



***Galatians 5 - Part Two:
The Fruit of the Spirit
January 2016***

As we saw last month, in [Galatians five](#) the apostle pictures two antagonistic forces which are in a continual conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. He shows us that we cannot stand undecided between these two opposing powers, but turn ourselves over completely to the Spirit. If we allow ourselves to be carried away by His divine power, we shall become fruit-bearing branches ([verse 22](#)). However if we do not we become a tree worthy of being plucked up and burned.

The Apostle enumerates nine graces, but he describes them all as “fruit” not “fruits.” And this is true to life, for the Holy Spirit always clusters His work. One Christian virtue inevitably raises up another; there is no such thing as sanctification in a single point. As one berry in a bunch of grapes cannot ripen without the others ripening too, so it is with the Christian. Try to eradicate one sin in your character and you will invariably find that in doing so you will weaken, if you do not pull up, another. Cultivate one good trait, and you will be surprised to find how many more seem to grow up at its side. This is often the best way to carry on one’s own edification, to concentrate one’s prayers and self-discipline upon one particular point of victory. For by cherishing that one excellence we shall promote all.

There is a sequence in the order of these fruits. The list begins with “love” and ends with “temperance.” We should have expected the reverse of the order, but in the realm of the Spirit we begin with the best and ripest and juiciest, and then pass to the plainer and more severe. The fact of the matter is, the one is assured by the other, and this is the order of the assurance: create love, and you have the conditions of self-control; obtain the juiciness of the first, and the seeming harshness of the last is never known. We may take them in three triads.

- A. The first three express our possible relationship to God, “love, joy, peace.”
- B. The next three express our possible relationship to our fellows, “longsuffering, gentleness, goodness.”
- C. The last three express our possible relationship to ourselves, “faithfulness, meekness, temperance.”

The first of these triads is “love, joy, peace.” We cannot call them duties or virtues; they are simply the results of our communion with God. Love, of course, heads the list, as the foundation and moving principle of all the rest. It is the instinctive act of the higher life and is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit. It is the life energy which rises through the tree and gives form to all the clusters. The remaining two members of this triad are plainly consequences of the first. Joy is not so much an act or a grace of character as an emotion poured into men’s lives by the Spirit of God, because in their hearts abides their love for God. Jesus Christ pledged Himself to impart His joy, so that it should remain in us and our joy should be full. There is only one source of permanent joy which takes possession of and fills the heart and that is our love towards God. Peace will be built on love and joy, if our hearts are ever turning to God and ever blessed with the inter-communion of love between Him and us. True peace comes not from the absence of trouble but from the presence of God, and will be deep and passing all understanding in the exact measure in which we live in, and partake of, the love of God.

In the latter part of this chapter the apostle comes to exhort these Christians to serious practical godliness as the best cure against the fruits of the flesh and the snares of false teachers. The first being:

1. **Love (Agape)**ⁱ. “**Agapao**” which is the verb and the corresponding noun “Agape” are “the characteristic words of Christianity, “Agape and Agapao” are used in the New Testament to describe; the attitude of God toward His Son, ([John 17:26](#)) the human race in general ([John 3:16](#); [Romans 5: 8](#)); and too such as believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, in particular ([John 14:21](#)). As well as to convey His will to His children concerning their attitude one toward another, ([John 13:34](#)) toward all men, ([1st Thessalonians 3:12](#); [1st Corinthians 6:14](#); [2nd Peter 1:7](#)) and to express the complete nature of God, ([1st John 4:8](#)).

“**Love can be known only from the actions it prompts!**” God’s love is seen in the gift of His Son, ([1st John 4:9-10](#)). But obviously this is not the love of complacency, or affection, it was not drawn out by any excellence in its objects ([Romans 5:8](#)). It was an exercise of the Divine will in deliberate choice, made without assignable cause save that which lies in the nature of God Himself ([Deuteronomy 7:7-8](#)).

“Love had its perfect expression among men in the Lord Jesus Christ, ([2nd Corinthians 5:14](#); [Ephesians 2: 4](#); [3:19](#); [5:2](#)). Christian love has God for its primary object, and expresses itself first in implicit obedience to His commandments, ([John 1:15, 21, 23](#); [15:10](#); [1st John 2:5, 5:3](#); [2nd John 6](#)). Obedience for self-pleasure, however, is the denial of God’s love.

“Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren or toward men, is not an impulse derived from feelings. Christian love does not always manifest because of any reason for approval, nor does it manifest only toward those for whom there is some similarity. Love seeks the welfare of all, ([Romans 15:2](#)), and works no ill to any, ([Romans 13:8-10](#)); love seeks opportunity to do good to all men, and especially toward those that are of the household of faith, ([Galatians 6:10](#)). In respect of “**Agapao**” as used of God, it expresses the deep and constant love and interest of a perfect Being (God) towards entirely unworthy objects (mankind). It produces a reverential love in them towards the Giver, and a practical love towards those who are partakers of the same godly love, while manifesting a Godly desire to help others to seek the Giver.

Love (**Agape**) is the rule for fulfilling all rules, the new commandment for keeping all the old commandments. That is why Jesus when asked about the greatest of all commandments responded with only two. Love is the essence of both. Love God above all. Love your neighbor as yourself. It could not be easier to understand. Understanding is one thing however, doing is another. Jesus made provision for that also. He said, “**With men it is impossible, but not with God for with God all things are possible**” ([Mark 10:47](#))! And the apostle Paul said, “**I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me**” ([Philippians 4:13](#)).

So how does the apostle Paul analyze Love? In [1st Corinthians 13](#) with just a few words we have what might be called the “Spectrum of Love”, or the “Analysis of Love.” Let us look at what the elements of Love are. You will notice that these elements have common names. In fact they are virtues that we hear about every day. They are things that can be practiced by every man at any time in life. The Spectrum of Love has thirteen components, they are:

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| 1. “Love Suffers Long” | Patience |
| 2. “And is kind” | Kindness |
| 3. “Love envies not” | Contentment |
| 4. “Love vaunteth not itself, it is not puffed up” | Humility |
| 5. “does not behave rudely” | Courteous |
| 6. “does not seek its own | Unselfishness |
| 7. “is not easily provoked | Good Tempered |
| 8. “thinks no evil | Guilelessness |
| 9. “does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth” | Sincerity |

10. "bears all things"	Tolerance
11. "believes all things"	Trusting
12. "hopes all things"	Confidence
13. "endures all things"	Courage

These ingredients make up the supreme gift, as well as the stature of the perfect man. You will observe that all these are related to men, and to life. They all bear on the known today and the near tomorrow. They have no bearing at all on the unknown future. In eternity there will be no suffering, unkindness, envy, pride, etc. There will be only love! Today we hear much about loving God, but Christ spoke much, of loving man. We make a great deal of peace in heaven; Christ made much of peace on earth. Before we are called home or Christ returns we need to get our priorities in order. In fact this supreme gift is not a thing, but a person who was and is and is to come. Who is the all in all, the alpha and omega the beginning and the end.

Now with that said let us examine the meanings of the remaining eight fruits of the Spirit. The second being:

- 2. Joy (chara).** Joy is cheerfulness, that is, calm delight or gladness. The passion or emotion excited by the acquisition or expectation of good.; the excitement of which is caused by the gratification of desire, or some good possessed, or by the prospect of having what we love or desire. God's pure fruit of, joy is ever present. For when we have understood deep within our soul the glorious good of possessing Christ, joy no longer is an emotion that can be turned on and off. It remains steadfast and permanent as a part of our nature that nothing can shake, change, or destroy (cf. [Rom 5:2; 14:17; 15:13; 2nd Cor. 6:10; Phil. 1:25; 4:4; 1st Pet. 1:8; 1st John 1:4](#)).
- 3. Peace (eirēnē).** The Greek means to be set at one again. It also means; one, peace, quietness, rest. By definition then a lack of peace is a break or division between body, mind and spirit. When our triune being is not in harmony in regard to an action, thought, or belief it results in worry, anxiety, fear etc. But when there is faith in an omnipotent, loving and caring Father in Heaven we have unity of person, which can only result in the peace produced by God's Holy Spirit.
- 4. Longsuffering (makrothumia).** Longsuffering literally means, "Long of nose" (or "breathing"), and, as anger was indicated by rapid, violent breathing through the nostrils, "long of anger," or "slow to wrath" is an attitude attributed to God. One possessing the attribute of longsuffering is said to be one with a long (enduring) temper, one who possesses forbearance, fortitude, and patience, one who can bear injuries or provocation for a long time; one who is patient; and not easily provoked. It is associated with "great kindness" and one "abundant in mercy."
- 5. Gentleness (chrēstotēs).** That is, moral excellence (in character or demeanor): gentleness, goodness, kindness, gracious, especially toward the wicked and unthankful. Gentleness or one of a gentle behavior carries the idea of **active** kindness, softness of manners; mildness of temper; sweetness of disposition; meekness. What else can come from the good Spirit of God, the author of the good work of grace upon the soul? And who employs gentleness toward acts of goodness unto men, in a natural, civil, moral, spiritual, and evangelic way, for the benefit both of soul and body?
- 6. Goodness (agathōsunē).** That is; virtue or kindness or favor. "Good" in any sense, or something of benefit, or for wellbeing. Goodness is the state or permanent condition, of being good; the physical qualities which constitute value, excellence or perfection. Goodness is a moral character which constitutes Christian excellence; moral virtue; religion. Kindness; benevolence; graciousness or the wholesome quality of the heart; but more generally, acts of kindness; charity; benevolence of nature; and mercy toward humanity exercised.
- 7. Faith (pistis).** Primarily faith means firm persuasion, or a conviction based upon hearing. It is moral conviction of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher, especially in reliance upon Christ for salvation; and the constancy in such a lifestyle; It also is translated

assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity. “**Pistis**” is a primary verb; which means to convince (by argument, true or false); and to give assent to, do to evidence or authority. One definition of Faith offered is; “adhere to, trust in and rely on with inward certainty.” One who has faith speaks, acts, and lives according to the object of that faith. In other words, “One’s life speaks clearly of one’s faith.”

8. **Meekness** (**praotēs**). “**Praotes**” means gentleness, humility, or mildness. Meekness is indulgence toward the weak and erring, patient suffering of injuries without feeling a spirit of revenge, an even balance of all tempers and passions. It is the entire opposite of anger. Meekness is a sign of one who walks humbly with God, acknowledging every favor, being thankful for every blessing or trial, and always depending on God’s grace alone. It behaves with modesty and humility among men. John Wesley describes meekness as one able to hold all one’s affections and passions in even balance.
9. **Temperance** (**egkrateia**). Temperance is self-control, moderation; especially concerning moderation in regard to the indulgence of the natural appetites and passions. Temperance in eating and drinking is opposed to gluttony and drunkenness, and in other indulgences, to excess. Other synonyms are; Patience; calmness; thoughtfulness; moderation of passion. Another rendering is “self-mastery,” or “self-restraint.” In the verbal form, it is found in **Genesis 43:31**, for the self-restraint exercised by Joseph in the presence of his brethren, when they appeared before him as petitioners, and in **1st Samuel 13:12** where Saul professes that he “forced” himself to do what was contrary to his desire.

This finishes the list of the Fruit of the Spirit. But that is not the end of the lesson. After the word temperance, **verse 23** ends with these words; “**against such there is no law.**” “No law” – which confirms **Galatians 5:18**, “**not under the law**” (Ref. **1st Timothy 1:9-10**). The law itself commands love (**Galatians 5:14**). And against such there is no law! That is, there is no law to condemn such persons whose actions are in accordance with the “fruit of the Spirit.” These “fruit of the Spirit” are not the things which the Law denounces. These, therefore, are free from the condemning sentence of the Law, and free in the service of God. Law condemns sin; and those, whose lives are adorned by the above virtues, cannot be condemned by any law, for the whole purpose and design of the moral law of God is fulfilled in those who have the Spirit of God, producing in their hearts and lives the preceding fruits.

So what is the conclusion of the matter? It is this, they that are Christ's - True believers in him. Have thus crucified the flesh - Nailed it, as it were, to a cross where it has no power to break loose, but is continually growing weaker and weaker, along with its affections and desires and all its evil passions, appetites, and inclinations. The last three verses do not merely give us a command, NO! – it is the statement of an important and deeply interesting, life changing truth, the only way to overcome the corrupt desires and natural desires of our nature, is by nailing it to the cross of Christ and submitting to the influences of the Holy Spirit. It is not by philosophy; it is not by mere resolutions to resist them; it is not by the force of education and laws; it is only by admitting into our souls the influence of Christ’s truth, and yielding ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God. If we live under the influences of that Spirit, we need not fear the power of the sensual and corrupt tendencies of our nature.

Lastly the Apostle Paul lays out a warning against pride and envy. He had before been exhorting these Christians by love to serve one another (**Galatians 5:13**), and had put them in mind of what would be the consequences if, instead of loving and serving one another, they bite and devour one another, (**Galatians 5:15; Philippians 2:3**). Now, he here cautions them against being desirous of vain-glory, or giving way to an undue affectation of the esteem and applause of men. For if this, were indulged, it would certainly lead them to provoke one another to wrath, and to envy one another. They, who do not carefully and closely follow the Spirit, will easily slide into this sinful action: because the natural effects of being desirous of vain-glory are, provoking to envy them that are beneath us, and envying

them that are above us. Please remember that an undue regard for the admiration and applause of men is fertile soil for unhappy strife and contentions that exist among Christians.

Why should he who is soon to wear the robes of salvation, made “white in the blood of the Lamb,” envy him who is “clothed in purple and fine linen?” Why should one adorn himself in the most gorgeous attire which art and skill can make, if he truly realizes that soon it will give place to the simple garb which the most humble wears in the grave? If all men truly understood that their great interests are beyond the grave: and that in the important matter of salvation they are all on the same level (Ref. [Acts 10:34](#); [Romans 2:11](#); [James 2:9](#)) how unimportant would it be to adorn their bodies, to advance their name and rank and to improve their estates! The rich and the great would cease to look down with contempt on those of more humble rank and the poor would cease to envy those above them, for they are soon to be equals in the grave and their equals, or their superiors in heaven!

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If any of our readers have a questions regarding God’s Word please feel free to write us and an answer will be soon coming.

May God Richly Bless You
Rev. Mario and Maria Bruni
[1st Corinthians 10:13](#)

ⁱ W.E. Vine - Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words - Zondervan Publishing.