

SPIRITUAL FRUIT

Practical Guide for Daily Living

Discussion Guide
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Title ***Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control*** by Paul Martin
Galatians 5: 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 third group of three: Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control.

I. The Fruit of the Spirit is FAITHFULNESS:

- A. Defined: The character of one who can be relied on, one who keeps his promises, reliable, trustworthy, consistent.
- B. Lack of faithfulness has become a cultural epidemic:
 - 1. Lack of consistency in promptness and attendance
 - 2. Lack of follow-thru in commitments and obligations
 - 3. Lack of consideration and rudeness toward others (e.g.: R.S.V.P.)
- C. The Holy Spirit produces the fruit of faithfulness, developing trustworthy reliability that is encouraging and reassuring.

II. The fruit of the Spirit is GENTLENESS:

- A. Defined: A quality of gentle friendliness or meekness as in a strength which accommodates to another's weakness. Gentleness of attitude and behavior in contrast to harshness in one's dealings with others. Always speaking softly to, or not raising one's voice. Gracious and kindly toward others with a soft, open, approachable manner.
- B. Gentleness is the WAY in which one expresses kindness and goodness. It goes out of its way to put others at ease and to value their self-esteem.
- C. Gentleness presupposes a genuine sense of humility and meekness, it gives the benefit of the doubt to those who have erred, seeks always to "save face" and "preserve honor," and communicates blessing and encouragement.

III. The fruit of the Spirit is SELF-CONTROL:

- A. Defined: having a firm hold over one's desires, disciplined. One who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites. "The one who competes in an athletic contest exercises self-control in all things," (I Cor. 9:25).
- B. Self-control extends to all areas of one's life and can truly only be accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit, since it pertains to one's
 - 1. appetites
 - 2. temperament (and temper) & emotions
 - 3. personal discipline and management of one's personal resources (time, money, aptitudes, spiritual gifts, etc.)

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*

