

Discipleship 201

Week 9: Understanding Holy Spirit - Fruit

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:4-8a).

Fruit Of Joy

Many mistakenly think happiness and joy are the same but they are quite different. True joy is far deeper than happiness, and we can feel joy regardless of our deepest troubles. Happiness is temporary because it is based on external circumstances, but joy is lasting because it is completely independent of our circumstances and is based on God's presence within us.

Without the help of Holy Spirit, none of us can be exceeding glad when we are going through difficult times. However, if we put our trust in God, He will give us peace so that we can rejoice throughout our tribulation.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds (James 1:2).

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13).

Christians and non-Christians alike will face difficult times. How we handle those trials will determine whether we have the fruit of joy residing inside of us. The Word of God tells us to rejoice, not complain. Keep your eyes focused on the Lord and not on your circumstances and you will overflow with hope and joy by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Fruit Of Peace

How can someone be so full of peace and yet be in the biggest storm of their life? The answer is quite simple—they are in a relationship with the Prince of Peace. They trust in the Lord and don't try to figure out everything on their own. It is the sense of security one feels knowing that God is in the midst of your circumstances and He will see you through. Peace will come by just being in His presence—not praying, not asking, just being and resting in His presence.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding (Proverbs 3:5).

The Lord tells us to not be anxious about anything but to rest in His peace. The peace that the world gives is temporary, but peace from the Lord is lasting. It is that peace from the Lord that will guard our hearts and minds against the lies of Satan.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).

Discipleship 201

Week 9: Understanding Holy Spirit - Fruit

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).

Fruit Of Forbearance

Forbearance, also translated as longsuffering or patience, can only be developed when we are faced with adversity. It's easy to be patient when you don't have to wait on someone, sit in traffic, or don't have to wait in the doctor's office for hours. But when these situations are just the opposite, our patience can grow thin or we can become just the opposite—very impatient. We seek to develop the same level of patience that the Lord has for us.

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.

Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

This scripture describes God's incredible love and patience towards sinners. God is slow to pour out His wrath, giving us a chance to repent and have a relationship with Him. This same longsuffering was demonstrated in the life of Jesus. He was beaten, spit upon, mocked, and crucified. Yet He was still able to say,

“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34a).

Longsuffering protects our hearts from growing bitter when we are offended and gives us the ability to bear adversity and to forgive others for their mistakes and wrongful actions. If we want God to show mercy and patience towards us, we must show mercy and patience towards others.

Fruit Of Kindness

The key to developing kindness is to get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, and every form of malice, and clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, forgiveness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you (Ephesians 4:31-32).

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you (Colossians 3:12-13).

Discipleship 201

Week 9: Understanding Holy Spirit - Fruit

The fruit of kindness cannot be grown effectively without Holy Spirit continually working in our lives. Ridding ourselves of evil spirits and clothing ourselves with Christlike virtues takes time and cannot be accomplished in our own strength. It is a growth process that must be cultivated by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Fruit Of Goodness

What exactly is goodness? The word '*good*' is used so frequently in our everyday lives that it almost loses its meaning. *Easton's Bible Dictionary* defines goodness as: in man is not a mere passive quality, but the deliberate preference of right to wrong, the firm and persistent resistance of all moral evil, and choosing and following of all moral good. In other words, goodness is the **excellence of behavior** flowing from a transformed mind and heart. We can only achieve this excellence of behavior and live a godly life through God's divine power.

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness (2 Peter 1:3).

The goodness that Jesus showed came from a pure heart and an excellent spirit. He was driven by love and compassion and was powered by the Holy Spirit to bring about healing.

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him (Acts 10:38).

As we allow Holy Spirit to inspire us, our motives, and doing good, we will become pure and selfless, driven by love and compassion.

Fruit Of Faithfulness

The author of faithfulness is God Himself. Throughout His Word, God promises to remain faithful to His promises.

Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments (Deuteronomy 7:9).

God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill (Numbers 23:19)?

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful (Hebrews 10:23).

Discipleship 201

Week 9: Understanding Holy Spirit - Fruit

God commands us to put our trust and confidence in Him. Faithfulness is not just believing in God. It is actively trusting in the goodness of God and being loyal to His will. It is our responsibility to be faithful with what God has entrusted us with, no matter how small or insignificant it may appear to us. In Matthew 25, God returns to see if His servants have been faithful in The Parable of Talents. For the two servants that were productive with His things, He gives them praise.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms (1 Peter 4:10).

His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness' (Matthew 25:21)!

The wise use of time, gifts, and abilities entrusted to us results in greater opportunities, their neglect results not only in the loss of more opportunities but also the loss of what was entrusted to us. It brings great joy to Him when He finds us worthy of His trust and can be relied upon.

Fruit Of Gentleness

Gentleness, also translated as meekness, is not a sign of weakness as some people think. On the contrary, it is a sign of strength and self-control. When someone lashes out in anger towards us, our first instinct is to lash back with harsh words. It takes strength not to respond in anger.

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger (Proverbs 15:1).

Another area where we need to show gentleness is when others are caught in sin. We must be ready to follow the Holy Spirit as He reveals what we need to do to restore them. We must do so gently, knowing that we are all subject to temptation and can easily fall as well.

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted (Galatians 6:1).

Fruit Of Self-Control

Self-control, also translated as temperance, is the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions. If you think about it, all the Christlike virtues of the fruit of the Spirit are dependent on self-control. They all depend on how we respond rather than on how we react and how we respond will undoubtedly require self-control.

The word can be deceiving because it makes one think it is oneself who is in control but that is far from the truth. The only way we can control the lust of the flesh is by walking

Discipleship 201

Week 9: Understanding Holy Spirit - Fruit

in the Spirit. It is the Spirit of God living inside of us that gives us the power to discipline and master our passions and desires.

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh
(Galatians 5:16).

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline (2 Timothy 1:7).