

SPIRITUAL FRUIT

Practical Guide for Daily Living

Discussion Guide
Vol. 12, No. 10
July 4, 2010

Title

Love, Joy, & Peace

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Galatians 2: 22-23

Introduction: In this fifth chapter of Galatians Paul contrasts the deeds of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit. As we move into the description of the Holy Spirit's fruit we find that Paul lists a total of nine qualities that group logically in three sets of three but which are described as singular: the *fruit* of the Spirit. It is clearly implied that all of these qualities are present simultaneously and relatively equally in one who is filled with the Spirit. In this study we will consider the first three: Love, joy, and peace.

I. The Fruit of the Spirit is LOVE:

- A. The Greek word agape (ἀγάπη) never occurs in classical Greek and never in Josephus, yet it is the most common word for love in the New Testament, occurring in some 52 forms over 450 times in more than 400 verses.
- B. The essence of this love is a valuation of God, and of human beings made in His image, that transcends personal wants, needs, and safety in the consideration of their well being.
- C. This love is expressed toward God and toward others regardless of personal cost and endures forever. It is always seeking the best for the other person and is self-sacrificing in the insurance of their well-being.

II. The fruit of the Spirit is JOY:

- A. The joy of the Spirit is rooted in the security of a relationship with God and the certainty that, regardless of present circumstances, the future is filled with unspeakable delight in His presence.
- B. This joy transcends all circumstances and exists at a deep level in the human spirit without respect to happiness or pleasure.
- C. None-the-less it manifests in a kind of inner happiness that defies all outward difficulties and gives one a song even in sorrow and suffering.

III. The fruit of the Spirit is PEACE:

- A. For the Greeks, peace was a state of mind characterized by tranquility and even the absence of activity. For the Jew, and from the OT Hebrew concept of shalom, peace had more to do with personal wholeness and a sense of healthy relationships rather than the absence of opposition, pain, or turmoil.
- B. The spiritual fruit of peace arises from the awareness that all is well with God and that, in so far as it is possible, all is well with one's brothers and sisters.
- C. Peace transcends circumstantial and temporal calamity and endures even in crisis and loss. It rests in the character of God and the security of knowing that He is in control and we are secure in Him. It is the absence of anxiety stemming from self-seeking.

Conclusion: How are you doing so far in the manifestation of Spiritual fruit. If you find yourself lacking remember that you need not try harder but yield more to Jesus. The flesh has its deeds, its works, but the Spirit naturally produce fruit when He is filling one's life. When we lack His qualities we simply lack His fullness, or put in reverse, He lacks our total yieldedness. You do not need more love, joy, or peace...you need Jesus Who is all of these and more!

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-25

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, ⁵ does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, ⁶ does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never fails; *1 Corinthians 13:4-8*

