EXPLORING THE

Fruits of the Spirit



Note:

This series will focus on the parables of Jesus Christ. Through this study of the parables, individuals will have a better understanding of each story, the application of the teaching of Jesus, and ways we must live out the parables in our own life.

Each Lesson will consist of the following:

- Lesson Illustration
- Key Scriptures
- The Focus of the Lesson
- Key Points
- Three Questions
- Notes section

The individual can do the following:

- Read the key scriptures and ask what stands out.
- Spend 5 minutes on each key point.
- Spend 5 minutes on each discussion question.



Weekly Lessons

1. Introduction to Fruits of the Spirit
2. The Fruit of Love
3. The Fruit of Joy
4. The Fruit of Peace
5. The Fruit of Patience
6. The Fruit of Kindness
7. The Fruit of Goodness
8. The Fruit of Faithfulness
9. The Fruit of Gentleness
10. The Fruit of Self-Control
11. Bearing Fruit for God's Glory
12. Living out the Fruits of the Spirit Daily

Week 1

Introduction to Fruits of the Spirit

Lesson Illustration:

A gardener planted a rare fruit tree known to bear excellent fruit, but it took years to mature. Seasons passed, and others doubted it would bear any fruit. The gardener, however, cared for it diligently, knowing that patience and the right conditions would eventually bring a harvest. Finally, in its fifth year, the tree bore an abundance of sweet fruit, surprising everyone. In the same way, the Fruits of the Spirit don't always appear instantly, but as we stay faithful and connected to God, we gradually see His character grow in us.

Key Scripture:

Galatians 5:16-26

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. **17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. **18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. **19** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, **20** idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, **21** envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. **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** And 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 keep in step with the Spirit. **26** Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Week 1 cont.

The Focus:
Understanding the purpose and significance of the fruits of the Spirit in the Christian life.

Key Points:

1. Fruits as Evidence of the Spirit's Work: The fruits show how the Holy Spirit transforms us.
2. Relationship between Root and Fruit: Just as a healthy tree produces good fruit, a Spirit-led life produces godly character.
3. Purpose of the Fruits: These qualities reflect Christ and build unity and love within the community.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you think the fruits of the Spirit differ from natural human virtues?
2. Why is it important for Christians to display these characteristics?
3. How can we nurture a life that produces spiritual fruit?

Notes:

Week 2

The Fruit of Love

Lesson Illustration:
Corrie ten Boom, a Holocaust survivor, shared a powerful story about meeting a former Nazi guard who had been responsible for atrocities at the concentration camp where her sister died. He approached her after a speaking event, asking for her forgiveness. Although she initially struggled, Corrie eventually reached out, feeling God's love replace her bitterness. The Spirit's love enables us to show forgiveness and compassion even when it's difficult, mirroring Christ's love for us.

Key Scripture:
1 Corinthians 13:4-8
4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant **5** or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; **6** it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. **7** Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
8 Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away

John 15:12-13
12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13** Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

Week 2 cont.

The Focus:
Exploring biblical love as a selfless, sacrificial commitment.

Key Points:

1. Love as the Foundation of All Fruits: Love enables the other fruits to grow.
2. Love in Action: True love is shown in actions, especially in sacrificial ways.
3. Commanded to Love: Jesus commands us to love as He loved.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does biblical love differ from popular cultural views of love?
2. Why do you think love is listed first among the fruits of the Spirit?
3. What are some practical ways we can show Christ-like love to others?

Notes:

Week 3

The Fruit of Joy

Lesson Illustration:
Picture a cold, dark prison cell where chains clink and echo off the stone walls. Inside sits Paul, a man who has endured beatings, shipwrecks, hunger, and now imprisonment. Yet, astonishingly, he writes words of joy and encouragement to the believers in Philippi: “Rejoice in the Lord always!” (Philippians 4:4). Paul’s joy wasn’t rooted in his comfort or freedom but in his relationship with Christ. He saw beyond his physical chains and found joy in the hope, purpose, and love of his Savior. His letters, filled with hope and gratitude, continue to lift others centuries later. Joy as a fruit of the Spirit transcends our circumstances and enables us to find strength in the Lord, no matter what life throws at us.

Key Scripture:
Philippians 4:4-6
4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. **5** Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; **6** do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

James 1:2-4
2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,
3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.
4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Week 3 cont.

The Focus:
Joy as a response to God's presence, regardless of circumstances.

Key Points:

1. Joy Transcends Circumstances: True joy is based on our relationship with God, not our circumstances.
2. Joy as a Choice and Discipline: Joy grows as we choose to focus on God's promises.
3. Joy in Trials: Trials can strengthen our joy by drawing us closer to God.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does joy differ from happiness?
2. How can we experience joy even in difficult times?
3. How does joy affect our witness as Christians?

Notes:

Week 4

The Fruit of Peace

Lesson Illustration:
A famous painting competition once invited artists to depict the theme of "Peace." The winning piece surprised everyone. It wasn't a tranquil scene of calm waters or soft meadows; rather, it showed a raging storm, with fierce winds whipping up waves and dark clouds looming overhead. Yet, amidst the storm, there was a small tree branch reaching out over the waters, where a tiny bird sat peacefully in its nest, unfazed by the turmoil around it. True peace is like that bird in the storm—our peace is not defined by the absence of trouble but by God's presence in the midst of it. This peace, a gift of the Spirit, allows us to remain steady and assured, knowing that we are held by the One who is stronger than any storm.

Key Scripture:
John 14:25-27
25 "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. **27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

Philippians 4:6-7
6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Week 4 cont.

The Focus:
The peace of God as a calming assurance that guards our hearts and minds.

Key Points:

1. Peace as Inner Calm: The Spirit offers a peace that the world cannot give.
2. Peace in Relationship with God: Peace flows from trust in God's sovereignty and love.
3. Peace as a Witness to Others: A peaceful spirit reflects God's presence.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some sources of worry in your life, and how can God's peace help?
2. How can we actively seek God's peace daily?
3. How does our peace impact those around us?

Notes:

Week 5

The Fruit of Patience

Lesson Illustration:
A young sculptor worked tirelessly on a large block of marble, chiseling away day after day, removing small fragments at a time. People often stopped to watch him, but after weeks went by and there was little progress, some grew skeptical. They wondered how long he would work on what seemed like a never-ending project. The sculptor smiled and kept working, knowing that creating a masterpiece required time and patience. Months later, the marble finally revealed the beautiful form of a figure, refined down to the smallest detail. Patience is like that—it often feels slow, even frustrating, as we wait on God or bear with others. But just as the sculptor could see the finished image in his mind, God sees the potential in us and in those around us. The Spirit's patience enables us to stay the course and trust in God's timing, even when the results aren't yet visible.

Key Scripture:
Colossians 3:12-13
12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, **13** bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

James 1:19-21
19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; **20** for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. **21** Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

Week 5 cont.

The Focus:
Patience as a reflection of God's patience with us and others.

Key Points:

1. God's Patience as Our Model: God's patience with us enables us to be patient with others.
2. Patience in Action: Practicing patience in both minor annoyances and significant challenges.
3. Patience as Growth: Trials help us develop patience, deepening our trust in God.

Discussion Questions:

1. What challenges your patience the most?
2. How does God's patience with you encourage you to be patient with others?
3. How can we cultivate patience in everyday situations?

Notes:

Week 6

The Fruit of Kindness

Lesson Illustration:
A man was driving late at night when his car broke down on a dark, deserted road. He struggled to change his tire, his hands numb from the cold, when suddenly, headlights appeared. A stranger pulled over, got out, and helped him replace the tire without a word. When the job was done, the man offered him money, but the stranger waved him off and simply said, “Just help someone else when they need it.” The small act of kindness made such an impact that the man began looking for ways to “pay it forward,” helping others in need. Kindness, even in its smallest forms, has a way of inspiring more kindness. When the Spirit prompts us to be kind, we become part of God’s chain reaction of love in the world.

Key Scripture:
Ephesians 4:25-32
25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. **26** Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, **27** and give no opportunity to the devil. **28** Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. **29** Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. **32** Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Week 6 cont.

Proverbs 11:17-20
17 A man who is kind benefits himself, but a cruel man hurts himself.
18 The wicked earns deceptive wages, but one who sows righteousness gets a sure reward. **19** Whoever is steadfast in righteousness will live, but he who pursues evil will die. **20** Those of crooked heart are an abomination to the Lord, but those of blameless ways are his delight.

The Focus:
Kindness as a heart for others expressed through compassionate action.

Key Points:
1. Kindness Reflects God's Heart: Kindness flows from God's love for humanity.
2. Practical Kindness: True kindness meets needs without expecting anything in return.
3. Kindness as a Witness: Simple acts of kindness can show others God's love.

Discussion Questions:
1. How does kindness impact those around us?
2. Why is kindness important in our relationships with others?
3. Can you share a time when someone's kindness impacted you deeply?

Notes:

Week 7

The Fruit of Goodness

Lesson Illustration:
A young woman working at a grocery store noticed she had given a customer too much change. She could have easily let it slide and kept quiet, but instead, she called out to the customer and returned the money. The man was surprised by her honesty and thanked her, explaining that he had just been telling his son about the importance of integrity. This small act became a lesson in goodness for the boy, who later shared that story with his own friends. Goodness is about doing the right thing, even when it would be easier to stay silent or benefit from wrongdoing. The Spirit's goodness in us can create moments that reinforce truth and integrity in ways we may never realize.

Key Scripture:
Romans 12:9-13
9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. **10** Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. **11** Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. **12** Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. **13** Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Week 7 cont.

Micah 6:6-8
6 “With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? **7** Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” **8** He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

The Focus:
Goodness as moral integrity and a commitment to righteousness.

Key Points:
1. Goodness Reflects God’s Nature: Goodness is about choosing what pleases God.
2. Goodness in Our Actions and Intentions: Goodness requires sincerity, not merely outward actions.
3. Goodness as a Light: Living in goodness attracts others to Christ.

Discussion Questions:
1. How would you define goodness?
2. What makes goodness different from just being "nice"?
3. What are some ways we can pursue goodness in our daily lives?

Notes:

Week 8

The Fruit of Faithfulness

Lesson Illustration:
Every morning, rain or shine, a postman delivered letters through his small town. People would watch him as he walked his route, greeting everyone he passed. For 40 years, he never missed a single day, even through sickness, storms, and holidays. His faithfulness became a source of stability in the community; people knew they could count on him. When he retired, the entire town honored him, and many thanked him for his quiet, consistent service. Faithfulness in the Spirit doesn't seek attention; it simply shows up day after day, embodying a reliability that points to God's unwavering faithfulness to us.

Key Scripture:
Lamentations 3:22-27
22 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; **23** they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. **24** "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." **25** The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. **26** It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. **27** It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

Week 8 cont.

2 Timothy 2:8-13
8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, **9** for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! **10** Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. **11** The saying is trustworthy, for:
If we have died with him, we will also live with him; **12** if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us;**13** if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.

The Focus:
Faithfulness as loyalty, commitment, and dependability.

Key Points:
1. God's Faithfulness as Our Foundation: God's consistent love inspires us to be faithful.
2. Faithfulness in Relationships and Promises: Faithfulness requires us to be reliable and true.
3. Faithfulness as Endurance: Faithfulness grows as we persevere through trials.

Discussion Questions:
1. How does God's faithfulness encourage you in difficult times?
2. Why is faithfulness important in our relationships?
3. What does faithfulness look like in your day-to-day life?

Notes:

Week 9

The Fruit of Gentleness

Lesson Illustration:
In a hospital, there was a nurse known for her gentle manner with the elderly. She took extra time to speak softly, to reassure, and to handle each patient with respect and kindness. One elderly woman who rarely spoke opened up to her, saying that her gentle care made her feel like she mattered. For many, gentleness is seen as weakness, but in the Spirit, it is a powerful force. Jesus, too, was gentle with those in need. True gentleness is strength wrapped in kindness, offering comfort and healing to those in need.

Key Scripture:
Matthew 11:28-30
28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. **29** Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

1 Peter 3:13-16
13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? **14** But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, **15** but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, **16** having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

Week 9 cont.

The Focus:
Gentleness as strength under control, with a tender heart.

Key Points:

1. Gentleness as Strength: Gentleness is powerful because it reflects humility and control.
2. Gentleness in Communication: Gentleness allows us to respond with kindness, not aggression.
3. Christ's Example of Gentleness: Jesus embodied gentleness and calls us to follow Him.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does gentleness reflect Christ's character?
2. In what situations is it challenging for you to be gentle?
3. How can we show gentleness to others without compromising our convictions?

Notes:

Week 10

The Fruit of Self-Control

Lesson Illustration:
An experienced archer stands in front of a target, his entire focus on the bullseye. He controls his breathing, steadies his hand, and ignores distractions around him. Every movement is deliberate, showing his mastery and discipline. Self-control is like the skill of that archer; it requires focus, patience, and practice. The Spirit helps us develop this self-control, allowing us to aim our lives toward Christ and to overcome distractions and temptations that might lead us astray.

Key Scripture:
2 Timothy 1:3-7
3 I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. **4** As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. **5** I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. **6** For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, **7** for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Week 10 cont.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13
12 Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. **13** No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

The Focus:
Self-control as mastery over desires through the power of the Spirit.

Key Points:
1. Self-Control and Temptation: The Spirit empowers us to resist temptations.
2. Discipline in All Aspects of Life: Self-control touches every area of our lives, from thoughts to actions.
3. Self-Control as Spiritual Strength: It is a mark of maturity and spiritual strength.

Discussion Questions:
1. What areas of your life do you find self-control challenging?
2. How can we lean on God's strength to develop better self-control?
3. How does self-control impact our witness to others?

Notes:

Week 11

Bearing Fruit for God's Glory

Lesson Illustration:

A man planted an orchard on a hillside, tending each tree with care, ensuring they were watered and pruned. When harvest season came, the trees produced more fruit than he or his family could eat, so he began sharing it with his town. Soon, the orchard became a source of nourishment for many, and it was known for its quality fruit. When we bear the Fruits of the Spirit, they're not just for us. God uses the fruit in our lives to bless and feed others, pointing them to His goodness and love.

Key Scripture:

John 15:5-8

5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. **7** If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. **8** By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

Week 11 cont.

Matthew 5:14-16
14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. **15** Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

The Focus:
Understanding that the purpose of bearing fruit is to glorify God.

Key Points:
1. Fruit-Bearing Comes from Abiding in Christ: Staying connected to Jesus is essential.
2. Fruit Glorifies God: Our lives should reflect God’s character, drawing others to Him.
3. Lasting Fruit as a Legacy: The fruit we bear impacts others and brings glory to God.

Discussion Questions:
1. What does it mean to abide in Christ daily?
2. How can our fruit impact others and lead them to God?
3. Why is bearing fruit essential to our faith?

Notes:

Week 12

Living Out the Fruits of the Spirit Daily

Lesson Illustration:

A grandmother spent her life serving her family and neighbors quietly, but with a heart full of love, joy, peace, and all the fruits of the Spirit. She would visit the sick, pray with her family, and show kindness to everyone she met. When she passed away, friends and family gathered to remember her, each one sharing stories of how her faithfulness had impacted them. Her life left a mark of God's love, patience, and kindness on everyone she met. Living out the fruits of the Spirit daily leaves a legacy that points to Christ, touching others in profound ways.

Key Scripture:

Galatians 5:16-26

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. **17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. **18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. **19** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, **20** idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, **21** envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. **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** And 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 keep in step with the Spirit. **26** Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Week 12 cont.

Colossians 1:9-10

9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Matthew 7:15-20

15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **16** You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? **17** So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. **18** A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

The Focus:

Encouraging a lifestyle that consistently reflects the fruits of the Spirit.

Key Points:

1. Daily Dependence on the Spirit: Living a Spirit-led life requires daily surrender to God’s guidance and strength.
2. Transformation through Practice: Practicing the fruits in our daily interactions helps deepen these qualities and shapes our character.
3. Impact on the World: A life bearing the Spirit’s fruit is a powerful witness, drawing people toward God and reflecting Christ’s love.

Discussion Questions:

1. In what areas of your life do you most need to practice the fruits of the Spirit?
2. How can you make a habit of surrendering to the Spirit each day to cultivate these fruits?
3. How can bearing the fruits of the Spirit influence others around you and point them to Christ?

Notes:



Free Resources

1. Blue Letter Bible (https://www.blueletterbible.org/)
2. Got Questions https://www.gotquestions.org/
3. The Bible Project https://bibleproject.com/