusts God.

____ True or ____ False

1. **Faithfulness** does not doubt God—not His salvation, His provision, or His strength to help.
____ True or ____ False
2. **Faithfulness** does not begin with God then back off and give up. Why or why not? _____
3. **Faithfulness** does not walk with God and give in to the lusts of the flesh.
4. **Faithfulness** begins and continues with God. Faithfulness continues; it never slackens or surrenders.
 - a. Why is that true? _____

APPLICATION /QUESTIONS/CONCLUSION

1. How have you experienced God's faithfulness in the past weeks? _____
2. How do you feel when people are unfaithful to you? _____
3. Use your imagination to fill in the details of the passage. Describe what you see (the setting, the mood, the people and so on) in *verse 13*. _____
4. In verses 14-19 _____
5. In verses 20-30 _____
6. Imagine yourself as one of the Israelites in verse 3-4. What are you feeling? _____
7. Examine Jehoshaphat's prayer (vv.6-12). On what basis does he appeal to God for help? _____
8. What do you think is necessary for you to be faithful to God? _____

SESSION EIGHT: THE FRUIT OF GENTLENESS (MEEKNESS, HUMILITY)

THERE IS THE FRUIT OF GENTLENESS

A person who is gentle does not act hard, unconcerned, indifferent, harsh, too busy, bitter, or prideful.

- Gentleness suffers with those who suffer, and struggles with those who struggle, and works with those who work.
- Gentleness cares for the feelings of others and feels with them.
- It experiences the full depth of sympathy and empathy.
- It shows care and gets right into the situation with a person.

Gentleness exemplified by Moses

1. The example of Moses (Numbers 12:3)
 - a. Though as God's chosen servant he could have rebuked Aaron and Miriam, he humbly kept silent. (Numbers 13:1-8)
 - b. His silence was not from personal weakness; however, it was a reaction to the golden calf. (Exodus 32:19-20, 25-28)
 - c. His pleading with God. (Exodus 32:30-32)
 - i. Indeed, Moses was no spineless coward; rather, his meekness was the result of a humble opinion of Himself!

The place of gentleness in the lives of Christians

In particular ...

1. We are to receive the Word of God with meekness. (James 1:21)
2. We must approach brethren in error with a spirit of gentleness. (Galatians 6:1)
3. We must correct those in opposition with humility. (2 Tim. 2:24-25)
4. We are to answer inquiries concerning our hope with gentleness. (1 Peter 3:15)

In general ...

1. Meekness is necessary for the Christian who would be wise. (James 3:13-18)
2. Meekness is necessary for the Christian who would be precious in the sight of God. (1 Peter 3:1-6)

APPLICATION /QUESTIONS/CONCLUSION

1. Who is the gentlest person you know? Describe that person. _____

2. **Personal Reflection:** We all have different temperaments and personalities. Some of us are just naturally upbeat, some are easily angered, others tend toward depression, still others are laid back. How does your temperament affect how you express gentleness? Also, write your prayer to ask God to release this fruit within and through the unique person he made you to be. _____

3. The Apostle Paul’s treatment of the Thessalonians provides a model of the gentleness God desires in us. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12.
 - a. According to Paul, what are some wrong ways to share Christ with others (vs. 3-6)? _____

 - b. Give an example of how we might make an appeal to a non-Christian using tricks or flattery. _____

 - c. In contrast, what were Paul’s motives for sharing Christ with the Thessalonians? _____

4. Why are pure motives so important? _____

5. How was Paul like a mother to the Thessalonians (vs. 7-9)? _____

6. In what ways can we share “not only the gospel of God but our lives as well” with those around us? _____

7. What might this mean in terms of time, energy and vulnerability? _____

8. How was Paul also like a father to the Thessalonians (vs. 10-12)? _____

9. Why is it important for gentleness (vs. 7) to be tempered with the qualities and goals mentioned in verse 12? _____

10. Looking back through the passage, how are the themes of evangelism and gentleness related? _____

11. In what practical ways can we encourage, comfort and urge people to live lives worthy of God? _____

12. Think of those around you who require time, energy and vulnerability. How could you express your unique style of gentleness to those people? _____

Ask God to help you be an example of gentleness and sacrificial love toward others...

SESSION NINE: THE FRUIT OF SELF-CONTROL (TEMPERANCE,)

Finally, we come to the last virtue listed by Paul that is found in a person who is walking in the Spirit, thereby producing the fruit of the Spirit: **"self-control"**.

In some ways, one might consider this virtue the most important.

- For without self-control, the "works of the flesh" cannot be overcome.
- For without self-control, the other elements of the "Fruit of the Spirit" will not be evident.

But what exactly is "self-control"? And how can one develop this virtue?

The Greek word is "Egkrateia" it comes from the word "kratos" (strength); and means "one holding himself in".

What is self-control?

- "Self-control is the ability to break a chocolate bar in four pieces w/your bare hands & then just eat one of the pieces".
- According to Webster-Merriam, self-control is, "the control of one's own emotions, desires, & actions... *it is power over oneself*"
- **Biblically, "self-control" means self under control.**
- In fact, instead of being in control of ourselves, *it actually means allowing ourselves to be under the control of the Holy Spirit.* The secret to self-control is Christ control.

When you surrender your life to Christ, God will transform & change you.

- Romans 8:9 say that Christians "are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit". *It means having control over our tongue, our body, our desires, our appetites, and our finances.*
- It means to stand against the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life. (1 John 2:15-16; Galatians 5:19, 20; 1 Samuel 26:1-25, where David Spares Saul Again)

Self-control is found at least four times in the New Testament

- Acts 24:25; Galatians 5:23; 2 Peter 1:6; 1 Corinthians 9:25

Why do we lack self-control?

1. We Have A selfish attitude.
2. We give in to impulsive desires.
3. We are rebellious.
4. Our defenses have been weakened.

APPLICATION /QUESTIONS/CONCLUSION

Controlling Our Tongue

Winston Churchill was known for his quick wit and sharp tongue. On one occasion, he was confronted by his archrival, Lady Astor. “Winston,” she said, “If I were your wife, I would put poison in your soup”. “Lady Astor,” he replied, “if I were your husband, I would drink it!”

It’s easy to laugh at such comments—especially when they are not aimed at us. But the tongue is no laughing matter.

Read James 1:19; 3:1-12.

1. Do you ever have difficulty controlling your tongue? Explain. _____

2. Why does James assume that if we can control our tongues, we must be perfect (vs. 2)? _____

3. Do you normally think of your tongue as the most uncontrollable part of your body? Why or why not? _____

Controlling Our Body 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; James 5:16

If athletes compete by the rules and master self-control in everything, all for the purpose of winning a perishable crown, how much should Christians discipline themselves for an imperishable crown?

1. Do you think Christians can eat whatever they want and as much as they want? _____

2. Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. Paul begins by countering those who say, “I have the right to do anything” (or as translations put it, “Everything is permissible for me”). How might some Christians come to that conclusion? _____

3. Even if something is permissible, why might we still refrain from doing it (vs.12-13)? _____

4. What example can you give of permissible actions that may not be beneficial for you or might even be enslaving? _____

It is a matter of giving our thoughts, emotions, actions, & reactions over to the control of God.

Five practical ways to exercise self-control:

1. Admit you have a problem
 - a. Take responsibility for your lack of self-control.
 - i. James tells us (James 1:14) “...each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away & enticed”

2. Forget your past

- a. You need to put your past behind you if you are going to develop self-control.
 - i. Notice what Paul says, “Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal (Phil. 3:1.3-14)”.
 - ii. We need to put the past behind us and look forward to what God can do in our future, and what God can change in our lives.

3. Ignore your emotions

- a. Just because we feel something doesn't make it right.
- b. We tend to think everything in life must feel good or it is not worth doing.
- c. But our feelings/emotions cannot be our guide in life, because our feelings & emotions are not reliable sources.
- d. And w/Christ as the master of our lives, we can learn to master our emotions.
 - i. “For the grace of God...teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness & worldly passions & to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives (Titus 2:11-12)”

4. Avoid Temptation

- a. If you have a weakness for ice cream, don't keep ice cream in the house when you are trying to lose weight.
- b. If you are tempted by pornography, then stay away from places where it is made available.
- c. We need to avoid those areas where we are tempted in life.
- d. And we need to identify those areas so we can avoid them.
- e. The Bible teaches that we are to run away from temptation.
- f. According to Ephesians 4:27, “do not give the devil a foothold”.

5. Depend on Christ's Power

- a. This is the most important step to lasting self-control.
- b. If we want to develop self-control, we need to learn to depend on Christ's power.
- c. We do not have the kind of power to resist temptation in our own strength, in our own ability.
- d. We need Christ's power in our life if we are going to resist temptation, overcome and master our feelings, desires and passions.
 - i. “So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature (Galatians 5:16).”

There are two aspects to self-control.

1. Self-control requires great strength because the hardest person to say "no" to is yourself. Why is that? _____
2. Self-control requires great strength because self-control also means doing what must be done. When do you know something needs to be done? Or what lets you know when something needs to be done? _____

If we are going to ever experience God being in control of our lives. We need His Spirit, His strength, His power, & His help if our lives are ever going to be truly under HIS CONTROL.

NOTES AND KEY POINTS
