

WATCH THE WIND

SERMON STUDY - 6.22.2025

Leader Corner

The Fruit of the Holy Spirit

Galatians 5:22-26

Long-time church goers have probably encountered the “Fruit of the Spirit” in a children’s song or on a refrigerator magnet. But familiarity can sometimes soften the edge of Paul’s intent. He’s not offering a checklist of personality traits, but a unified picture of the kind of character produced when walking in step with the Holy Spirit. To caution believers against returning to a life dominated by their old sinful nature, Paul draws a sharp contrast: the works of the flesh bring decay, while the Spirit produces lasting transformation. In fact, the shift from “works” (plural) to “fruit” (singular) emphasizes that the Christian life is about Spirit-led character, not personal performance. This study aims for a deeper understanding of what the Spirit is producing in you—not as a self-improvement project, but as evidence that you truly belong to Christ and are living under His new rule.

Main Idea: In step with God’s transformative purposes, the Spirit produces a unified, distinct, Christlike character in believers, which is in stark contrast to the destructive patterns of the flesh.

Main Practice: Live in step with the Spirit by yielding to His work each day, allowing Him to shape your attitudes, relationships, and responses.

Main Teaching: Galatians 5:22-26

As You Begin....: If you could magically grow any kind of fruit in your backyard, what would it be and why?

Connect with Prayer & Praise

Have someone in your group read the following Scripture aloud:

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.” – Psalm 1:1-3, ESV

with Principle

1. As a group, read Galatians 5:16-26 together and discuss the key, biblically-based teaching points you recall from the weekend's sermon. What stood out?
2. In verses 16–18, Paul introduces the idea of “walking by the Spirit.” What does this phrase suggest about the nature of spiritual growth, and how does Paul contrast it with being “under the law?”
3. Review verses 19–21. What categories do these sins fall into—are they mostly private, social, or communal? How does this shape Paul’s concern? Additionally, what does Paul’s warning about “not inheriting the kingdom of God” mean?
4. Additionally, the “works of the flesh” are plural, while the “fruit of the Spirit” is singular. Why might Paul use that distinction? What might this indicate about how the qualities listed should be understood?
5. Looking at the nine qualities listed in verses 22–23, how do these reflect the character of Christ? Which ones seem especially communal or relational in nature? Which seem more personal? Can they be both?
6. In v23, Paul says “against such things there is no law.” What’s the point he’s making, especially in light of his argument against legalism in Galatians?
7. Verse 24 states that those who belong to Christ have “crucified the flesh.” How does that connect to Galatians 2:20, and what does it imply about identity?
8. What’s the difference between “living by the Spirit” and “keeping in step with the Spirit” (v. 25)? What do those images communicate?
9. Paul ends this section with a caution against conceit, provocation, and envy (v. 26). Why would this warning be relevant at this point in the passage? How could those attitudes distort a community that’s bearing spiritual fruit?
10. Overall, why is it important that Paul doesn’t instruct us to “go produce this fruit” ourselves, but rather describes it as something the *Spirit* produces? How does this shape our understanding of sanctification as a Spirit-empowered process rather than mere moral striving? This could raise another question: what role does the believer play in this passage—and what role belongs entirely to the Spirit?

with Practice

Hopefully your group had a good discussion about the importance of understanding the fruit of the Spirit as a *result* of the Spirit’s presence rather than a checklist of virtues you strive to achieve. This week, whether in relationships, work, or habits, be more aware of whether you’re reacting in ways that reflect the Spirit’s presence—or patterns of the flesh.

for Further Study

Consider reading John 15:1–11, where Jesus teaches about abiding in Him as the true vine. How does Jesus’ language about bearing fruit deepen your understanding of Galatians 5? You might also explore Romans 8:1–14, which gives another rich picture of life led by the Spirit.