

Fruit of the Spirit

Psalm 1

Galatians 5:13-26

John 15:1-8

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The book of Galatians teaches us that the Holy Spirit is an integral part of your life.

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, God Himself, who lives and dwells in you¹!

In your Baptism, you were washed clean of your sins, given faith in the Savior Jesus Christ, brought into God's family, and given the Holy Spirit. So this is personal for you: Your identity is wrapped up with the Triune God. You are even known as a “Christian.” The Holy Spirit *lives within you*² so much so that your body is considered a “temple” of the Holy Spirit³! In a real and powerful way, the Holy Spirit dwells in you so that you have the assurance of faith, and that you have power to live the Christian life. The Holy Spirit’s presence and power is at work in your life!

The work of the Holy Spirit in your life will produce good works that are described like **fruit** on a vine. The root is Christ, and you are connected to Him through faith. Here is how Jesus taught it:

Jesus said, “I AM the Vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, **you will bear much fruit**; **apart from me you can do nothing.** John 15:5

¹ This is the doctrine of the “Mystical Union.” Here is a good summary of this mysterious teaching of Scripture: “The presence of [the Spirit] in the believers assures them of the fulness of both His grace and power in them, grace and mercy for their sins and power for their sanctification.” [John](#), P. E. Kretzmann, chapter 14, adapted

² St. Paul is emphasizing the Holy Spirit living within you in Galatians 5; but remember that the entire Holy Trinity makes His dwelling in you! See John 14:23 for example, where the Father and the Son live within you. NOTE: This Mystical Union does not make you a god!! Rather it is the power and presence of God the Holy Trinity at work in your life. It is a mystery how the Lord dwells in us, hence the name “Mystical” Union to describe it.

³ 1 Corinthians 6:19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?

In Galatians, St. Paul carries the analogy further and explains it like this

The Fruit Of The Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control; against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23

Note that these *good works* are called fruit. They are the result of being connected to the Root and the Vine; they are not the root and the vine themselves. *Good works flow from faith, they are not the reason for your faith.* The reason for your faith is the Lord Jesus Christ, it's His work of salvation that has grafted you into the Vine... once you have been given faith, then you produce good works. If you get this order mixed up, and you think God is rewarding you for your good works, then you have shipwrecked the faith and have fallen into works righteousness. *The order is absolutely important.* The Holy Spirit creates faith in Jesus that brings you into the Vine⁴; then once on the Vine, you then start to produce good works, or as Paul calls it, the *Fruit of the Spirit*.

When you think about the *Fruit of the Spirit*, it's important to remember that they are **not multiple choice**. ☺ God is **NOT** asking you to pick one or two of these *Fruit* to be seen in your life. *Rather all of these things are to be seen in your life by the power of the Holy Spirit. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control;* they are all character traits of a Christian; they are all evidence that the Holy Spirit lives within you!

- These are the things that separate you from the world and from unbelievers.
- These are the things that become part of your confession of Christ to the world.
- These are part of your witness to unbelievers.
- These things are how you interact with other people.
- These are the things that make you a godly friend
- These are the things by which you encourage and comfort other people

⁴ This is why the "Means of Grace" are so important. These are the ways that God works to create faith and forgive sins: holy baptism, holy scripture, and Holy Communion. These are the ways that God has chosen to work in our lives; first to bring us into the faith, and thereafter just strengthen and nurture our faith throughout our lives. [It is important to note that God has not attached His promise of salvation to anything else; the forgiveness of sins is promised only in these three places . . . that's why they are so important to us as conservative Lutherans!]

- ➡ These **Fruit of the Spirit** are your light that shines.
- ➡ These are the things that will mark you as one belonging to God the Heavenly Father, one redeemed by Christ the crucified, and one filled by God the Holy Spirit.
- ➡ The **Fruit of the Spirit** describes the life of the baptized child of God.

These are the things that you strive for, these are the things that you pray for, these are the things that the Holy Spirit has promised to work in your life. **Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control** are character traits of a Christian.

And this is just the beginning of a list! You could add **zeal** in faith, **abiding** in Christ, **hallowing** His Name, **seeking** His will, **learning** His Word, faithful in **prayer**, **confessing** Christ, **memorizing** Scripture, a **hatred** of false doctrine, **striving** to be biblically literate and doctrinally sound, being **mission** minded, and even being passionately **engaged** in the Kingdom of God! All of this is the work of the Holy Spirit; all of these things are **Fruit of Faith** in the Lord Jesus Christ!

As Paul reminds us of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, he also reminds us that this is **a daily battle**.

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 good things you want to do.
Galatians 5:17

There's a part of you that does not want to bear the fruit of the Spirit. Your sinful nature loves to sin. Your sinful nature wants to chase after *the works of the flesh*⁵. There's a part of you that loves the world and listens to Satan and his depraved demons⁶.

⁵ Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. [See my August 6, 2023 sermon for some thoughts on the “Works of the Flesh”]

⁶ “Paul explains that the Christian’s life will always be a pitched battle. There is an ongoing conflict between what the rebellious old Adam wants to do contrary to God’s will and what the new man, guided by the Holy Spirit, wants to do in accordance with God’s will.” Panning, Armin J.. Galatians, Ephesians (The People’s Bible)

As a Christian, filled with the Holy Spirit, this is a daily battle for you⁷.

But *greater is He that's in you than he that's in the world* ^{1 John 4:4}• The Holy Spirit empowers you to overcome your flesh and your sinful nature so that you can bear the *Fruit of the Spirit*, glorify your Father in heaven, and love your neighbor.

And when you fall, and get tripped up into sin, the Lord has given you a way to deal with your guilt and sin: **repentance**. **Repentance** is confession and absolution. **Repentance** means that you turn from your sin, you realize that you have sinned against God and against others, and you want nothing to do with that. You stop sinning, confess it to God, and believe that you are forgiven because of the Lord Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection for you. In Christ, your sins are forgiven. In Christ, every day is a day of grace. In Christ, you are filled with the Holy Spirit. Through faith, you continue to live a holy and godly life, bearing the *Fruit of the Holy Spirit*. Don't live in sin nor in guilt. The kindness of God leads you to **daily repentance**, confessing your sins, and knowing that you are forgiven in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit creates a hatred of sin within you; and you learn to despise your sinful nature. You have nothing to do with rebellion, disobedience, or immorality. Your sinful nature has been crucified with Christ. It has no power over you! The passions, the desires, the evil thoughts; all rebellion against God's Word, all sexual immorality of every kind ... consider it all dead to you. In Christ, you are set free from all these things! You have a *new spiritual life* to live!

Jesus describes this as being united to Him *as a branch is to a Vine*; the Apostle Paul describes this as bearing *Fruit Of The Holy Spirit: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control*

MAY THESE FRUIT BE SEEN IN YOUR LIFE! Amen!

⁷ "Therefore the Christian must fight a daily battle against sin. And here God, through the Word and the Sacraments, continues to pound away at, buffet, immerse, and drown the old Adam and the sinful nature. And the Christian by the grace of God co-operates in this work, and through the Holy Spirit's work faith is increased, love toward the brethren is strengthened, confidence in God and in His promises is confirmed and established, the image of God is renewed, the Christian becomes more and more righteous, more and more holy, more and more blessed, more and more firm in the faith and godliness."

The Abiding Word, III.277-278, Sanctification, Roger L. Sommer

Holy Spirit,

we thank you that you are the Lord and Giver of life.

We thank you for faith in Jesus, so that we can know Him as our Savior.

We thank you for your presence in our lives, so that we can glorify our Father in Heaven.

We ask that you work in our lives so that we can bear Your fruit:

love, joy, peace, patience, Kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control.

Sanctify us through your word, and strengthen us with your presence.

In Jesus name, Amen.

Psalm 1

1 Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers,

2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.

3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.

4 Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

6 For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,

but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Galatians 5:13-26

13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” 15 If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. 16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

John 15:1-8

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes[a] so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.