

COVENANT — THE NEW COVENANT

The Fruit of the Spirit

LESSON 10

AUGUST 09, 2026

LESSON TEXT

Galatians 5:16–24

FOCUS VERSES

Galatians 5:24–25

²⁴**And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.**

²⁵**If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.**

TRUTH ABOUT COVENANT

Living in covenant is the best life we could live.

MY RESPONSE TO COVENANT

I will allow God's Spirit to bear fruit in my life.

COVENANT CONTEXT

Living for God is the most fruitful, fulfilling life possible, but it does not always come naturally to us. That is why Paul wrote nine letters to churches to teach them how to live once they were in covenant with God. This new covenant life will bear the fruit of the Spirit. Otherwise, we will find in our own lives the weeds of the works of the flesh.

TEACHING OUTLINE

Icebreaker: If you could only plant one fruit tree, what would it be?

Teacher Tip: Connect the group's answers to the blessing God gives us through the fruit of the Spirit.

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection.

I. WORKS VERSUS FRUIT

A. Work Versus Growth

DISCUSS: *Why does it sometimes feel like our relationship with God is more “work” than God intended?*

B. The Contrast

DISCUSS: *Although we steer clear of certain works of the flesh, like adultery and murder, when was the last time you checked your life against hatred, strife, and envy?*

C. I will crucify my flesh so the fruit of the Spirit will grow.

II. A CLOSER LOOK AT FRUIT

A. The Fruit Makes Us Fruitful (V)

DISCUSS: *When you take inventory, what works of the flesh do you see? What fruit of the Spirit do you see in your life?*

B. Facets of Fruit

C. I will learn to recognize fruit when I see it and when I bear it.

III. A PRACTICAL APPLICATION

A. Society's Knockoff

DISCUSS: *How do you tell the difference between the fruit of the Spirit and the counterfeit the enemy offers?*

B. The Process of Fruitfulness

DISCUSS: *When the fruit of the Spirit is not growing in your life, what will you do to allow it to grow again?*

C. I will keep in step with the Spirit.

Internalizing the Message (I)

PRAYER FOCUS

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For God to help us daily choose to walk with the Spirit
- For God to give us wisdom to recognize what fruit our lives are bearing

LESSON CONNECTION

When avid golfers hear the name Scottie Scheffler, they may think first of his two Masters championships or his 2024 Olympic gold medal or even his 122 weeks in the coveted number one rank. It might have never come up that he also enjoys cooking—that is until the Christmas ravioli incident.

If it sounds dramatic, well, it sure seemed so to golf fans when Scheffler missed two tournaments with scant details about a personal injury. When he finally met the press, he detailed the uncanny accident: Scheffler had endeavored to make homemade ravioli for his family for Christmas dinner. His impromptu culinary adventure in a rental house without the requisite tools went awry. Needing to cut the pasta dough, Scheffler selected a nondescript glass to roll and separate the strands for ravioli. When he bore down on the glass, it subsequently shattered and punctured his hand. The multimillion-dollar athlete immediately felt a wave of frustration, realizing he had just jeopardized his career all because he didn't have the right tool.

Thanks to a premier surgeon, Scheffler bounced back in time to play the prestigious January Pebble Beach tournament. What could have been much worse is now merely a quirky story among golf enthusiasts. Yet the point remains that tools serve specific purposes, and the lack of an adequate tool can have dire consequences.

In trying to explain the difference between the Law and the fruit of the Spirit, Evangelist Fred Brown compared the

Law to the following tools:

The dentist's mirror: The Law is like the little mirror the dentist uses to check your teeth. With this mirror, the dentist can detect cavities and abnormalities. However, this mirror is no good to pull a tooth, drill a cavity, or replace with good dental material. It can show the dentist the abnormality, but it has no solutions to solve the problems.

A flashlight: Suddenly all the lights go out. The curious homeowner picks up the flashlight and walks down the stairs to the basement to find the problem. Arriving at the electrical box, he realizes a breaker has blown. The flashlight reveals the problem, but it cannot solve the problem. He needs the correct tool and a new part to restore the light.

A plumb line: A builder wants to check his work, so he uses a plumb line, a weighted string, to see if his wall is truly vertical. He realizes he has made an error and the wall is crooked, but a plumb line cannot correct the problem. He needs to get out a hammer and saw to correct the issue.

The issue with the Law is it only revealed the problem but could not provide a permanent solution. However, Jesus Christ's fulfillment of the Law and outpouring of His Spirit upon humanity gave us not only the ability to identify the problem but also the solution. When we receive and walk in the Spirit, we are using the tools Jesus Christ provided to begin to fix the problems we find in our lives. Our hatred can be smothered by producing the fruit of love. Unhappiness will be reorganized by the joy of the Spirit reigning in our lives. Chaos will be canceled when we release the peace that passes understanding through His Spirit in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit includes the tools to fix the problem, not just to identify it.

BIBLE LESSON

I. WORKS VERSUS FRUIT

A. Work Versus Growth

The churches in Galatia were trying to attain spiritual perfection through obeying the Jewish law. The problem with the Law was the amount of work needed to achieve just the required minimum. Paul revealed the answer was not in striving to keep the Law, but in learning to live and walk in the Spirit. When believers live by the Spirit, we will not "fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16). In verse eighteen Paul let them know they would need to choose the Spirit or the Law; they could not rely on both. If we are led by the Spirit, we are not under the Law. In fact, in trying to live by the Law, we deny the power of the Spirit.

The Law was about works, while the Spirit is about growth. The Law was a mechanical, tedious, methodical checklist of matching actions to the commands and living in fear of being caught in disobedience. It only pointed out when a person was wrong. It is similar to seeing a speed-limit sign and looking down at your dashboard to make sure you are in line with the law; all the work to stay in line is your job. However, the Spirit is like setting your cruise control on your car; the Spirit governs your life and keeps you in line without the effort necessary under the Law. When we are born again, we speak in tongues as the initial sign that we have been Spirit filled. When we live

filled with the Spirit, God's Spirit naturally produces fruit as ongoing evidence of the Spirit's power working in our lives.

***DISCUSS:** Why does it sometimes feel like our relationship with God is more "work" than God intended?*

B. The Contrast

In the culture Paul grew up around, teachers would give a list of vices versus virtues to help people define the direction of their lives. Paul utilized this tool to help the Galatians understand whether they were working in the flesh (selfish human nature) or walking in the Spirit. Paul's list of the seventeen works of the flesh is not a comprehensive list as he ends this section of Scripture by saying, "and such like," indicating there are more (Galatians 5:21).

The first four are sins of sexual immorality: "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness" (Galatians 5:19). Paul declared these are acts people commit against their own bodies. (See I Corinthians 6:18–20.) When our lives are not led by the Spirit, the works of the flesh manifest in breaking vows of purity in marriage (adultery) and with our own bodies (fornication). Continuing that path leads to complete moral corruption (uncleanness) and unbridled sin (lasciviousness) in these areas of life.

The final thirteen works are actions committed against God and others. Paul warned of excessive devotion to anything other than God (idolatry), any action in service to the opposite of the kingdom of God (witchcraft), along with Satan's first sin in desiring to be like God (emulation), rebellion (sedition), and false doctrine (heresies). These actions place our lives in opposition to God's kingdom and reveal we are being led by our flesh, not by God's Spirit. The additional works mentioned here reveal lack of respect for others through hatred, love for conflict (variance), wrath, strife, envying, murder, drunkenness, and being foolish to the point of destruction (reveling). We must take inventory, and if our lives are filled with these works, we are being led by our flesh and not by His Spirit.

***DISCUSS:** Although we steer clear of certain works of the flesh, like adultery and murder, when was the last time you checked your life against hatred, strife, and envy?*

C. I will crucify my flesh so the fruit of the Spirit will grow.

In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus taught that if we are going to follow Him, we must choose to take up our cross and die daily. To walk in the Spirit, we must continually crucify our flesh. In the Book of Romans, Paul declared this crucifying act destroyed our flesh; therefore, we should not serve sin or our sinful nature any longer. (See Romans 6:6.) According to John 12:24, a seed can only bring fruit after it is buried (or dies).

The fruit of the Spirit will only grow in our lives when we crucify our sinful nature. The resurrection the Spirit provides then causes that seed to burst to life, grow, and mature until it produces much fruit. Choose today to crucify the attitudes of your sinful nature and allow the Spirit to reign in your life. Then watch the Spirit grow daily, producing a harvest of abundant fruit to bless others.

II. A CLOSER LOOK AT FRUIT

A. The Fruit Makes Us Fruitful

At Creation God established a natural law that everything produced because the seed was within itself. (See Genesis 1:11–12.) When we study the Creation story, we see God spoke into existence most of what He created, although He formed creatures and humanity out of the dust of the earth. (See Genesis 1:1–2:9.) However, when He spoke to the grass, trees, and flowers, He commanded the earth to do the work because the power was already in the seed.

(V) When we live filled with God’s Spirit, we will find God has planted a powerful seed in our lives. Within that seed of the Spirit is much fruit that will grow if nurtured. Living in covenant with God mirrors the same process as all seed (death, burial, and resurrection). When we daily choose to walk in the Spirit, our lives will produce fruit because the power in the seed of the Spirit is the same creative power God spoke in the beginning. He desires to create good things in our lives, so allow the Spirit to produce all the fruit it has for you.

***DISCUSS:** When you take inventory, what works of the flesh do you see? What fruit of the Spirit do you see in your life?*

B. Facets of Fruit

Paul did not want to leave the Galatians with only the bitter taste of works of the flesh, so he contrasted these with the sweet fruit of the Spirit, which is produced when we allow God to lead our lives. Paul used the singular of the word *fruit* rather than the plural, as the seed of *all* these are planted when we allow the Spirit to be the root of our lives. This fruit is a package deal, not a roadside market to choose from. When we receive and allow the Spirit to reign in our lives, it continually produces all this fruit daily. We produce love, joy, peace, longsuffering (bearing the faults of others because we are not faultless), gentleness, faith, meekness, and temperance (self-control). (See Galatians 5:22–23.)

C. I will learn to recognize fruit when I see it and when I bear it.

If we can love despite being treated unkindly, we are bearing the fruit of the Spirit. Learning to live in joy and not in the temporary state of happiness shows we are nurturing the Spirit in our lives. When the world is in chaos and confusion, and even our own lives are experiencing the same, but we still have peace, the fruit of the Spirit is active in us. Recognizing we need to bear the flaws of others because we also have flaws models the longsuffering God has with us. Learning to be gentle in response to anger and accusation leads to self-control and forgiveness for others. These are the fruit of the Spirit, and when they are growing in our lives, they are evidence we are walking in covenant.

III. A PRACTICAL APPLICATION

A. Society’s Knockoff

The enemy often counterfeits God’s good gifts. The counterfeit fruit of love is lust. Love is selfless but lust is selfish. Love is patient but lust will not wait. People often make wrong decisions based on what will make them happy (which is temporary) versus what will bring them joy (which is lasting). We must be careful not to buy into the false concept of peace as an absence of conflict when the Spirit defines peace as *shalom*: wholeness or completeness.

No one needs to cultivate the counterfeit; it is simply there. Anyone who has raised children will confirm that you do not have to teach them to lie. They will figure that one out on their own. Anger, selfishness, and even violence are parts of our nature. Certainly, these traits can be highlighted by the environment in which we live, but the seeds of the works of the flesh are already present in our flesh. This appetite for evil in fallen humanity is described in the condition of those who lived just before the Flood: “Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5). Let us learn to recognize the false from the fruit and weed them out of our lives, replacing them with true fruit of the Spirit.

***DISCUSS:** How do you tell the difference between the fruit of the Spirit and the counterfeit the enemy offers?*

B. The Process of Fruitfulness

The goal in this process is not seeking specific fruit but keeping our lives in covenant with Jesus. You do not need to show an apple tree a YouTube tutorial video on growing fruit; it just grows fruit when it is rooted and open to rain and sunshine. Daily crucifying the flesh (asking God to help us control our sinful desires) and walking consistently in the Spirit allow the right seed to be planted, to be watered, and to begin to grow. Then when we arrive at the moment we need the proper fruit, it is available.

The work of God’s Spirit is both in us and on us. He works in unseen areas inside our minds, and He works on the visible facets of our bodies. He impacts our attitudes and our actions. He shapes our thinking and our appearance. The transformative work of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not intended to be limited to either arena without the other. Nor should we seek to limit it in such a way. We can begin the process today of walking in covenant with Jesus and watching our lives burst with the fruit of the Spirit.

***DISCUSS:** When the fruit of the Spirit is not growing in your life, what will you do to allow it to grow again?*

C. I will keep in step with the Spirit.

Walking is an excellent exercise, or so doctors say. The biblical command is to walk in the Spirit. This means a daily conscious determination to get up and put one foot in front of the other spiritually. It takes active determination to follow the direction of the Spirit, resisting our sinful nature. However, each time we step in the direction of the Spirit and away from our old sinful nature, the positive effects begin to blossom in our lives.

Daily choose to walk in step with the Spirit and allow Him to produce the fruit of His Spirit in your life. This whole section of Galatians started because Paul wanted these believers to realize the power of God’s Spirit would always triumph over the Law. Therefore, it is unique that Paul left them with this thought regarding the fruit of the Spirit: “Against such there is no law” (Galatians 5:23). The Law caused humanity to work hard to get it right, but if we allow the Spirit to lead our lives, there is no law against the fruit. We can enjoy as much of the fruit as we want without harm; eat up. Enjoy as much as you want. This is the freedom God desires for His people—to walk in step with His Spirit and enjoy His blessings released in the fruit of the Spirit.

Teacher Option: *Tell the story below or share one of your own to illustrate how being connected to God will automatically bear fruit in our lives.*

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

(I) A famous mango tree is growing in a small village in Andhra Pradesh, India. A farmer named Ramanna planted the tree over seventy years ago in hopes it would produce mangoes for him, his family, and his neighbors. This tree started just like any other tree, as just a sapling. For years it was just like any other tree, offering just enough fruit to feed him, his family, and a few neighbors. So far, it had lived up to Ramanna's expectations, but something amazing happened in the 1980s.

A severe drought ravaged the region where Ramanna lived, and he feared that his trees would fall prey to it, but this mango tree survived. In fact the following season the tree produced ten times as much fruit as it had in previous years. Villagers were pleasantly surprised to learn that one tree was yielding one thousand mangoes or more every year. That was nearly double the average of many of the other trees. What was this tree's secret?

Soon the miracle mango tree became a treasure, allowing villagers to feed the poor, share with others, sell in the markets, and even support events in their small community. Other farmers believed the secret was in the seed, so they tried to plant the seeds themselves in hopes of having another miracle tree. Eventually they nicknamed the tree "The Giving Tree." People traveled from nearby villages, amazed at its generosity, especially following such a devastating drought.

Word of The Giving Tree made it to botanical experts who came to see it for themselves. After their examination, they discovered this singular tree had dug its roots into a hidden underground water source, which allowed it to survive such harsh weather conditions. No matter its secret, the villagers in Andhra Pradesh, India, are thankful to have the miracle mango tree in their village to remind them to have hope, be resilient, and be generous with the blessings in their lives.

When we are walking in the Spirit, connected to the source of God's bountiful blessings, the fruit of the Spirit will be produced in our lives. When people are around us, they too will be amazed that we can be joyful when others are sad; peaceful when others are in chaos; temperate when others lose control; meek when others are proud and brash. The fruit of the Spirit simply depends on us digging our roots deep into our covenant relationship with God and watching God take care of the rest.