

The Fruit of the Spirit

Series 1-10

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Introduction: When the Spirit Bears Fruit, the Flesh Loses Ground

In a world driven by pride, lust, noise, and impulsive reaction, the genuine evidence of the Spirit-filled life is not a platform, performance, or popularity—it's fruit.

Not the kind you manufacture. Not the kind you fake in public. But the kind only the Holy Ghost can produce in the soil of a surrendered heart.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance...”

— *Galatians 5:22–23*

This isn't a list of goals. It's a portrait of Jesus Christ formed in the life of the believer. Each fruit is:

- **Rooted in grace**, not grit
- **Manifested in weakness**, not performance
- **Grown through abiding**, not striving

And every one of them stands in direct opposition to the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19–21). These nine characteristics are not optional add-ons for elite Christians—they are **evidence of the Spirit's occupation**.

This 10-part VerseQuest exclusive will walk through each fruit:

- Not just what it means
- But how it's grown
- Why the flesh resists it
- And how it changes everything

From **love** that doesn't quit, to **temperance** that reigns over every impulse—these aren't virtues to admire from afar. They are **real, gritty, spiritual realities** that should be growing in every believer who walks in step with the Spirit.

This is fruit that lasts. Fruit that testifies. Fruit that feeds a hungry world.

Are you bearing it?

Let's find out—one fruit at a time.

1 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – The Root and the Fruit: What It Means to Walk in the Spirit

Overview of Galatians 5 – Explaining the difference between works of the flesh and fruit of the Spirit. How fruit is the evidence of abiding, not self-effort.

Introduction: From Root to Fruit

In the Christian life, the call is not simply to behave—but to bear. God is not interested in hollow religion, artificial righteousness, or temporary moral improvement. He is after **fruit**—the visible evidence of an inward spiritual reality. And that fruit is not self-produced, self-sustained, or self-glorifying.

It is the **fruit of the Spirit**.

The phrase comes from *Galatians 5:22–23*, where Paul lists nine qualities that naturally emerge when a believer is walking in step with the Holy Spirit. These traits—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance—are not commands to perform, but descriptions of what the Spirit produces when we **abide in Christ**.

Before we explore each individual fruit in this series, we must understand the **soil in which fruit grows**, the **war between flesh and Spirit**, and the **difference between trying to act spiritual and truly walking in the Spirit**.

1. The Context of Galatians 5: A Book About Grace vs. Legalism

The Book of Galatians is Paul's fiery letter defending the gospel of grace against the legalism infecting the early church. The Galatians were being told that salvation and sanctification required **obedience to the law of Moses**, including circumcision and rituals.

Paul forcefully refutes this:

“Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”
— *Galatians 3:3*

He reminds them that the Christian life starts **by grace through faith**—and continues the same way. You cannot **add law** to the gospel without **nullifying the gospel**.

This sets up the battle described in chapter 5—a battle not of **law vs. liberty**, but **flesh vs. Spirit**.

2. The Great Contrast: Works of the Flesh vs. Fruit of the Spirit

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”
— *Galatians 5:16*

Paul outlines two paths:

- **Walking in the Spirit** leads to fruit.
- **Walking in the flesh** leads to corruption.

The Works of the Flesh (*Galatians 5:19–21*)

Paul lists the evidences of a life governed by the flesh:

- **Sensual sins** (adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness)
- **Spiritual sins** (idolatry, witchcraft)
- **Social sins** (hatred, strife, envy, wrath, seditions)
- **Substance sins** (drunkenness, reveling)

These are not merely outward actions—they are **manifestations of a nature in rebellion against God**.

The Fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:22–23*)

In contrast, Paul lists nine beautiful qualities that grow from walking with God. This is not fruit of **self-discipline**, **legal effort**, or **religious appearance**. It is the **fruit of the Spirit**—something only He can produce in a surrendered believer.

3. Why Paul Uses the Word “Fruit”—Not “Fruits”

Paul doesn’t say “fruits of the Spirit,” but “**fruit**” (singular). Why?

Because these nine traits are not **nine separate spiritual goals**—they are **one unified manifestation of the Spirit's presence**. You don't get "joy" without also getting "temperance." You don't grow in "love" but remain "harsh." The Spirit grows them together as a **spiritual ecosystem**.

This fruit grows organically from **abiding in Christ**—not from self-effort.

4. Abiding, Not Achieving: The Key to Spiritual Fruit

Jesus explained this in John 15:

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

— *John 15:5*

Note that Jesus does **not command fruit**. He commands **abiding**. The fruit is the **result** of that connection.

Many Christians exhaust themselves trying to **act patient, act joyful, act loving**—but fruit cannot be faked for long. Real fruit is **produced**, not **performed**. It flows from a relationship with the Vine—**Jesus Christ Himself**.

5. What It Means to Walk in the Spirit

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

— *Galatians 5:16*

Walking in the Spirit is not mystical, emotional, or occasional. It means:

- **Living in continual dependence on the Holy Spirit**
- **Yielding your will to His direction**
- **Saturating your mind with the Word of God**
- **Saying no to the flesh and yes to Christ**

Walking in the Spirit is not a moment—it's a **lifestyle**. Step by step, day by day, choice by choice.

6. How the Flesh and Spirit Oppose One Another

“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh...”
— *Galatians 5:17*

This is the inner tug-of-war every believer experiences. The flesh wants:

- Immediate gratification
- Self-glory
- Moral autonomy

The Spirit wants:

- Obedience to God
- Holiness
- Christlikeness

You cannot feed both. You are always **sowing** to one or the other (Galatians 6:8).

7. Legalism vs. Liberty: Why Fruit Doesn't Grow in a Law-Based Life

Paul warns not to return to bondage (Galatians 5:1). Legalism tries to **force fruit** through rules, guilt, or outward pressure. But fruit only grows in **freedom**—the kind of freedom that flows from grace.

Law-based religion:

- Produces pride (when you succeed) or despair (when you fail)
- Focuses on external behavior, not internal transformation
- Looks good outwardly, but lacks spiritual life (Matthew 23:27)

The Spirit-led life:

- Produces humility and joy
- Starts in the heart and flows outward
- Results in authentic, lasting transformation

8. The Role of the Word in Growing Fruit

The Spirit never works independently of the Word.

“The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

— *John 6:63*

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly..”

— *Colossians 3:16*

Fruit grows where the Word is **planted, watered, and obeyed**. To walk in the Spirit is to walk in truth. The Word is the fertilizer that nourishes your roots.

9. The Fruit Is for Others to Taste

Fruit is never for the tree. It's for those around the tree.

The fruit of the Spirit blesses:

- Your spouse (love, patience, gentleness)
- Your children (peace, joy, goodness)
- Your church (faith, meekness, temperance)
- Your enemies (longsuffering, forgiveness, mercy)

If your “spirituality” only benefits **you**, it's not fruit—it's performance.

10. Fruitfulness vs. Busyness: A Common Trap

Not all Christian activity is Spirit-led.

- You can be busy without being fruitful.
- You can lead ministries and still walk in the flesh.
- You can grow a platform and neglect the inner life.

Jesus didn't say, “By their success you shall know them,” but:

“By their **fruits** ye shall know them.”

— *Matthew 7:20*

The Spirit cares more about **who you are becoming** than what you're doing.

11. Cultivating the Ground for Fruit to Grow

Fruit doesn't grow in hardened or neglected soil. It must be:

- **Broken** (repentance)
- **Watered** (prayer and Word)
- **Weeded** (removal of flesh and distractions)
- **Exposed to the sun** (walking in the light of God's presence)

God is not looking for talent—He's looking for **soil**.

12. What Blocks Fruit?

The works of the flesh choke out the fruit. These include:

- Bitterness
- Pride
- Envy
- Selfish ambition
- Impurity
- Worldliness

You cannot walk in the Spirit while feeding the flesh. Something must die for the other to live.

13. Fruitfulness Is the Evidence of True Discipleship

“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”

— *John 15:8*

God is not glorified by:

- Activity without intimacy
- Performance without purity
- Knowledge without transformation

He is glorified by **fruit**—and only the Spirit can produce it.

14. You Can't Manufacture Fruit—But You Can Position for Growth

You can't make an apple grow by gritting your teeth. But you can:

- Tend the soil
- Abide in the vine
- Receive nourishment

Likewise, you can't manufacture spiritual fruit—but you can surrender to the Spirit and let Him produce it in you.

Conclusion: Let the Spirit Take Over

The Christian life is not about trying harder—it's about **surrendering deeper**. Fruit is not the goal—**abiding is**. When you walk with the Spirit, the fruit will come.

And when that fruit shows up—love in the face of hatred, joy in suffering, peace in chaos—**you'll know it didn't come from you.**

It came from Him.

So stop trying to “act spiritual.” Start walking with the Spirit. Let Him produce in you what you never could.

Because when the **root is right**, the **fruit will follow**.

2 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – Love: The Foundation of All Fruit

Agape love as a Spirit-produced quality. Love vs. lust, selfishness, and apathy. How love governs the other fruits.

(1 Corinthians 13; Galatians 5:22)

Introduction: The First and Greatest Fruit

When Paul lists the fruit of the Spirit in *Galatians 5:22*, he starts with a towering word:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is **love...**”

It's no accident that love comes first. It is not only the first fruit—it is the **foundational fruit**. Every other fruit flows from it, is governed by it, and without it, becomes **an empty display**.

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”
— *1 Corinthians 13:13*

In this second installment of our Fruit of the Spirit series, we will explore the richness of **agape love**—what it is, what it is not, how it contrasts with the works of the flesh, and how it becomes the governing power behind every other fruit of the Spirit.

1. Love Is the Defining Mark of the Spirit-Filled Life

When Jesus was asked the greatest commandment, He responded with love:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”

“...and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”
— *Matthew 22:37–39*

Love isn't just a part of Christianity—it **is** the heartbeat of it. In *Romans 5:5*, Paul tells us that **“the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.”**

Love is not self-generated. It is **Spirit-poured**.

2. What Is Agape Love?

The Greek word used in Galatians 5 is **agape**—not eros (sensual), not phileo (friendship), not storge (family affection).

Agape is:

- **Unconditional**
- **Self-giving**
- **Not based on merit or emotion**
- **Rooted in God's character**

Agape love **gives, forgives, sacrifices, and serves**—not for personal benefit, but for the good of others and the glory of God.

“God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

— *Romans 5:8*

That is agape in action: self-sacrificial love aimed at the unworthy.

3. Love Is Not a Feeling—It’s a Fruit

The world tells us love is:

- An emotion
- A spark
- A chemical reaction

But the Bible says love is:

- A command
- A decision
- A **fruit** of the Spirit

You don’t “fall into” or “out of” biblical love. You **grow into it**—as the Spirit transforms your heart.

4. What Love Is Not: Exposing the Counterfeits

Love must be defined biblically, not culturally. Here’s what agape is **not**:

A. Love is not Lust

Lust seeks to consume. Love seeks to give. Lust is about pleasure. Love is about sacrifice.

Lust is **impulsive**, **selfish**, and **temporary**. Love is **patient**, **selfless**, and **eternal**.

“Flee also youthful lusts...”

— *2 Timothy 2:22*

B. Love is not Selfishness

True love **puts others first**. The flesh seeks gain, control, and applause. Agape love **serves in silence**.

“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory...”

— *Philippians 2:3*

C. Love is not Apathy

Some say, “I’m not unloving—I just don’t get involved.” That’s not love. Love **engages**, **initiates**, and **bears burdens**.

Love doesn’t avoid the mess. It steps into it.

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

— *Matthew 22:39*

5. 1 Corinthians 13 – The Greatest Exposition of Love

Paul dedicates an entire chapter to love—and places it above spiritual gifts, knowledge, and faith.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels... and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass...”

— *1 Corinthians 13:1*

Let’s explore what love **does** according to Paul:

Love is patient

Endures wrongs without retaliation.

Love is kind

Acts in mercy even when not deserved.

Love does not envy

Is content when others succeed.

Love is not proud

Does not boast or elevate self.

Love is not rude

Is considerate, not careless.

Love does not seek its own

Looks out for the interests of others.

Love is not easily provoked

Doesn't fly off the handle.

Love rejoices in truth

Is anchored in integrity, not flattery.

Love bears all things

Carries the weight when others can't.

Love believes all things

Gives the benefit of the doubt.

Love hopes all things

Never gives up on redemption.

Love endures all things

Keeps going when others quit.

6. How Love Governs All the Other Fruit

Agape love is not just **one fruit among nine**—it is the **soil in which all the other fruits grow**.

Without love:

- Joy becomes **superficial happiness**
- Peace becomes **detachment**
- Longsuffering becomes **toleration**
- Gentleness becomes **manipulation**
- Goodness becomes **virtue-signaling**
- Faith becomes **legalism**
- Meekness becomes **self-pity**
- Temperance becomes **stoicism**

But when **love is present**, it energizes and authenticates the rest.

7. Love and the Flesh: Irreconcilable Enemies

The flesh cannot produce agape love. The works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19–21) include:

- Hatred
- Emulation
- Strife
- Wrath
- Seditions
- Envyings

All of these are **anti-love**. The flesh demands its way. Love yields. The flesh strikes back. Love forgives. The flesh seeks control. Love seeks peace.

This is why walking in the Spirit is essential. The flesh can **fake** love for a moment. The Spirit **produces** it for a lifetime.

8. Jesus: The Perfect Picture of Agape Love

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”
— *John 15:13*

Jesus:

- **Touched lepers**
- **Wept over Jerusalem**
- **Prayed for His enemies**
- **Was moved with compassion**
- **Laid down His life for sinners**

He didn’t just talk about love—He **was** love incarnate.

To walk in the Spirit is to be **conformed to Christ**, and to be conformed to Christ is to **love like Him**.

9. What Love Looks Like in Daily Life

Love is not just theology—it's lifestyle. Here's how agape shows up:

A. In Marriage

Choosing to serve when you're tired. Speaking gently. Forgiving quickly. Seeking your spouse's good above your own.

B. In Parenting

Correcting in grace. Listening with care. Modeling Christ—not just morals.

C. In Church

Bearing with weakness. Serving without recognition. Avoiding gossip. Encouraging the discouraged.

D. In Conflict

Turning the other cheek. Speaking truth in love. Seeking reconciliation over retaliation.

10. How the Spirit Grows Love in Us

You cannot grit your teeth and produce agape love. It must be **grown** by the Spirit through:

A. Abiding in the Word

“Faith worketh by love.” — *Galatians 5:6*

The more you know Christ, the more you love like Him.

B. Trials and Suffering

God often grows love in **hard places**. Patience, forgiveness, and empathy develop in seasons of struggle.

C. Confession and Repentance

Love is choked by pride and sin. Repentance clears the soil.

D. Prayer for Others

When you pray for people, your heart softens toward them.

11. Love and the End Times Church

“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.”

— *Matthew 24:12*

We are living in a loveless world—and often a loveless church age. The flesh is loud. The Spirit is gentle. And many Christians are more fluent in anger, sarcasm, and self-interest than in love.

But God is calling a remnant to **walk in love**, not just **talk about truth**.

Love doesn't compromise doctrine. It confirms it.

12. Love as the Mark of Maturity

“Above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”

— *Colossians 3:14*

You can be theologically brilliant and spiritually bankrupt.

You can teach truth with a bitter heart.

You can fight for sound doctrine and forget to love your brother.

The true mark of spiritual maturity is **agape love**—produced by the Spirit, rooted in truth, and directed toward others.

Conclusion: Let the Spirit Produce His Love in You

The greatest thing the Spirit can grow in your life is **love**.

Not fluffy emotionalism. Not compromise. Not man-pleasing.

But bold, sacrificial, truth-filled, patient, humble, cross-shaped **love**.

And when that love grows in you:

- Your home will change.
- Your church will change.
- Your witness will shine brighter.
- Your heart will look more like Christ's.

Ask the Spirit to fill you.

Ask Him to break you.

Ask Him to make you **loving**—even when it costs, even when it hurts, even when it’s hard.

Because when the fruit of love grows, **everything else follows**.

3 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – Joy: The Unshakable Delight in God

Joy as more than emotion—rooted in Christ, not circumstances. Joy vs. bitterness and depression. How the Spirit grows joy in suffering.

(Galatians 5:22; John 15:11; James 1:2–4)

Introduction: Joy That Stays When the Storm Stays

Joy is often mistaken for happiness. But happiness is based on *what happens*. Joy is based on *Who lives within*. The fruit of the Spirit includes **joy**—not the fragile, fleeting emotion of the world, but an unshakable delight in God Himself.

In this third installment of our Fruit of the Spirit series, we dive into a biblical understanding of **Spirit-filled joy**. It is not plastic, fake, or forced. It is real, rooted, resilient, and revealed most clearly in **hard places**.

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, **joy**, peace...”

— *Galatians 5:22*

This essay explores what joy is, what it isn’t, how it contrasts with worldly emotions like bitterness and despair, and how the Spirit produces true joy in us—even through tears.

1. Joy Is Not Optional—It’s Evidence of the Spirit

Joy is not a personality trait. It’s not reserved for the extroverted, optimistic, or emotionally expressive. Joy is a **supernatural result of walking in the Spirit**.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that **my joy** might remain in you, and that **your joy might be full**.”

— *John 15:11*

Jesus didn’t just offer joy—He offered **His own joy**.

This means joy:

- Comes from Christ
- Is sustained by the Spirit
- Is experienced in the soul
- Is expressed in praise and perseverance

Joy is a spiritual reality—not an emotional rollercoaster.

2. The Difference Between Joy and Happiness

Happiness depends on circumstances. It's the product of:

- Good news
- Financial stability
- Success
- Favorable conditions

But when things fall apart, happiness evaporates.

Joy, however:

- Is **rooted in Christ**, not circumstance
- Remains even when feelings falter
- Shines brightest in the dark
- Is not taken by sorrow—but deepens through it

“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.”

— *Philippians 4:4*

Paul wrote that from **prison**, not from a beach house.

3. What Joy Is Not: Clearing the Confusion

Many Christians confuse joy with:

- **Denial** ("I'm fine. It's fine. Everything's fine.")

- **Cheeriness** (Constant smiles, upbeat tone)
- **Detachment** (Pretending not to feel pain)

These are **not joy**. In fact, they can become barriers to true joy.

Joy doesn't ignore reality—it **overcomes** it.

4. Joy vs. Bitterness and Depression

A. Joy vs. Bitterness

Bitterness grows when we:

- Hold onto offense
- Compare ourselves with others
- Fixate on injustice

Bitterness poisons the soul. Joy purifies it.

“Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any **root of bitterness** springing up trouble you...”

— *Hebrews 12:15*

Bitterness is a fruit of the flesh. Joy is the fruit of surrender.

B. Joy vs. Depression

Depression can be chemical, circumstantial, or spiritual. It saps hope, dulls vision, and isolates hearts. Christians can and do battle depression—but it is not a fruit of the Spirit.

Joy doesn't mean you're **always emotionally up**—but it means you're **anchored even when down**.

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? ... Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him...”

— *Psalms 42:11*

5. Joy Comes from Knowing Christ—Not Escaping Trouble

“...in thy presence is **fulness of joy**...”

— *Psalms 16:11*

Joy is found in **nearness to God**, not escape from pain.

Examples:

- **Habakkuk** rejoiced though the fig tree didn't blossom (Habakkuk 3:17–18)
- **Paul and Silas** sang praises at midnight in jail (Acts 16:25)
- **Jesus** endured the cross “for the joy that was set before him” (Hebrews 12:2)

These were not joyful **circumstances**—but they were joyful **believers**.

6. The Spirit Grows Joy Through Suffering

God often cultivates joy in **hard soil**.

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”

— *James 1:2–3*

Trials can:

- Strip away false sources of joy
- Drive us into deeper communion with God
- Make us treasure eternal things more than earthly ones

Suffering is the tilling of the soul that allows joy to grow deeply.

7. The Role of the Word in Fueling Joy

“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the **joy and rejoicing** of mine heart...”

— *Jeremiah 15:16*

The Word of God is joy's food.

You cannot have Spirit-produced joy if you:

- Starve yourself of Scripture
- Dwell on lies and negativity
- Fill your mind with fleshly media

Joy is strengthened when you feast on **truth**.

8. Joy Strengthens You for the Battle

“...for the **joy of the Lord is your strength.**”

— *Nehemiah 8:10*

Joy doesn't just result from strength—it **gives it.**

When you have joy:

- You don't quit easily
- You endure trials with vision
- You minister to others more freely
- You bounce back faster from setbacks

Joy makes you spiritually resilient.

9. Joy Is Expressed, Not Suppressed

Joy isn't just internal—it overflows:

- In **praise**
- In **thanksgiving**
- In **witness**
- In **generosity**

“Then will I go unto the altar of God... unto God my exceeding joy...”

— *Psalms 43:4*

Joy is **loud in gratitude, quiet in confidence, and present in suffering.**

10. Joy Is Contagious in the Church

Joy strengthens unity. A joyless church becomes:

- Judgmental
- Competitive
- Cold

- Program-driven

A joyful church is:

- Warm
- Worshipful
- Sacrificial
- Gospel-centered

Joy spills over into every ministry, every greeting, every sermon, every song.

11. The Enemy of Joy: Idolatry

When we place our joy in:

- Recognition
- Success
- Comfort
- Relationships

We are building our house on sand.

These idols cannot sustain joy because they are:

- Fragile
- Temporary
- Conditional

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.”

— *1 John 5:21*

The Spirit crushes idols to **restore joy in God alone.**

12. Cultivating the Fruit of Joy Daily

Joy grows through:

- **Thanksgiving:** List what God has done.

- **Worship:** Even when you don't feel like it.
- **Obedience:** There's joy in a clean conscience.
- **Fellowship:** Joy multiplies in community.
- **Perspective:** Focus on what's eternal.

The Spirit doesn't produce joy in chaos—He produces it in **surrendered stillness**.

13. Living Joyfully in a Joyless World

This world is angry, anxious, and loud. It feeds fear, comparison, and despair.

But the Spirit gives believers joy that:

- Confounds the culture
- Testifies of a better kingdom
- Honors Jesus in the storm
- Becomes a beacon of hope to the broken

Your joy **preaches louder than your opinions**.

14. Joy and Evangelism: A Powerful Combination

“Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation...”

— *Psalms 51:12*

A joyful Christian is a powerful witness.

People don't just want to hear truth—they want to **see someone who delights in it**.

- You don't need to be perfect.
- You don't need a platform.
- But you do need the **real joy of Jesus**—and the world will notice.

Conclusion: Choose Joy by Choosing the Spirit

Joy isn't a result of a perfect life. It's the result of a **Spirit-filled heart**.

It is not a command to fake—it's a **fruit to grow**.

It doesn't mean the tears stop. It means **hope sings through the tears**.

Ask the Holy Spirit to grow joy in you today:

- Not plastic joy, but real joy
- Not shallow grins, but deep gladness
- Not temporary cheer, but **eternal delight in God**

Because when joy is rooted in Christ, it cannot be stolen—it only gets stronger.

4 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – Peace: Inner Calm in a Chaotic World

Peace with God and peace within. Contrasted with anxiety, fear, and strife. How peace grows through trust in God's sovereignty.

(Galatians 5:22; Romans 5:1; Philippians 4:6–7)

Introduction: A World at War, a Heart at Rest

The world is spinning faster, louder, and more frantically than ever. Fear fills headlines, strife floods relationships, and anxiety stalks even the strongest hearts. Peace, for many, feels like a distant dream—something always longed for but never fully grasped.

And yet, nestled in Paul's list of Spirit-produced qualities in *Galatians 5:22*, is this steady, immovable word:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**...”

The peace that comes from God is not circumstantial. It doesn't come from external control, distraction, or emotional detachment. It comes from the **Spirit of God living within the believer**, producing a supernatural calm that transcends the chaos around them.

In this fourth installment of the Fruit of the Spirit series, we explore what true peace is, how it contrasts with the flesh's unrest, and how the Holy Spirit cultivates deep, immovable peace in the heart that trusts God's sovereignty.

1. What Is Peace? Biblical Definition, Not Cultural Noise

In the Bible, peace is more than the absence of conflict. It is the presence of:

- Wholeness
- Harmony
- Security
- Calm
- Confidence in God

The Hebrew word is **shalom**, meaning **completeness, well-being, tranquility**. The Greek equivalent, **eirēnē**, conveys rest in the soul that is grounded in **reconciliation with God** and **assurance of His rule**.

Biblical peace is not fragile or elusive. It is **anchored in relationship** with Christ and **fueled by the Spirit**.

2. Two Types of Peace: With God and Within

A. Peace with God – *Positional Peace*

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
— *Romans 5:1*

Before salvation, we were at war with God (Romans 8:7). Our sin put us in rebellion. But the blood of Christ **ended the war**. The moment we place faith in Him, we are **justified**—declared righteous—and we receive **peace with God**.

This is not based on feeling. It’s a **fact**. It means:

- God is no longer our Judge, but our Father
- We no longer stand condemned, but redeemed
- Heaven is no longer closed, but open

B. Peace within – *Practical, Daily Peace*

This peace is **subjective**—felt in the soul—and grows as we **trust God’s sovereignty**, obey His Word, and **walk in the Spirit**.

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

— *Philippians 4:7*

3. Peace vs. Anxiety, Fear, and Strife

The flesh cannot produce peace. In fact, it produces the **opposite**.

A. Peace vs. Anxiety

Anxiety is:

- Fear about the future
- Obsession with control
- Mental spinning

“Be careful [anxious] for nothing...”

— *Philippians 4:6*

Anxiety says, “I must hold everything together.”

Peace says, “God holds all things in His hands.”

B. Peace vs. Fear

Fear torments (1 John 4:18). Peace **protects**.

“God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

— *2 Timothy 1:7*

Fear sees threats. Peace sees **God’s promises**.

C. Peace vs. Strife

Strife flows from pride, competition, and division.

“Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.”

— *James 3:16*

But:

“The wisdom that is from above is... **peaceable...**”

— *James 3:17*

4. The Flesh Can’t Produce Peace—It Only Imitates It

The world tries to manufacture peace through:

- Vacations
- Medication
- Distraction
- Control
- Escape

But these are **temporary bandages**, not lasting healing. The flesh can't produce what only the Spirit can grow.

5. Peace Comes from Trust in God's Sovereignty

“Thou wilt keep him in **perfect peace**, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”

— *Isaiah 26:3*

Peace flows from **knowing God is in control**. The Spirit reminds us:

- God is sovereign over every event
- Nothing surprises Him
- His plans are wise, even when painful
- He is with us in the storm

The more we trust His sovereignty, the less we fear uncertainty.

6. Peace Grows Through Prayer

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer... let your requests be made known unto God.”

— *Philippians 4:6*

Peace is not passive. It's pursued through **prayer**. When we:

- Cast our cares
- Worship in the storm
- Thank God in advance

- Rest in His presence

...the Spirit **calms our anxious minds**.

Prayer is not a performance—it's a transfer of burden.

7. Peace Grows Through the Word

“Great peace have they which love thy law...”

— *Psalm 119:165*

The more you **saturate your mind with Scripture**, the more your soul is:

- Stabilized
- Cleansed
- Strengthened

The Word anchors your thinking in truth, even when feelings rise.

8. Peace Grows in Suffering

It's easy to talk about peace when life is smooth. But true peace is **forged in fire**.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation...”

— *John 16:33*

Examples:

- **Joseph** in the pit and prison
- **David** running from Saul
- **Paul** writing from jail
- **Jesus** asleep in the storm

In suffering, the Spirit proves His presence by producing a **peace that makes no earthly sense**.

9. The Peace of Christ Rules the Heart

“And let the **peace of God rule in your hearts...**”

— *Colossians 3:15*

The word “rule” means **to umpire**. Peace helps you:

- Discern decisions
- Confirm God’s direction
- Detect internal conflict
- Stay grounded in His will

When the Spirit is grieved, peace lifts. When the Spirit is pleased, peace settles.

10. Peace Multiplies in Unity

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

— *Ephesians 4:3*

A Spirit-filled church is a **peaceful church**. It:

- Avoids drama
- Confronts biblically
- Forgives quickly
- Honors leadership
- Pursues reconciliation

Where peace rules, the enemy **loses his grip**.

11. Peace in Death and Dying

The Spirit’s peace is not just for life—it’s for **death**.

“Let not your heart be troubled... I go to prepare a place for you.”

— *John 14:1-2*

Believers can:

- Face death with confidence
- Comfort the grieving

- Die in peace, knowing their eternity is secure

Many saints in Scripture and history have gone to glory with **peace on their lips and joy in their hearts**.

12. Peace That Passes Understanding

“And the **peace of God, which passeth all understanding**, shall keep your hearts and minds...”

— *Philippians 4:7*

This peace:

- Defies logic
- Outlasts storms
- Guards your thoughts
- Strengthens your heart

The world can't give it—and the world can't take it.

13. Peace Isn't Weakness—It's Strength

Some see peacemakers as passive, soft, or avoidant. But Jesus said:

“Blessed are the peacemakers...”

— *Matthew 5:9*

To be a peacemaker is to:

- Resist gossip
- Pursue reconciliation
- Kill pride
- Choose humility
- Stand for truth in love

It's not peace at **any cost**—it's peace at **Christ's cost**.

14. The Spirit Leads Us Into Peace, Not Confusion

“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace...”

— *1 Corinthians 14:33*

When you walk in the Spirit, you are led by:

- Clarity
- Calmness
- Conviction

The enemy stirs panic. The Spirit brings peace.

15. Cultivating Peace Daily: A Checklist

- Start your day in the Word
- Cast your burdens in prayer
- Turn off the noise
- Walk in forgiveness
- Trust God's timing
- Refuse to argue over non-essentials
- Meditate on Scripture
- Rest in God's sovereignty
- Speak peace over your family
- Take thoughts captive (2 Corinthians 10:5)

Conclusion: Peace Is a Person

Peace is not found in a place. It's not found in a plan. It's found in a **Person—Jesus Christ.**

“For he is our peace...”

— *Ephesians 2:14*

The Spirit doesn't offer you an escape from life—but **a power to face it with peace.**

Let Him grow that fruit in you. Not peace that depends on calm waters—but peace that says, like Jesus in the boat:

“Peace, be still.”

5 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – Longsuffering: Endurance Without Complaining

Patience in trials, delays, and with difficult people. Contrasted with wrath, revenge, and irritability. How the Spirit cultivates endurance.

(Galatians 5:22; Colossians 1:11; James 5:10–11)

Introduction: The Beauty of a Steady Soul

In a culture that celebrates instant results, demands quick fixes, and fuels emotional outbursts, the biblical trait of **longsuffering** stands like a lighthouse in a storm. It is not just passive waiting—it is **active endurance** rooted in the Spirit of God.

Longsuffering is the ability to stay grounded in truth, peace, and love while under pressure, provocation, delay, or pain. It is the power to **withstand without exploding**, to **persist without quitting**, and to **endure without becoming bitter**.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, **longsuffering...**”

— *Galatians 5:22*

In this fifth installment of our Fruit of the Spirit series, we’ll explore what longsuffering really is, what it’s not, how it contrasts with the flesh’s impulse to react in anger or vengeance, and how the Spirit cultivates this quiet strength in us.

1. What Is Longsuffering? The Forgotten Fruit

Longsuffering (Greek: *makrothumia*) means:

- **Long-temperedness**
- **Enduring patience**
- **Restraint under provocation**
- **The ability to suffer long without complaint**

It is the **opposite of irritability, short temper, or vengeful behavior**.

Unlike simple “patience,” which often deals with time or waiting, **longsuffering** involves dealing with **people** and **prolonged difficulty**. It is love on trial. Peace under fire. Faith stretched but unbroken.

2. Longsuffering in Scripture: A Godlike Trait

God is described as **longsuffering** repeatedly in Scripture:

“The LORD is merciful and gracious, **slow to anger**, and plenteous in mercy.”

— *Psalms 103:8*

“Despise not the riches of his goodness and **forbearance and longsuffering...?**”

— *Romans 2:4*

If the Spirit is conforming us to Christ, then we too must become **slow to anger**, abundant in mercy, and able to endure offenses without reacting sinfully.

Longsuffering is not weakness. It is **strength under the Spirit’s control**.

3. Longsuffering vs. Wrath, Revenge, and Irritability

A. Longsuffering vs. Wrath

Wrath is the flesh’s response to injury or delay. It erupts. Longsuffering endures.

“Cease from anger, and forsake wrath...”

— *Psalms 37:8*

Wrath wants justice **now**. Longsuffering leaves justice to God.

B. Longsuffering vs. Revenge

Revenge is a retaliatory spirit. But the Spirit says:

“Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”

— *Romans 12:19*

Longsuffering does not seek payback—it trusts divine justice.

C. Longsuffering vs. Irritability

Irritability is being easily provoked. A sharp tone. An impatient sigh. A harsh word. The Spirit softens these edges with grace.

“He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding...”

— *Proverbs 14:29*

Longsuffering doesn't excuse sin—but it doesn't explode at it either.

4. Jesus: The Perfect Picture of Longsuffering

Jesus modeled longsuffering:

- With **His disciples** (who misunderstood and argued)
- With **sinners** (who mocked, accused, and resisted)
- With **His enemies** (who nailed Him to a cross)

“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”

— *Luke 23:34*

That was **longsuffering incarnate**.

He could have called down angels—but He chose to endure. Not because they were worthy—but because **love suffers long** (1 Corinthians 13:4).

5. Longsuffering in Trials

Sometimes God doesn't remove the storm—He strengthens the saint.

“...tribulation worketh patience.”

— *Romans 5:3*

God allows:

- Delays
- Disappointments
- Physical pain
- Emotional weariness
- Difficult people

Not to crush us, but to **grow longsuffering** in us.

It is the Spirit's way of deepening roots in hostile soil.

6. Longsuffering with People Who Don't Change

This may be the hardest form.

When you:

- Apologize, and they still attack
- Serve, and they remain ungrateful
- Pray, and see no breakthrough
- Forgive, and get hurt again

The Spirit whispers, “**Stay faithful. Don't grow weary.**”

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.”

— *James 5:7*

God's love isn't based on the other person's response—**and neither is yours** when the Spirit is in control.

7. The Power of Longsuffering in Ministry

Paul writes:

“But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God... in **much patience**, in afflictions, in necessities...”

— *2 Corinthians 6:4*

Every faithful pastor, teacher, or servant of God knows:

- Growth takes time
- Sheep can bite
- Fruit often grows in hard seasons

Ministry without longsuffering becomes:

- Driven
- Cynical
- Fleshly

But with longsuffering, it becomes:

- Tender
- Enduring
- Holy

8. Longsuffering in Marriage and Family

Every close relationship will test your patience. The Spirit produces longsuffering in the home through:

- Consistent parenting, even when fruit is delayed
- Patience with a spouse's weakness
- Silence instead of snapping
- Prayer instead of pressure

You don't win family battles with louder voices—but with a **quiet strength** rooted in God's Spirit.

9. How the Spirit Cultivates Longsuffering

Longsuffering is not achieved through willpower. It is **grown** through:

A. Abiding in the Word

“The entrance of thy words giveth light...” — *Psalm 119:130*

Meditating on God's longsuffering toward you makes it easier to extend it to others.

B. Daily Surrender

You don't need more patience—you need **less control**. The Spirit fills the surrendered heart.

C. Prayer in the Tension

Ask: “Lord, give me grace in this moment.” The Spirit brings calm when you call on Him.

D. Remembering the Cross

How long has God endured you? Let the gospel soften your response to others.

10. Longsuffering Is Not Tolerance of Sin

Some confuse longsuffering with enabling or silence in the face of evil. But Scripture says:

“...admonish one another.” — *Colossians 3:16*

“...speak the truth in love.” — *Ephesians 4:15*

Longsuffering:

- Is not compromise
- Is not passivity
- Is not approval of wrongdoing

It is **truth with tenderness**. Confrontation without condemnation. Correction wrapped in compassion.

11. The Fruit of Longsuffering Glorifies God

When others:

- Lose their temper
- Seek revenge
- Slam the door
- Snap back
- Walk away

...but you remain **calm, kind, and consistent**—the world sees something *supernatural*.

That is the Spirit’s glory on display.

12. Longsuffering Makes You a Safe Person

People open up to:

- The patient
- The stable
- The enduring

When the Spirit grows longsuffering in you:

- You become slow to speak and quick to listen
- You offer space for others to grow
- You become a refuge, not a threat

13. Biblical Examples of Longsuffering

A. Job

“Ye have heard of the patience of Job...” — *James 5:11*

Job suffered loss, pain, betrayal, and confusion—yet did not curse God.

B. Moses

“Now the man Moses was very meek...” — *Numbers 12:3*

Moses endured a grumbling, complaining people—over and over. He interceded for them, pleaded for them, and led them anyway.

C. Stephen

“Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” — *Acts 7:60*

Even while being stoned, Stephen reflected the longsuffering Spirit of Christ.

14. The Endurance That Outlasts

“...let us run with **patience** the race that is set before us...” — *Hebrews 12:1*

The Christian life is a marathon—not a sprint. The Spirit produces the kind of endurance that:

- Keeps going when others stop
- Endures when rewards are delayed
- Serves even when unseen
- Loves even when unloved

15. What Kills Longsuffering

- **Self-entitlement** ("I deserve better")
- **Comparison** ("Why is their life easier?")
- **Pride** ("I shouldn't have to put up with this")
- **Unbelief** ("This will never change")

These are rooted in the **flesh**. But the Spirit whispers, "God is not done. Stay. Trust. Endure."

Conclusion: The Strength to Stay When It Would Be Easier to Leave

Longsuffering is not resignation—it's **faith-filled endurance**.

It's not stuffing your emotions—it's **bringing them to the Spirit**.

It's not weakness—it's the **quiet roar of God's strength inside you**.

In an angry, impatient, reactive world—let the Spirit grow this rare and radiant fruit in you.

Stay when it's hard.

Wait when it's long.

Forgive when it hurts.

Love when it's costly.

Because when the world sees a heart that suffers long—they see a Savior who did the same.

6 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – Gentleness: Strength Wrapped in Kindness

What biblical gentleness is (not weakness). Gentleness in speech, action, and conflict. Contrasted with harshness and cruelty.

(Galatians 5:22; 2 Timothy 2:24–25; Proverbs 15:1)

Introduction: A Quiet Power That Changes Everything

In a world that rewards power, platform, and performance, the fruit of **gentleness** seems out of place. It's often misunderstood as weakness or softness—something unfit for real leadership, ministry, or conflict.

But in God’s kingdom, **gentleness is not weakness—it’s controlled strength**. It is power in submission. Authority under restraint. It is what God uses to break the hardest hearts and heal the deepest wounds.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, **gentleness...**”

— *Galatians 5:22*

This sixth installment of our Fruit of the Spirit series explores the biblical meaning of gentleness, how it functions in word and deed, and why it is one of the most powerful—yet underrated—marks of a Spirit-filled believer.

1. What Is Gentleness? The Strength of Self-Controlled Love

The Greek word for gentleness (*chrestotēs*) is sometimes translated as “kindness,” but it conveys more than politeness. It means:

- Moral goodness
- Tenderness in tone and action
- A disposition of grace toward others
- Softness with truth, firmness with love

Gentleness is **strength guided by love**, not anger.

It’s what happens when the Spirit replaces pride, cruelty, or domination with humility, kindness, and self-restraint.

2. Gentleness Is Not Weakness

Let’s be clear: Gentleness is **not**:

- Passivity
- Cowardice
- Indecision
- Emotional fragility

Gentleness does not mean you:

- Avoid hard conversations

- Compromise truth
- Tolerate sin
- Let people walk all over you

Gentleness means you confront—but with grace. You correct—but without crush. You lead—but without a whip.

It's **boldness without brutality. Courage without cruelty.**

3. The Gentleness of Jesus

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart...”

— *Matthew 11:29*

Jesus was the Lion and the Lamb. He could drive out money changers and weep with Mary. He could confront Pharisees and touch lepers. His gentleness wasn't an absence of strength—but a **wise use of it.**

“A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench...”

— *Matthew 12:20*

He didn't crush the weak—He restored them.

Gentleness is the character of Christ formed in the soul of a believer.

4. Gentleness in Speech

“A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”

— *Proverbs 15:1*

Gentleness isn't just a tone—it's a tool of reconciliation.

A. Correcting Without Condemning

“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves...”

— *2 Timothy 2:25*

Rebukes wrapped in harshness often provoke rebellion. But correction wrapped in gentleness often invites repentance.

B. Disagreeing Without Dividing

A Spirit-filled believer can:

- Stand firm in doctrine
- Reject false teaching
- Debate without degrading

Because **truth never requires a harsh delivery.**

5. Gentleness in Action

Gentleness shows up in how we:

- Serve others
- Respond to criticism
- Handle interruptions
- React when wronged
- Treat those under our authority

It's the mom who answers her toddler's tantrum with a whisper instead of a scream.

It's the leader who listens instead of lashing out.

It's the believer who sacrifices comfort for someone else's healing.

Gentleness is the **motion of love in slow, deliberate steps.**

6. Gentleness in Conflict

The flesh responds to conflict with:

- Harshness
- Accusation
- Power plays
- Mockery
- Control

The Spirit responds with:

- Peace

- Calm
- Humility
- Steadfast love

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the **spirit of meekness...**”

— *Galatians 6:1*

Gentleness **heals where harshness hardens.**

7. Gentleness in Leadership

Worldly leadership says:

- “Make them fear you.”
- “Assert dominance.”
- “Demand compliance.”

But Paul said:

“We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.”

— *1 Thessalonians 2:7*

Leaders lead best when:

- They are gentle with the weak
- They listen to the wounded
- They stay calm under fire

Spiritual authority is strongest when wrapped in gentleness.

8. Gentleness in Evangelism

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always... with **meekness and fear...**”

— *1 Peter 3:15*

You don't need a megaphone to reach a heart. You need:

- Truth
- Clarity
- Gentleness

Gentleness disarms defenses. It allows people to hear the gospel **without being pushed into a corner**.

9. Gentleness with the Hurting

Some people are not hard-hearted—they are **bruised reeds**. They don't need a sermon—they need **gentle presence**.

- The person grieving doesn't need your theology—they need your tenderness.
- The one in failure doesn't need a lecture—they need love wrapped in quiet truth.
- The fearful don't need force—they need **peace given gently**.

Gentleness is God's way of saying, "You are safe here."

10. Gentleness with Ourselves

Some believers are harshest not with others—but with themselves.

They:

- Condemn themselves constantly
- Replay failures on a loop
- Speak internal words they'd never say to anyone else

But gentleness includes how you treat your own soul.

The Spirit says:

- "My grace is sufficient."
- "My yoke is easy."
- "There is therefore now no condemnation..." (Romans 8:1)

If God is gentle with you—walk in step with that gentleness.

11. What Gentleness Is Not

- It's not refusing to correct.
- It's not the absence of firmness.
- It's not enabling sin.
- It's not fear of confrontation.
- It's not emotional fragility.

Biblical gentleness is **truth carried on the shoulders of grace**.

It confronts sin without humiliating the sinner.

It leads without intimidation.

It forgives without delay.

12. What Harshness Looks Like

- Snapping when stressed
- Yelling to gain control
- Shaming others
- Ridiculing or mocking
- Refusing to listen
- Correcting in anger

These are not signs of strong leadership or conviction.

They're signs of the **flesh in charge**, not the Spirit.

13. Why Gentleness Is So Powerful

- It de-escalates conflict
- It heals broken relationships
- It reflects the heart of Christ
- It wins influence through humility
- It makes room for repentance and growth

- It invites safety in community

Gentleness isn't weak—it's **holy restraint for the sake of another's good.**

14. Cultivating Gentleness Through the Spirit

A. Yielding, Not Achieving

You don't "try harder" to be gentle. You **surrender deeper.**

Ask daily:

"Holy Spirit, make me gentle like Jesus."

B. Remembering How God Has Treated You

"Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near."

— *Philippians 4:5* (NIV)

You've been:

- Forgiven
- Pursued
- Carried
- Held tenderly

Now extend what you've received.

C. Practicing Self-Control in the Moment

Pause. Breathe. Pray before reacting.

D. Listening More Than Speaking

Gentleness listens. Gentleness slows down.

15. Gentleness Changes Everything

Gentleness may not impress the crowds—but it **transforms families.**

It may not get applause—but it **wins trust.**

It may not trend online—but it **reflects the kingdom of Christ.**

“Let your moderation [gentleness] be known unto all men...”
— *Philippians 4:5*

It’s not just what we say—it’s how we say it.
It’s not just what we do—it’s how we do it.

When you walk in gentleness, you walk **in step with the Spirit**.

Conclusion: Wrap Your Strength in Kindness

Gentleness is not weakness.

It’s **Spirit-empowered restraint** that reflects the strength of Christ.

It’s **conviction wrapped in compassion**.

It’s **truth delivered with grace**.

It’s the tone, posture, and manner that shows the world:

This person walks with God.

Let the Spirit grow this fruit in you—

- So your words build, not break
- So your actions heal, not harm
- So your leadership restores, not controls
- So your life looks like Jesus—full of truth and grace

Because in a world of shouting and pushing...

gentleness is radical.

7 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – Goodness: Moral Beauty and Integrity

Doing what is right because God is good. Contrasted with evil intent, manipulation, and hypocrisy. How goodness flows from a pure heart.

(Galatians 5:22; Psalm 34:8; Romans 12:21)

Introduction: Not Just Doing Good—Being Good

In a world where "good" is often used loosely—attached to behavior, feelings, or performance—the biblical fruit of **goodness** goes far deeper. It is not merely about being nice or doing the right thing when others are watching. Goodness is **moral beauty** in action. It is **God's character reflected** in a believer's life.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, **goodness...**”
— *Galatians 5:22*

This essay explores what goodness truly is, how it contrasts with the flesh's manipulation and hypocrisy, and how the Holy Spirit grows this kind of integrity within a believer whose heart is pure, motives are sincere, and character is shaped by Christ.

1. Defining Goodness: What It Is (and Isn't)

Biblical Goodness (*agathōsunē*) means:

- Uprightness of heart and life
- Moral excellence
- Sincere righteousness without selfish ambition
- A genuine desire to do what is **right**, not what is **easy** or **impressive**

Goodness is **truth in action**. It's integrity in both **public and private life**.

It's not just “being good” as the world sees it (kind, generous, or helpful). It's **God's goodness reproduced in you** through the work of the Holy Spirit.

2. God Is the Standard of Goodness

“O taste and see that **the LORD is good**: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.”
— *Psalms 34:8*

“There is none good but one, that is, God.”
— *Mark 10:18*

God is not good because He meets some moral checklist—**He defines it**.

Everything God does is good, because **He is good**:

- His judgments are good (Psalm 119:39)
- His mercy is good (Psalm 100:5)

- His discipline is good (Hebrews 12:10)
- His timing is good (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

When the Spirit grows goodness in us, He's making us **like the One who is good**.

3. Goodness Comes From the Heart, Not Just the Hands

“A good man out of the **good treasure of his heart** bringeth forth that which is good...”

— *Luke 6:45*

You can do the right thing with the wrong motive:

- Giving for praise
- Serving for power
- Teaching to impress
- Correcting with pride

Biblical goodness begins in the **heart**, not just the hands. It flows from a heart purified by truth and filled with love.

4. Goodness Is Not Self-Righteousness

Goodness is not:

- Moral superiority
- Legalistic piety
- Public virtue for private gain

The Pharisees appeared good—but Jesus exposed their hypocrisy. Their “righteousness” was:

- Self-promoting
- Showy
- Superficial

“Woe unto you... for ye are like whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones...”

— *Matthew 23:27*

True goodness **isn’t seen by everyone—it’s seen by God first.**

5. The Opposites of Goodness: Evil Intent, Manipulation, and Hypocrisy

The fruit of the flesh (Galatians 5:19–21) includes:

- Hatred
- Envy
- Variance
- Heresies
- Emulations

These are the **distortions of goodness.**

A. Evil Intent

Even good deeds can mask evil desires:

- Helping to control
- Serving to manipulate
- Flattering to deceive

Goodness is **pure in motive**, not just appearance.

B. Manipulation

The world uses false goodness to gain influence. God grows **authentic goodness** to reflect His glory.

C. Hypocrisy

Hypocrisy wears the mask of goodness. But when no one is watching, the true fruit is revealed.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked...”

— *Galatians 6:7*

6. Goodness in Jesus: The Living Example

Jesus was the embodiment of **perfect goodness**:

- He healed out of compassion, not popularity.
- He fed the hungry because they were hungry, not to gain applause.
- He cleansed the temple out of zeal for God's house—not personal offense.
- He spoke truth even when it offended the crowds.

“Who went about doing good...”

— *Acts 10:38*

Jesus didn't just do good things—He **was good**, and that goodness was consistent from the cross to the cradle.

7. Goodness in Relationships

Goodness is not confined to ministry or public actions—it's revealed in:

- **Marriage** – being faithful, honest, and patient
- **Parenting** – guiding with grace, not rage
- **Friendship** – speaking truth in love
- **Church life** – serving without agenda

A good person:

- Confronts with compassion
- Helps without keeping score
- Gives without demanding recognition
- Rejoices in others' success

8. Goodness in Leadership and Ministry

“A bishop then must be... of good behavior...”

— *1 Timothy 3:2*

Goodness in leadership:

- Does not manipulate followers
- Doesn't twist Scripture to control
- Keeps private integrity and public witness aligned
- Seeks people's growth over personal gain

The fruit of goodness is the antidote to spiritual abuse.

9. How the Spirit Grows Goodness in Us

A. Through the Word of God

“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.”

— *Psalms 119:9*

The more you fill your heart with truth, the more your life overflows with goodness.

B. Through the Fear of God

“By the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.”

— *Proverbs 16:6*

Goodness grows when we live aware of God's presence.

C. Through Trials

Suffering strips away pretense and tests the roots of our character.

D. Through Confession

Goodness doesn't come from pretending perfection—it comes from a **repentant, honest heart**.

10. Goodness Is Measured in the Small Things

While some look to prove their “goodness” in:

- Big donations
- Public sermons

- Leadership positions

True goodness shows up in:

- Telling the truth when it's costly
- Returning something that doesn't belong to you
- Refusing to gossip when invited
- Serving behind the scenes
- Saying no to temptation when no one is looking

The Spirit delights in the **small, sincere acts of faithfulness** that reflect the Father.

11. Goodness Brings Glory to God

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your **good works**, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

— *Matthew 5:16*

We don't do good to be seen—**but when we do good with the right heart, it reveals Christ.**

God uses:

- Your kindness
- Your honesty
- Your forgiveness
- Your quiet integrity

...to point people to Himself.

12. The Power of Goodness in an Evil World

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

— *Romans 12:21*

The flesh reacts to evil with:

- Retaliation

- Slurs
- Social media fights
- Slander

The Spirit overcomes evil with:

- Grace
- Goodness
- Gentle strength
- Steadfast love

Goodness doesn't give evil a mirror—it gives it a **contrast**.

13. Goodness Is Not Just External—It's Transformational

The world sees “good” as:

- Being nice
- Following rules
- Giving to charity

But the Spirit sees goodness as:

- A new nature
- A changed heart
- A life of worship

This is not **external behavior modification**—it is **internal spiritual transformation**.

14. Goodness Endures When the Spotlight Fades

Anyone can:

- Act good when praised
- Give when watched
- Serve when it benefits them

But Spirit-grown goodness:

- Keeps going when unappreciated
- Serves in secret
- Loves the unlovable
- Remains kind when wronged

That's the kind of goodness that **heaven applauds**.

15. Goodness and Judgment

"...God will render to every man according to his deeds..."

— *Romans 2:6*

Goodness won't earn your salvation—but it will testify **that you are saved**.

At the Judgment Seat of Christ, our works will be tried. Goodness that flows from a pure heart, led by the Spirit, will stand the fire (1 Corinthians 3:13–15).

Conclusion: Be Good Because God Is Good

You don't need to act good. You need to **abide in the One who is good**.

Let the Holy Spirit:

- Purify your motives
- Shape your words
- Align your actions with truth
- Transform your heart to mirror the Father's goodness

Because goodness isn't about **appearing righteous**—it's about **reflecting a righteous God**.

Live with such goodness that:

- Hypocrisy has no place
- Integrity becomes natural
- And the world sees your Father in you

Let your light so shine... that they may see your **goodness**, and glorify your Father in heaven.

8 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – Faith: Spirit-Given Trust and Faithfulness

Faith in God and faithfulness to Him and others. Contrasted with unbelief, inconsistency, and double-mindedness. How faith grows through testing.

(Galatians 5:22; Hebrews 11:1–6; James 1:6–8)

Introduction: Two Sides of One Precious Fruit

When Paul lists the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5, he includes a word rich with layers of meaning:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, **faith...**”
— *Galatians 5:22*

The Greek word translated **faith** is *pistis*, which means both **trust** and **faithfulness**. It's a two-sided coin: believing **in** God and being faithful **to** God. It's dependence and durability. Confidence and consistency.

In this eighth installment of the Fruit of the Spirit series, we will explore how the Holy Spirit cultivates a deep, unwavering faith in the believer—one that withstands storms, obeys when it's hard, and remains loyal even in pressure. We'll contrast true faith with unbelief, inconsistency, and double-mindedness, and discover how faith is grown through the very trials that threaten to shake it.

1. Faith Is Not Just Belief—It's a Way of Life

“Now faith is the **substance** of things hoped for, the **evidence** of things not seen.”
— *Hebrews 11:1*

Faith is not blind optimism or vague spirituality. It's a Spirit-born conviction:

- That God **is who He says He is**
- That His Word is **true regardless of emotions**
- That His ways are **right even when costly**

- That His promises will be **fulfilled, even if not yet seen**

Faith affects:

- How we view our future
- How we endure pain
- How we interact with others
- How we obey in the present

It is not momentary—it's **habitual trust**.

2. Faith Is a Fruit—Not a Work

Faith is not something we muster up to impress God. It is **something God grows** in us through His Spirit.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”
— *Ephesians 2:8*

We are saved **by faith**, and we continue in Christ **by faith**—but all of it is from Him.

The fruit of the Spirit called “faith” is not merely salvific faith (saving faith), but the **Spirit-enabled lifestyle of trust and faithfulness** in all things.

3. Faith in God vs. Faith in Self, Systems, or Signs

The world tells you to:

- “Believe in yourself.”
- “Manifest your future.”
- “Trust the system.”

But Spirit-filled faith says:

- “I am weak—He is strong.”
- “I don’t control my destiny—God does.”
- “I will trust even when I can’t trace.”

Faith in self collapses when failure comes.
Faith in systems cracks when culture shifts.
Faith in signs fades when feelings disappear.

Only faith in **God** holds steady.

4. Faithfulness to God—The Other Side of the Coin

Faith is not only **trust in God**—it is also **faithfulness to Him**.

“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found **faithful**.”

— *1 Corinthians 4:2*

Faithfulness looks like:

- Consistent obedience
- Following through on commitments
- Daily repentance and surrender
- Unswerving devotion even when no one sees

Faithful Christians don't just believe well—they **live well**.

5. Faith in Trials: When Trust Is Tested

“The trying of your faith worketh patience.”

— *James 1:3*

Faith is not tested when life is easy. It's tested:

- In the doctor's office
- In financial setbacks
- In family conflict
- In spiritual drought

Trials ask:

- Will you still trust God's promises?
- Will you still obey when it's hard?

- Will you still believe He's good when it hurts?

Faith says **yes**—even with trembling hands.

6. The Heroes of Faith: Hebrews 11

This hall of faith lists people whose trust in God changed history:

- **Abraham** believed for a son and offered him in obedience.
- **Moses** chose reproach over riches.
- **Noah** built an ark when there wasn't a drop of rain.
- **Rahab** hid spies in faith.
- **Joseph** trusted in prison and power.

Their faith:

- Didn't always produce miracles
- Didn't always see the promise fulfilled
- But always pleased God

“Without faith it is impossible to please him...”

— *Hebrews 11:6*

7. Faith vs. Unbelief

The opposite of faith is not doubt—it's **unbelief**:

- Unbelief **rejects** God's Word.
- Faith **clings** to it, even when confused.

Doubt is a struggle within faith. Unbelief is a refusal to trust.

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief...”

— *Hebrews 3:12*

Faith says, “I don't understand—but I trust.”

Unbelief says, “I'll trust only if I understand.”

8. Faith vs. Double-Mindedness

“He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind...”

— *James 1:6*

Double-mindedness:

- Trusts God one day, doubts the next
- Obeys when convenient, resists when uncomfortable
- Has no rooted conviction

The Spirit grows single-minded, steady trust.

9. Faithfulness in Relationships

Faithfulness is also a **relational fruit**. Spirit-filled people are faithful:

- In marriage
- In friendships
- In church membership
- In service and stewardship

They show up. They follow through. They **honor their word**.

“A faithful man shall abound with blessings...”

— *Proverbs 28:20*

Faithfulness may not be flashy—but it is **heaven’s currency**.

10. How the Spirit Grows Faith in You

A. Through the Word

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

— *Romans 10:17*

You can’t trust someone you don’t know. The more you **know God’s character through Scripture**, the more you trust Him.

B. Through Surrender

Faith grows when you **let go of control** and yield to God.

C. Through Waiting

Waiting seasons are **faith-growing soil**. You learn to:

- Trust His timing
- Stay faithful without visible results
- Worship in the in-between

D. Through Obedience

Faith is not just felt—it's **lived**. The more you obey in faith, the more your faith grows.

11. Faith Is a Shield in Spiritual Warfare

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”

— *Ephesians 6:16*

The enemy throws:

- Doubt
- Fear
- Lies
- Accusation

Faith says:

- “God’s Word is true.”
- “His grace is sufficient.”
- “I am who He says I am.”

Faith isn’t just defense—it’s victory.

12. Faith Produces Obedience and Action

“By faith Abraham... obeyed.”

— *Hebrews 11:8*

Faith that never obeys is not real faith (James 2:17).

Faith:

- Prays when answers delay
- Tithes even in lack
- Serves even when tired
- Forgives when it's hard
- Stays when others leave

Faith produces fruit because **faith without works is dead**.

13. Faithfulness in the Mundane

Not every act of faithfulness is epic. Sometimes it's:

- Making breakfast with a smile
- Praying for a wandering child
- Showing up to church again
- Reading your Bible when you're dry

The Spirit honors **daily, quiet, unseen faithfulness**.

14. Faith Pleases God More Than Performance

God is not impressed with:

- Your platform
- Your personality
- Your productivity

But He is pleased when:

- You trust Him deeply
- You walk with Him daily
- You believe even when others mock

“The just shall live by faith.”

— *Habakkuk 2:4*

15. Final Faithfulness at the End

Paul, nearing death, didn't say:

- “I had a large ministry.”
- “I gained influence.”
- “I was widely known.”

He said:

“I have kept the faith.”

— *2 Timothy 4:7*

Faithfulness to the end is the mark of a Spirit-filled life.

Conclusion: Lord, Make Me Faithful

Faith is not flashy—it's **steady**.

Faith is not loud—it's **resolute**.

Faith is not always seen—but it **shines in the dark**.

Let the Spirit grow this fruit in you. Ask Him to:

- Deepen your trust in God
- Root out double-mindedness
- Replace anxiety with anchored faith
- Produce daily faithfulness in small things

Because on the day you stand before Jesus, He will not say,

“Well done, my **successful** servant,”

but:

“Well done, thou good and **faithful** servant...”

— *Matthew 25:21*

9 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – Meekness: Power Under Control

A meek spirit is humble, not weak. Contrasted with arrogance, rebellion, and pride.

Examples: Moses and Christ. How meekness glorifies God.

(Galatians 5:22–23; Numbers 12:3; Matthew 11:29)

Introduction: The Quiet Strength the World Can't Understand

Of all the fruits of the Spirit, **meekness** may be the most misunderstood.

To the world, meekness sounds like:

- Weakness
- Cowardice
- Softness
- Passive resignation

But to God, meekness is **noble strength held in restraint**, strength that bows low before the Lord and others. It's not about the absence of power, but the **submission of power** to God's will. It's not being spineless—it's being Spirit-led.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, **meekness**, temperance...”

— *Galatians 5:22–23*

In this ninth installment of our Fruit of the Spirit series, we'll define biblical meekness, contrast it with the pride and rebellion of the flesh, examine it through the lives of Moses and Christ, and discover how the Spirit produces it in the believer to bring glory to God.

1. What Is Meekness? Power Under God's Control

The Greek word translated “meekness” is *prautēs*, which refers to:

- Gentle strength
- Humble submission
- Controlled authority

- A quiet spirit in the face of provocation

Meekness is not the lack of strength. It's **strength governed by grace.**

Imagine:

- A stallion trained by a master—still powerful, but now obedient.
- A sword in its sheath—still sharp, but no longer swinging wildly.
- A leader who listens, a teacher who corrects with compassion, a father who disciplines with mercy.

Meekness is **fire with a thermostat, thunder guided by reverence.**

2. Meekness Is Not Weakness

Some confuse meekness with:

- Fear
- Timidity
- Passivity
- Spinelessness

But biblical meekness is **not the absence of confrontation, emotion, or conviction.**

A meek person may:

- Speak boldly
- Confront sin
- Lead firmly
- Correct lovingly

What they will not do is **promote self, seek vengeance, or react out of ego.**

Meekness is **not a lack of fire—it's fire under control.**

3. Meekness in Moses: Strength in Humility

“Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.”

— *Numbers 12:3*

Moses:

- Confronted Pharaoh
- Led a rebellious people for 40 years
- Interceded for Israel when they deserved judgment
- Wielded authority given by God

Yet he didn't exalt himself. When challenged by Aaron and Miriam, he didn't retaliate. He let God defend him.

Moses' meekness:

- Allowed him to hear from God
- Made him patient with people
- Prevented self-promotion
- Enabled him to pray for those who hurt him

Meekness gave him **longevity in leadership** and **favor with God**.

4. Meekness in Christ: The Model of Controlled Power

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am **meek and lowly** in heart...”

— *Matthew 11:29*

Jesus:

- Cast out demons
- Cleansed the temple
- Rebuked Pharisees
- Raised the dead

Yet He:

- Welcomed children

- Wept at a tomb
- Was silent before His accusers
- Washed the feet of Judas

He could have summoned angels—but He laid down His life.

He could have silenced scoffers—but He prayed for them.

“When he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not...”

— *1 Peter 2:23*

Christ’s meekness was not powerlessness. It was **perfect submission to the Father’s will.**

5. Meekness vs. Pride, Arrogance, and Rebellion

A. Meekness vs. Pride

Pride says:

- “I deserve better.”
- “I’ll prove I’m right.”
- “I won’t be spoken to like that.”

Meekness says:

- “God is my defender.”
- “I don’t have to win.”
- “It’s not about me.”

“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.”

— *James 4:6*

B. Meekness vs. Arrogance

Arrogance:

- Talks over people
- Looks down on others
- Demands recognition

Meekness:

- Listens
- Serves
- Is content with God's approval

C. Meekness vs. Rebellion

The flesh:

- Rebels when corrected
- Resents authority
- Pushes against restraint

But the Spirit produces meekness that **submits joyfully to God's authority** and **walks in peace with others**.

6. Meekness in the Church and Ministry

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the **spirit of meekness...**”

— *Galatians 6:1*

Meekness in ministry:

- Corrects with compassion, not cruelty
- Teaches without superiority
- Serves without manipulation
- Listens before reacting

A meek pastor or teacher:

- Leads without domineering
- Defends truth without mocking others
- Endures criticism with grace

A church full of meekness will not be void of conviction—it will be **full of humility, gentleness, and restoration**.

7. Meekness in Conflict

“A soft answer turneth away wrath...”

— *Proverbs 15:1*

Meekness doesn't mean you never speak truth—it means you speak it in love, without vengeance or ego.

In conflict, meekness:

- Pauses before reacting
- Prays before speaking
- Seeks understanding, not just victory
- Is quick to forgive and slow to accuse

It is the quality that **de-escalates tension and invites reconciliation.**

8. Meekness in Daily Life

Meekness shows up in:

- **Marriage:** Yielding rather than insisting on being right
- **Parenting:** Correcting in love, not frustration
- **Friendship:** Listening without interrupting
- **Workplace:** Taking criticism without lashing back
- **Social Media:** Speaking truth without arrogance

The Spirit doesn't just make you bold—He makes you **meek in how you carry that boldness.**

9. How the Spirit Cultivates Meekness

A. Through Brokenness

God often uses hardship to:

- Expose pride
- Humble us

- Soften us
- Make us more dependent

“Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.”

— *Psalms 119:67*

B. Through the Word

The Bible is full of reminders:

- That we are dust
- That God is sovereign
- That greatness comes through service
- That Christ humbled Himself even to death

The more we saturate in Scripture, the more the Spirit develops a meek spirit.

C. Through Worship

When we see God rightly, we see ourselves humbly.

“Woe is me! for I am undone...”

— *Isaiah 6:5*

True worship breaks pride and builds meekness.

10. Meekness Glorifies God

“The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.”

— *Psalms 25:9*

Meekness:

- Reflects the character of Christ
- Invites the lost to listen
- Restores the fallen with love
- Displays the fruit of the Spirit to a watching world

The world is drawn to strength—but it’s changed by **meekness that looks like Jesus**.

11. Meekness Is a Weapon Against the Devil

Pride is Satan's playground. Meekness is a fortress against his lies.

- When the devil tempts you to prove yourself—meekness rests in God's approval.
- When he urges revenge—meekness trusts God's justice.
- When he fans ego—meekness bows low.

Meekness disarms spiritual pride and makes room for spiritual authority.

12. Meekness in Eternity

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”

— *Matthew 5:5*

The world gives platforms to the loudest and richest. But God gives **kingdom inheritance** to the meek.

In eternity:

- Titles won't matter
- Followers won't impress
- Pride will be judged
- Meekness will be rewarded

Conclusion: Walk Like the Master

Meekness is not popular, but it is **powerful**.

It doesn't command attention—but it **carries heaven's favor**.

It's not the easy route—but it is the **Jesus route**.

Let the Spirit grow this fruit in you:

- Not to silence your convictions—but to **shape their delivery**
- Not to suppress your fire—but to **channel it into healing**
- Not to erase your strength—but to **submit it to God's authority**

Be like Moses—strong yet meek.

Be like Jesus—bold yet humble.

Be like the Spirit—powerful, gentle, and glorifying the Father in all things.

Because in a world driven by ego, **meekness is a miracle.**

10 of 10: Fruit of the Spirit – Temperance: Spirit-Empowered Self-Control

Mastery over desires and impulses—not through flesh, but Spirit. Contrasted with excess, addiction, and indulgence. How temperance preserves testimony.

(Galatians 5:22–23; Proverbs 25:28; 1 Corinthians 9:25–27)

Introduction: Strength in Restraint

In an age driven by impulse, gratification, and self-expression, one fruit of the Spirit stands in sharp contrast to the desires of the flesh: **temperance.**

Temperance—often translated as **self-control**—is not mere willpower or stoicism. It is the **Spirit’s power to govern our desires.** It enables us to say “no” when everything inside us says “yes.” It teaches us how to master the flesh, rather than be mastered by it. It’s **not behavior modification; it’s internal transformation.**

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, **temperance:** against such there is no law.”

— *Galatians 5:22–23*

In this final installment of our Fruit of the Spirit series, we explore what temperance is, why it’s essential, how the Spirit cultivates it, and what it protects us from in a world of excess and addiction.

1. What Is Temperance?

The Greek word *enkrateia* means:

- Mastery from within
- Strength to resist impulses
- Control over passions

- Self-restraint, not self-suppression

Temperance is:

- **Controlling the tongue** when tempted to lash out
- **Resisting temptation** when lust arises
- **Saying no** to the second helping when you're full
- **Walking away** from the scroll hole on your phone
- **Disciplining the mind** when anxiety creeps in

Temperance isn't repression—it's **redirection**. It is **spiritual mastery over the flesh**.

2. Temperance Is Not Legalism or Willpower

Some equate temperance with:

- Rule-keeping
- Performance
- Legalistic routines

But true temperance isn't about:

- Controlling others
- Impressing God
- Outward appearance

It's about the **Spirit forming Christ within you**, enabling you to govern your life from the inside out.

“Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the LORD...”

— *Zechariah 4:6*

3. Why Temperance Matters

Without temperance:

- Talent turns into pride
- Love turns into obsession
- Pleasure turns into addiction

- Liberty turns into bondage
- Success turns into destruction

“He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.”

— *Proverbs 25:28*

Temperance is the wall that protects your integrity, relationships, and testimony.

4. The Flesh Hates Temperance

The flesh cries:

- “Just one more.”
- “You deserve this.”
- “Do what feels good.”
- “No one’s watching.”

But the Spirit whispers:

- “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

— *Galatians 5:16*

The war between the Spirit and flesh is fought on the battlefield of **appetites, thoughts, habits, and choices**.

5. Temperance vs. Excess, Addiction, and Indulgence

A. Temperance vs. Excess

Excess is the lack of boundaries:

- Talking too much
- Spending too freely
- Working without rest
- Eating beyond need

Temperance draws holy boundaries around blessings so they don’t become burdens.

B. Temperance vs. Addiction

Addiction enslaves. Temperance **sets free**.

Whether it's pornography, food, substances, technology, or approval—temperance says:

- “Christ is better.”
- “I am no longer a slave.”
- “The Spirit gives me power to say no.”

“All things are lawful unto me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.”

— *1 Corinthians 6:12*

C. Temperance vs. Indulgence

Indulgence worships comfort. Temperance **worships Christ**.

It denies the flesh—not because pleasure is evil, but because **God is better than temporary satisfaction**.

6. Examples of Temperance in Scripture

A. Daniel

He refused the king's meat and wine—not out of pride, but conviction.

“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself...”

— *Daniel 1:8*

Temperance gave him clarity, favor, and strength.

B. Joseph

Faced with Potiphar's wife's advances, he didn't flirt—he fled.

“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”

— *Genesis 39:9*

He ruled his desire instead of being ruled by it.

C. Paul

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection...”

— *1 Corinthians 9:27*

Paul practiced temperance to avoid becoming a castaway.

7. The Ultimate Example: Jesus Christ

Jesus, full of power, yet restrained:

- Fasted 40 days and resisted Satan's temptations
- Withstood insults at His trial without reviling
- Submitted to the Father's will in Gethsemane
- Chose the cross over comfort

“Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth...”

— *1 Peter 2:22*

Jesus had nothing to prove, no impulse to gratify, and no need to sin—because **He was led by the Spirit, not the flesh.**

8. How the Spirit Cultivates Temperance

Temperance doesn't grow overnight. It's a fruit—**not a button.**

A. Through Daily Surrender

You can't control yourself by yourself.

“Walk in the Spirit...”

— *Galatians 5:16*

It means:

- Yielding moment by moment
- Asking the Spirit for help when temptation comes
- Training your mind to say, “Not my will, but Thine”

B. Through the Word

The Word:

- Exposes excess
- Renews your mind

- Refines your desires
- Arms your conscience

C. Through Prayer and Fasting

Prayer keeps you spiritually focused.

Fasting retrains your appetites.

Both create space for the Spirit to reign.

D. Through Discipline, Not Shame

Discipline is **Spirit-led structure**. Shame says, “I’m a failure.”

Discipline says, “God is growing something in me.”

9. Areas Where Temperance Is Needed

A. Speech

- Do you dominate conversations?
- Speak rashly when angry?
- Gossip? Exaggerate? Curse?

“Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak...”

— *James 1:19*

Temperance teaches the tongue to bow to the Spirit.

B. Thought Life

- Do you dwell on fear?
- Rehearse offenses?
- Feed lustful fantasies?

“Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ...”

— *2 Corinthians 10:5*

C. Appetite and Pleasure

- Do you eat for comfort?
- Binge entertainment without purpose?

- Turn to substances for peace?

Temperance doesn't eliminate joy—it channels it in godly ways.

D. Time Management

- Do you procrastinate?
- Waste time on mindless scrolling?
- Overcommit and burn out?

Temperance balances **rest, work, ministry, and play**.

10. Temperance Protects Your Testimony

Without temperance:

- Ministers fall
- Marriages collapse
- Reputations are destroyed
- Influence is lost

A moment of indulgence can ruin years of integrity.

Temperance doesn't just protect you—it protects your witness.

“Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.”

— *Philippians 4:5*

11. The Reward of Temperance: Freedom and Fruitfulness

- You're not bound by cravings
- You live with focus and purpose
- You grow in holiness
- You bear lasting fruit
- You bring glory to God

Temperance **makes room for joy.**
It **keeps the lamp filled.**
It **guards your mind, body, and soul.**

12. Common Myths About Temperance

- **“I was just born this way.”**

No. You were born again to walk in the Spirit.

- **“Everyone struggles—it’s not a big deal.”**

Yes, but unchecked sin always grows.

- **“God forgives, so I don’t need to be strict.”**

True grace leads to holiness, not license.

- **“It’s just a personality thing.”**

Temperance is not personality—it’s fruit.

13. The Flesh Wants Control—The Spirit Offers Mastery

Flesh says:

- “Indulge now, repent later.”
- “Don’t deny yourself—you deserve it.”
- “You’ve already failed—keep going.”

But the Spirit says:

- “You’re not a slave.”
- “You have resurrection power.”
- “Grace trains you to deny ungodliness.”

“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly...”
— *Titus 2:12*

14. Practical Ways to Grow in Temperance

- Start your day in the Word
- Memorize key verses (e.g., 1 Corinthians 10:13)
- Practice saying “no” in small things
- Create wise boundaries
- Submit your schedule to God
- Confess failures quickly—don’t hide
- Get accountability when needed
- Celebrate small wins in growth
- Fast periodically to reset appetites
- Thank God daily for His Spirit’s strength

15. The End Goal: Christlike Control for God’s Glory

“And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things...”

— *1 Corinthians 9:25*

Temperance doesn’t win you salvation.

But it shows that salvation is **winning in you**.

It says:

- “Christ is worth denying my flesh.”
- “God’s glory matters more than my gratification.”
- “I’m not enslaved—I’m free.”

And that freedom speaks volumes in a world chained by addiction.

Conclusion: Under New Management

You no longer belong to the flesh.

You are no longer a slave to sin.

The Spirit of God lives in you to produce **temperance**—not for your pride, but for **His glory**.

Let the world see:

- A Christian with self-control in a chaotic age
- A disciple who walks in holy restraint
- A heart whose desires are governed by heaven, not hell

Because true freedom is not doing what you want—but being **free to do what's right**.

Temperance is not the end of joy—it is the **road to it**.

Conclusion: When the Fruit Speaks, the Flesh Falls Silent

The Fruit of the Spirit is not a checklist for Christian behavior. It is the supernatural fingerprint of the indwelling Holy Ghost on a life fully yielded to God.

This series was never about learning how to “be better”—it was about showing how to **abide deeper**.

The Spirit does not patch up the flesh; He crucifies it. He doesn't decorate a dead tree—He plants a new one. And the fruit He produces in us is living proof of that inward transformation.

Each fruit—**love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance**—reveals the character of Christ. Not nine separate virtues, but **one unified testimony** of a Spirit-led life.

What's the takeaway?

- You can't fake fruit.
- You can't force fruit.
- You can only **abide in Christ**, walk in the Spirit, and allow Him to work through you.

There is no shortcut. There is no substitute.

And make no mistake: this world doesn't need more Christian influencers—it needs **Spirit-bearing believers** whose lives radiate something that can't be manufactured. Something unshakable. Eternal. Holy.

So examine yourself:

- Is your walk Spirit-led or flesh-driven?
- Are you more concerned with visible gifts or invisible fruit?
- Are you building reputation—or reflecting Christ?

In the end, fruit is not for you. It's for **those around you**—to taste and see that the Lord is good.

And when He returns, He won't inspect your platform. He'll inspect your fruit.

So keep walking. Keep abiding. And let the world wonder how a branch like you could ever bear something so divine.

Because it's not you.

It's Him—**in you**.