

Fruits of the Spirit

Goal: The goal of this study is to understand the importance of the Spirit's role in our lives to transform our inner character and make us more like Jesus.

Openers:

- What characteristics do you look for in a friend? Why?
- Imagine that you were a manager at a retail store or a coffee shop and you needed to hire a new shift supervisor. Which is more important to you: character or skills? Why?

Scripture:

Galatians 5:13 -18

13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge in 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.

Galatians 5:22-25

22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 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*.

Matthew 7:16

By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?

Digging Deeper:

Observations

- What differences do you see between the fruit of the Spirit and the acts of the flesh?
- What do you notice about an individual's role in seeing the fruit of the Spirit grown in his/her life? What do you notice about the Spirit's role in it?

Interpretations

- If you were to paint a picture of "the acts of the flesh," what colors would you use and why? What colors would you use to paint "the fruits of the Spirit" and why?
- What is significant about love, joy, peace, etc. being referred to as fruit?
- What differences might there be between "walk by the Spirit" (vs 16), "led by the Spirit" (vs 18) and "keeping in step with the Spirit" (vs 25)?

Application & Prayer Time

- Which of the fruits of the Spirit would you like the Lord to cultivate more in your life? Why?
- Spend some time praying for each other – for an openness to the Spirit, for an awareness of the Spirit's nearness & the ability to keep in Step with Him, and for Him to cultivate the fruits that each person mentioned.

Optional Activities for Devotional Times or 1:1's This Next Week:

- For each fruit of the Spirit, find a story from the Gospels that shows it at work in Jesus' life.
- Go through the Gospels and note what it looked like for Jesus to "keep in step with the Spirit"?

Suggested questions for 1:1's this week:

- Why are there no laws against the fruit of the Spirit?
- Why are there laws against the works of the flesh?

Next Week's Core

Take some time at the beginning of next week's Core to share what everyone found during there Devotional times.