Fruit of the Spirit
Galatians 5:22-23

Vocabulary:
characteristics: a special quality or feature that someone has
mature (verb): to become fully grown or developed
action: something that you do
imitator: to do something exactly the same way as something or someone else
remain: stay
demonstrate: show
priority: the most important thing
attitudes: the opinions or feelings that you have about something or someone

"But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind, and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself. There is no law against things of that kind."

Fruits such as apples or peaches are produced when fruit trees are mature. What is the fruit of the Spirit? These "fruits" are traits or characteristics that the Holy Spirit produces in us as we grow in our Christian faith. In this study, we will look at each characteristic. We will examine what the bible tells us about each of them.

A. Love
We think of love as an emotion or a feeling but it's not. God is love. It's part of His character. How did God show his love for us? God showed His love by sending Jesus, His own son to die for our sins. This love was not an emotion - it was an action. God's love for us is unfailing and will never end.

Read I John 4:8-10 (page 1293), Psalms 36:7 (page 597), Psalms 100:5 (page 640)

What is our response to God's love? First, we must make God our first priority. We are to love Him with our hearts, mind, soul, and strength. Second, the bible tells us that since God loves us, we should love one another. We should be imitators of God's love. Jesus Himself imitated God, His father. Just as God, the Father loved Jesus, Jesus loves us. Jesus said that if we obey his commands, we will remain in his love. What is Jesus' command? Jesus told us to love each other. We are to love each other in the same way that Christ loved us.
When we live a life of love, we demonstrate that we belong to God. If love is an action, how do we show love to other people? If we look at I Corinthians, we can see what behaviors and attitudes demonstrate love. A person shows love by being patient and kind to others. They should not be jealous, rude, angry, or proud. If we love, we don't keep track of what other people do that is wrong. When we love, we trust God.

We demonstrate this love by serving others. We do this when we put the needs of others first. If we are to produce love, where does it come from? God himself gives us this love through the Holy Spirit.

Questions

1. What is the fruit of the Spirit?

2. What is love? How did God show His love to us?

3. What is our response to God's love?

4. What is Jesus' command?

5. What behaviors or attitudes demonstrate love?

6. Where does love come from?

Discussion: Can we demonstrate I Corinthians 13 in our lives? What happens when we don't? What can we do about this?
B. Joy

Vocabulary:
inner: inside
will face: will have (will endure)
count it: consider it/ think that it is
grow in Him: mature in our faith

What is joy? It is inner happiness and a deep feeling of satisfaction. How does this relate to God? God's very presence gives joy. Our hearts are filled with joy when we read His word.

Read Psalms 19: 8 (page 586), Psalms 21:6 (page 586), Psalms 28: 7(page 591)

There is a relationship between joy and suffering. In the book of James, we read that we will face all kinds of trouble. This is not surprising, suffering is normal. But when we have trouble, we should count it as joy. This is because our faith is tested in times of trouble. When we trust God, He will increase our strength in Him. God uses difficulties to help us grow in Him. We have the strength to endure our suffering because the joy of the Lord is our strength.

Read James 1: 2-4 (page 1279), I Peter 4:12-13 (page 1286), Nehemiah 8:10 (page 519)

There is also a relationship between joy and sorrow. In times of sorrow, God promises to gives us joy. This occurs in everyday life. When we become sad or sorrowful from difficulties at work, God will turn our sadness to joy. Sometimes our sadness comes when we feel distant from God. It's usually because we have become too busy. But when we cry out to God, He turns our sorrow into joy. Jesus cares when we are sorrowful. Before His death, Jesus was concerned for his disciples. Jesus knew that they would be sad when he died on the cross, but Jesus promised that they would be filled with joy when they saw Him again.

Read Psalm 126: 5-6(page 661), Psalm 30:11 (page 592), John 16:24 (page 1146)

When do we have joy? We have joy because of Jesus. The world was in darkness. But Jesus brought light into the world. God increased the joy of His people by sending Jesus. Jesus' birth was announced as good news of great joy.
We have joy because of salvation. When Jesus saves us, God brings joy like springs of water. We will have joy when Christ returns. When Jesus returns, we will have joy that lasts forever.
Read Isaiah 9: 2-3 (page 735), Luke 2:10-11(page 1089), Isaiah 12:2-4 (page 740), Psalm 51:12 (page 607), Isaiah 35:10

We should be joyful simply because we belong to Christ. This is our response to God's grace. We can increase the joy of our brothers and sisters in Christ by loving them. Finally, Jesus tells us that when we ask anything in His name, we will receive it. Because of this, our joy will be complete.

Read Philippians 4:4 (page 1244), Philemon 1: 7 (page 1266), John 16:24 (page 1146)

Questions

1. What is joy?

2. What is the relationship between joy and suffering?

3. How does God use difficulties in our lives?

4. What is the relationship between joy and sorrow?

5. When do we have joy?
C. Peace

Vocabulary:
  harmony: in agreement
  serenity: calm and peaceful
  established: put in place/ developed/ started

What is peace? It is the opposite of war. But it is also harmony between people as well as a feeling of serenity.

God is the author of peace. He is King and has established peace in the highest parts of heaven. Not only has God established peace, but He also promised to give peace to Israel. Every promise God makes comes true. In Isaiah, we read about the prophecy of the coming Christ. One of Jesus' titles is the Prince of peace. This tells us that Jesus came to bring peace to the world. The peace that Jesus gives is not like the peace found in the world. Jesus' peace calms our hearts when we are troubled or afraid.


When sin came into the world, we became separated from God. In fact, we became His enemies. God sent Jesus so that we could be at peace with God through Jesus' death on the cross.

Read Romans 5:10 (page 1192), Colossians 1:20 (page 1245)

When do we receive peace? We receive peace when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus. When we accept Jesus' gift of salvation, we will receive peace because we belong to Christ. When we are faithful and love God's word, we receive God's peace.

Read Isaiah 30:15 (page 760), Isaiah 26:3 (page), Isaiah 32:17 (page 763), Philippians 4:7 (page 1244), Psalms 85:8 (page), Psalms 119: 165 (page 659)

Many times we have to endure difficulties. God uses them to teach us and to show us our dependence on Him. God wants us to share in His holiness. But although the training may be painful, we will receive peace.
We receive peace from God but we must also live in peace with those around us. How can we live in peace? First of all, we must love other people. Sometimes we don't agree, sometimes we quarrel but we have to put up with each other. The Holy Spirit makes us one with our fellow believers so we should live in peace. To help us live in peace, we should think about the needs of others.

Questions

1. What is peace?

2. What is one of Jesus' titles? What does it mean?

3. How can we have peace with God?

4. When do we receive peace?

5. How can we live in peace?
D. Patient

Vocabulary:
Ultimate: most important
opportunity: chance
promotion: a raise in pay or a better position
natural: normal

What does it mean to be patient? If a person is patient, they remain calm when difficulties happen. They don't get angry or upset when people or things are slow. God is the ultimate example of patience. When Adam and Eve sinned, God planned to send His son to save us. Then in His perfect time, Jesus came to earth. God desires for everyone to be saved. In 2 Peter, we read that some people think that God is being slow about Jesus' return. He is not being slow, He is being patient. Jesus will not return again until everyone has the opportunity to hear about Jesus.

Read Romans 2:4 (page 1189), I Timothy 1:16 (page 1255), 2 Peter 3:8-9,15 (page 1290)

When should we be patient? We should be patient while we are waiting for the Lord to act. Many times we ask the Lord for something, maybe a job or a promotion. Sometimes we get impatient when we see others becoming successful. God hears us and will respond with what is good for us in just the right time. Sometimes we are going through difficulties, God will hear us. We need to be patient as we wait for God.

Read Psalm 37: 7 (page 597), Psalm 40:1 (page 600), Romans 12:12 (page 1199), James 5: 10-11 (page 1282)

We need to be patient as we wait for Christ's return. It is natural for us to look to the future. Jesus has promised to return. When Christ comes, we will be like Him - perfect in mind and body. This is the Christian's hope. But until then, we must wait patiently.

Read Romans 8:22-25(page 1195), James 5: 7-8 (page 1282)
What does patience look like when we respond to others? In I Corinthians 13, we read about love and how to respond in love. To show love, we must be patient with others. When we realize just how much God has forgiven us, we can respond to others in love. Sometimes we think that our choices and how we think is the best. But it is more important to be patient and show love than to be viewed as right.


What is the result of patience? Patience leads to great understanding. We begin to listen to others. When we are patient with others, we can calm down a difficult situations. With gentleness and patience, we can win people who may otherwise refuse to help us.

Read Proverbs 14:29 (page 687), Proverbs 15:18 (page 688), Proverbs 25:15 (page 699)

Questions

1. What does it mean to be patient?

2. How does God show that He is patient?

3. When should we be patient?

4. What is the Christian's hope?

5. What does patience look like when we respond to others?
6. What is the result of patience?
E. Kind

Vocabulary:

mercy: not to receive the punishment deserved
impress: to feel admiration or respect
look down on: to think you are better than someone
compassion: pity

1. Kindness is part of God's character.

What is the definition of kindness? The definition of kindness is to show a tender, considerate, and helping nature. The best way to be kind is to think of others and their needs before your own needs. Kindness is part of God's character. Although the people of Israel were stubborn and disobedient, God was kind and slow to get angry. Jonah also knew that God was kind and slow to anger. God told Jonah to go to Nineveh but Jonah didn't want to go. He didn't want God to save the people of that city. In fact, Jonah ran away from God. He knew that God would show kindness to the people of Nineveh.

We were just like the people of Israel. We disobeyed God and only wanted to please ourselves. But God showed kindness and love to us. He sent Jesus to save us, not because we were good. Jesus died for us to show God's mercy. It is God's kindness that causes us to repent from our sins.

Read Nehemiah 9:17 (page 521), Jonah 4:2 (page 991), Titus 3: 3-5 (page 1265), Romans 2: 4 (page 1189)

2. Examples of kindness.

There are many examples of kindness found in the bible. From the Old Testament, we will look at the kindness of King David and the kindness of a Shunemite woman. After Saul died, David became king. He wanted to help anyone who was left from Saul's family. Saul's grandson, Mephibosheth, was still living. He was handicapped and couldn't walk. David gave all of Saul's land to Mephibosheth. King David made sure that Mephibosheth had food and anything else that he needed. King David showed kindness to Mephibosheth.

Elisha was a prophet for God. One day when he was visiting the town of Shunem, a woman gave him a meal. Every time Elisha was in that town, she
provided a meal for him. The woman and her husband even provided him with a place to stay. The woman showed great kindness to Elisha.

Read 2 Samuel 9: 1-13 (page 328), 2 Kings 4: 8-10 (page 389)

There are also examples of kindness found in the New Testament. Probably the most famous story of kindness is the story of the Good Samaritan. Jesus told this story to show us how to demonstrate love. In this story, a man from Samaria stopped to help a Jewish man who had been beaten. The Jews hated the Samaritans. The Samaritan man gave up his time, money, and natural dislike to be kind to this man.

Jesus showed kindness and compassion. One time, Jesus and his disciples went to a town called Nain. As Jesus approached the town, he saw a funeral procession. The only son of a widow had died. Jesus felt compassion for the poor widow. He brought her son back to life.


3. How can we show kindness?

In the book of James, we learn how to treat one another with kindness. We should not be impressed by people who have money or powerful positions. We also shouldn't look down on people who are poor. We should treat everyone with the same respect.

How can we have God's character of kindness? God has given us His Holy Spirit. Through His power, we can lead a godly life. Not only do we have the Holy Spirit, but we also have God's promises. Therefore, we can step out in faith and begin to actively show kindness. It is not a matter of feeling - it is a matter of faith in action.

Read James 2: 1-9 (page 1280), 2 Peter 1:3-8 (page 1288)

Questions

1. What is the definition of kindness?
2. How does God show kindness to us?

3. How did the following people show kindness:
   
   King David
   
   The Shunemite woman
   
   The Good Samaritan
   
   Jesus

4. How does James say we should treat one another?

5. How can we have God's character of kindness?
F. Good or goodness

Vocabulary:
urges: to encourage someone to do something
evident: can be seen

1. God's goodness

    God is good. Goodness is part of God's character. Over and over throughout the Psalms, we read about God's goodness. God is good and He teaches us to walk in His ways. In Psalm 34, David urges us to find out for ourselves just how good God is. God is good because He is forgiving and He loves us. In fact, God's love continues forever.

    Read Psalm 25:8 (page 589), Psalm 34:8 (page 595), Psalm 86:5 (page 631), Psalm100:5 (page 640), Psalm 136:1 (page 664)

    God's goodness is evident to those who trust and rest in Him. We can see the trust that King David had when we read the 23rd Psalm. Because King David trusts in God, he knows that God's goodness will always be with him. When we trust in God and run to him when we are in difficulty, we will see God's goodness.

    Read Psalm 23 (page 588), Psalm 31: 19 (page 592)

    Not only is goodness a part of God's character, but what God makes is also good. After making each part of creation, God said that it was good. After God created light, oceans and dry land, plants and trees, day and night, God said that it was good. After God created all the animals on land, in the air, and in the sea, God said that it was good. After he created man, God said that it was good. We were made in God's image - in God's very likeness. We were made to reflect God's character of goodness.

    Read Genesis 1:3-4 (page 1), Genesis 1: 9-10, 12, 17-18, 20-21,25-27

2. Man's sinfulness.

    Unfortunately, sin entered the world through Adam and Eve. Sin brought separation between God and us. We cannot do anything right or good. We cannot please God on our own. Our own human nature is the opposite of God's nature.
Paul talks about his struggle with wanting to do what is good. However, God in His mercy has the solution to our problem. Jesus has paid the penalty of our sins and has made us right with God. Because Jesus died for us, we can walk in His light. Through Christ, we can produce what is good, right, and true.

Read Romans 3:10-12 (page 1190), Romans 7: 18-25 (page 1194), Ephesians 5: 8-9(page 1238)

Questions

1. What does David urge us to do?

2. What does Psalm 23 tell us about God's goodness?

3. When do we see God's goodness?

4. How were we made?

5. What keeps us from being good on our own?

6. What is God's solution to our problem with being good?
G. Faithfulness

Vocabulary:
solemn: serious or earnest
tribe: group of families which were related
proclamation: an announcement made from a king
reflects: shows

1. God's faithfulness

What is faithfulness? To be faithful, a person shows true and constant support or loyalty. Faithfulness means that you keep your promises.

Faithfulness is one of God's characteristics. It is a part of who God is. When talking to Moses, God said, "I am faithful and full of love." God always keeps His solemn promises or covenant. His character of faithfulness can be seen in everything that He does.

We can trust in God's faithfulness. He promises to forgive our sins if we confess our sins to Him.

Read Exodus 34:6 (page 89), Deuteronomy 7:9 (page 193), Psalm 33:4 (page 594), I John 1:9 (page 1291)

2. People who showed faithfulness

There are many examples of people who demonstrated faithfulness. One tribe of Israel really showed faithfulness. The tribe of Levi, called Levites, demonstrated their faithfulness to God by setting themselves apart to serve the Lord.

Daniel is a wonderful example of a man who showed faithfulness to God. Daniel was a young man during the time of Babylonian rule in Jerusalem. King Nebuchadnezzar gathered some young men to serve in his palace. When Daniel went to the palace, he decided to keep himself pure for God by not eating or drinking the King's food or wine. God honored Daniel's faithfulness and blessed him with good health, knowledge and wisdom. Later, Nebuchadnezzar made a statue and wanted everyone to worship it. But Daniel's friends remained faithful to God and refused to worship the statue. Later in Daniel's life, a new King named
Darius made a proclamation that no one could worship anyone but the King. Daniel refused to worship the King and was put in a den of lions to be killed.

In the New Testament, Timothy is a good example of faithfulness. Paul, who was himself a man who was faithful, praises Timothy. In fact, Paul trusts in Timothy's faithfulness so much that Timothy is sent to the Corinthian church to represent Paul. Of course, our best example of faithfulness is the Lord, Jesus Christ. In Hebrews, the writer compares the faithfulness of Moses with the faithfulness of Jesus. While Moses is faithful as a servant, Jesus is faithful as the Son of God.

Read 2 Chronicles 31:17-18 (page 490), Daniel 1: 8, 15-17(page 945); Daniel 3: 8-28(page 948), Daniel 6:13-23(page 953), I Corinthians 4:17(page 1207), Hebrews 3:1-6(page 1268)

3. How do we show faithfulness?

The most important thing to remember about being faithful is that it comes from God. It is not about us trying to be faithful.

When we are being faithful to God, it will show in our behavior to others. Sometimes to understand what faithfulness looks like, we need to see what unfaithful behavior is. When we cheat people or tell lies, we are not being faithful to God. In fact, anything that we do to hurt someone reflects our unfaithfulness to God. When we turn to any other source but God to get information about our future, we are not being faithful.

When we obey God, we show that we are faithful. What commands are we obeying? Jesus tells us that the two greatest commandments are: 1) love the Lord with all your heart and 2) love your neighbor as yourself. If we truly love other people, we will want what is best for them. By showing love to the people around us, we show faithfulness to God.

Read Romans 14:4(page 1200), Leviticus 6:2 (page 103), Numbers 5:6 (page 141), Leviticus 20:6 (page 122), Deuteronomy 11:13(page 197), Mark 12:28-34 (page 1080)
Questions

1. What is the definition of faithfulness?

2. How does God show this characteristic?

3. How did the following people show faithfulness?
   
   Levites:
   
   Daniel:
   
   Daniel's friends:
   
   Timothy:
   
   Jesus Christ:

4. How can we show faithfulness?
H. Gentleness or humility

Vocabulary:
- characteristic: part of someone's character
- insist: to demand and continue demanding
- entry: to enter
- in contrast: the opposite

1. Gentleness

   Another fruit of the Spirit is gentleness. When we think of gentleness as a behavior, it can be described as being kind to others. But we can also define gentleness as a characteristic or a trait. As a trait, gentleness is the same as humility. A new translation of the bible called "The Message" has an interesting definition of gentleness. The word "gentleness" is described as "not needing to force our way in life". This means that if we are gentle, we won't insist on what we want or on our ideas. Instead, we will allow others to be more important.

2. Examples of gentleness

   King David showed gentleness and humility. In this scripture passage, we read about David's humility before God. It was God's choice to make David king of Israel. David knew that he was not from an important family. He understood that God made all this possible. This is where true humility begins. When we fully understand who God is, our own importance becomes less and less.

   Read 2 Samuel 7: 18-24 (page 327)

   Our most important example of gentleness and humility is Jesus Christ. In Isaiah 40, we can see the tenderness and gentleness of Jesus. Jesus, as the great Shepherd, gathers and gently leads his flock. We, as sheep, would be lost without Him. Zechariah gives us a picture of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. Jesus is described as being gentle and riding on a donkey. This is in contrast to the powerful, mighty conquering king that the Jewish people were expecting. Jesus himself says that he is gentle and free of pride. He wants us to be his servants and learn from him. What are we learning? We are learning how to be gentle and humble.

   Read Isaiah 40:11 (page 771), Zechariah 9:9 (page 1019), Matthew 11:28-30 (page 1041)
3. Gentleness to others

Proverbs 15 tells us that a gentle answer turns anger away. People respond so much better to an answer that is calm and gentle. When we respond with anger, this only results in greater conflict. In fact, 2 Timothy 2 tells us that gentle responses may help lead people to the truth of God.

We need to consider the needs of other people before our own and to treat others with gentleness. But how can we do this with people who are difficult? Before Christ, we didn't obey God. We were slaves to our own passions and envy. But Jesus died for us. Not because we were good, but because of His mercy to us. When we realize how great God's mercy is to us, we can begin to show mercy to others. The knowledge of God's mercy to us also helps us to see our own sin and our dependence on God. This helps us in our struggle to be humble and gentle.

Read Proverbs 15:1 (page 687), 2 Timothy 2:24-26 (page 1261), Titus 3:1-8 (page 1265)

Questions

1. What does gentleness mean?

2. How did King David show gentleness or humility?

3. Give examples of Jesus' gentleness and humility.

4. What does Jesus want us to learn from Him?
5. Why is it important to respond with a gentle answer?

6. What helps us in our struggle to be gentle and humble?
I. Self-control

Vocabulary:
    impulse: behaviors that we do without thinking
    implies: something that is not directly stated
    summed up: to add something together
    primary: the most important
    arrogant: proud
    indulge: to yield (to say "yes") to something you desire

1. Self-control

    Self control means the ability to control your desires and impulses. It also implies that we should use moderation and wisdom in how we approach things. In Paul's letter to Titus, he writes about the character of a church leader. A church leader must not be concern only about himself. He shouldn't get angry but instead should be kind to people. He should control his mind and feelings as well as the desires of his body. This whole message can be summed up as having self-control.

    The primary example of the lack of self-control can be found in the Garden of Eden. Eve saw that the forbidden fruit looked good. It looked delicious! The serpent told her that she would become wise. Instead of using self-control, Eve chose to take the fruit and eat it. Her husband Adam also lacked self-control. He chose to take the fruit from Eve and eat it.

    An example of the lack of self-control can also be seen in 2 Timothy. In Paul's letter to Timothy, Paul talks about the last days. The last days represent the time before Christ returns. We are living in the last days. During this time, people will be arrogant, self-loving, not thankful, liars, and only interested in pleasing themselves. Does this sound familiar? This is the world that we live in!

    Read Titus 1:7-8 (page 1264 ), Genesis 3: 1-6 (page 3), 2 Timothy 3:1-5 (page 1261)

2. What types of behavior do we need to control?

    The primary behavior which we need to control is satisfying ourselves. Most of our problems come from the desire to put our needs before others. When
Jesus was talking to the Jewish leaders, He told the Pharisees that they only wanted to satisfy themselves.

Another problem that needs to be controlled is sexual desire. Our bodies are meant for the Lord not for sexual sins. God has provided marriage to help with our sexual needs. We shouldn't indulge in wild parties and getting drunk. Many times this can lead to uncontrolled sexual desire.

We need to control our anger. A person who is angry commits many sins. In 1 Corinthians 13, we read that a person who is loving does not become angry easily. In fact, if we respond to a person who is angry in a gentle and calm way, the person may not respond in anger.

Read Matthew 23:25-26 (page 1055), 1 Corinthians 6:12 (page 1208),
1 Corinthians 7:9 (page 1208), Romans 13:12-14 (page 1200), Proverbs 29:22 (page 704), Ecclesiastes 7:9 (page 713), 1 Corinthians 13:5 (page 1214), James 1:19 (page 1279), Proverbs 15:1 (page 687)

3. How can we control ourselves?

God gives us the power to overcome our human nature. God provides the way to escape the sin of this world and our own desires. The power that God has given us is through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives us power and love. Through these, we can choose to control ourselves. The Holy Spirit sets us free from the law of sin. Because of Christ, the Holy Spirit now controls the way that we live.

Read 2 Timothy 1:7 (page 1260), 2 Peter 1:3-7 (page 1288), Romans 8:1-9 (page 1194)

Many times we struggle with trying to change ourselves. But God has given us the power. We just need to choose to listen to the Spirit. In Romans, Paul talks about our need to offer our bodies to God as a sacrifice. Part of this sacrificing is to have a change in our thinking. We should develop the mind of Christ.

Read Romans 12:1-2 (page 1199)
4. The Fruit of the Spirit

"But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind, and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself. There is no law against things of that kind."

The key to this scripture verse is the Holy Spirit. All the different parts of the fruit which we discussed come from one source - the Holy Spirit. In Paul's letter to the Galatians, he admonishes them (and us) to live by the Holy Spirit's power. The more that we listen to the Holy Spirit, the less we will be tempted by our human nature.

Read Galatians 5:16-18 (page 1233)

Questions

1. What does "self-control" mean?

2. What did Adam and Eve do that showed a lack of self-control?

3. In the last days, people will show a lack of self-control. Describe these people.

4. What behaviors do we need to control?

5. How can we control ourselves?