

## I. OBJECTIVES

- A. PMLO: To equip saints to the unity of faith, knowledge of Christ and maturity demonstrated through building the church in love (**Eph. 4:12-16**)
- B. CLO: Determine what fruit is, where it comes from and how to manifest the benefits of bearing fruit in your life (**Gal. 5:22-23**)

## II. INTRODUCTION

- A. Interview question: “What are your greatest strengths?”
- B. What spiritual virtues identify you best?
- C. We’ll examine a list of virtues described in Galatians 5:22-23
- D. Through examining each virtue individually and collectively, pray that we develop a more mature and impactful relationship with God and others

## III. OVERVIEW

- A. **Definition** of Fruit: collection of virtues
  - The Spirit progressively makes evident in the believer
  - Opposed to the evident deeds of the flesh (**vv.19-21**)
  - Understand the virtues (love, joy, peace, etc.):
    - Long-lasting positive characteristics, not temporal feelings
    - Spiritual, not physical
    - Singular fruit: no virtue is optional
  - Not all “fruit-bearing” (results) is positive (see **Rom. 7:4-5**)
- B. **The Source**
  - Traced back to the Trinity: “the same God who works all things in all persons” (see **1 Cor. 12:4-6**)
  - The Spirit is the reason we qualify
    - Unbelievers can only imitate with fake renditions
- C. **The Producer**
  - The Spirit progressively develops godly character in the believer
- D. **The Production**
  - A life and character of godliness expressed in natural actions
    - God should be glorified in your bearing (**Rom. 7:4-5**)
    - Others should benefit from your bearing (One another)
- E. **Bear Fruit**
  - “Every branch in Me that does not ***bear fruit***, He takes away; and every branch that ***bears fruit***, He prunes it so that it may ***bear more fruit***.”
    - Pruning implies severely cutting away branches/ stems
    - Pruning increases fruitfulness and growth
  - 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.
    - “Abiding” implies remaining in relationship with Christ
    - Only believers “abide” and therefore bear fruit
  - My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.
    - Bearing fruit is evidence of being a disciple of God
  - You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you

- Bearing and keeping your fruit is expected
- Fruit abides as you abide in Christ (vv.4-5)

#### F. Inner Man Renewed

- **2 Cor 4:16-18** – “Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”
- Our nature is continually being renewed, day by day

#### IV. NEAR CONTEXT

- A. In **Galatians 5:16**, Paul writes to the churches of Galatia saying, “walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh”
- B. In **verses 19-21**, he mentions deeds of the flesh, which those who practice them will not inherit the kingdom of God
- C. But, **verses 22-23** Paul refers to 9 characteristics called “Fruit of the Spirit” for which “against such things there is no law” (no sin committing to these things)
- D. The goal is to become exposed to the work of the Spirit in development of these virtues through study and prayer and allow the Spirit to manifest His fruit in our character in our fellowship and engagement with the rest of the world

#### V. FRUIT: THE VIRTUES

##### A. LOVE ἀγάπη

- Reflection of God: Love (**Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:1f; 1 John 4:16**); see lovingkindness (**Psa. 136**)
- This is the love of **1 Cor. 13**, a sacrificial love seen expressed in the words of **Rom. 5:8** and **John 3:16**
- The perfect bond of unity (**Col. 3:14**)
- Love is the summation of the law (**Matt. 22:36-40**)
- A gift of grace superior to all spiritual gifts, and among other grace gifts greater than faith and hope (**1 Cor. 12:31; 13:13**)
- We only have the ability to love God because He first loved us (**1 John 4:19**)
- It is the love of God that sustains us through tribulation, allowing us to exult in it (**Rom. 5:2-3**)

##### B. JOY χαρά

- Reflection of God: The power joy of the Lord led the people of Israel to cry, “The joy of the Lord is our strength” (**Neh. 8:8-12**). We are called to Joy; this is not mere human happiness, but is grounded on a conscious relationship with God
- Always be joyful, meaning that joy is not optional at any time (**1 Thes. 5:16**)
- The kingdom of God is joy in the Holy Spirit (**Rom. 14:17**)
- Related to the word “Rejoice” (**Php. 4:4**)
- Paul exhorts Christians to rejoice “in the Lord” (**Php. 3:1; 4:4; cf. 2 Cor. 13:11**)
- Joy should be present in the midst of trials (**Jam. 1:2-4**)

##### C. PEACE ειρήνη

- Reflection of God: “God of peace” (**Rom. 15:33; 16:20a; Php. 4:9; 1 Thes. 5:23; cf. Heb. 13:20**); Lord of Peace (Jesus; **2 Thes. 3:16**)
- Peace represents a sense of wellbeing and wholeness. As God is the source of peace, we must recognize that “peace” that does not last in the face of hardship is not peace at all!
- Entailed in Paul’s common greeting “Grace and peace”

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Galatians 5:22-23

- We have peace with God and with each other in the home (**1 Cor. 7:15**), church (**1 Cor. 14:33; Eph. 4:3**) and the world (**Rom. 12:18**). **Eph. 2:14-18** shows the need for peace between Jews and Gentiles
- We should seek and pursue it, while at the same time turn away from evil and doing good (**Psa. 34; 1 Pet. 3:11**)
- This is associated with the Kingdom of God (**Rom. 14:17**)

D. **PATIENCE** μακροθυμία

- **Reflection of God:** Jesus demonstrates perfect patience toward Paul (**1 Tim. 1:16**); God is patient (**Rom. 2:4**); The Lord is patient not that anyone should perish... (**2 Pet. 3:9**)
- It embraces “steadfastness” and “staying-power”
- **Psa. 103:8** describes God as “slow to anger”, which is also descriptive of a man who has discretion (**Prov. 19:11**)
- Love is patient (**1 Cor. 13:4**)
- Paul exhorts Christians to display this patience to one another and to all (**Eph. 4:2; Col. 1:11; 3:12; 1 Thes. 5:14**)

E. **KINDNESS** χρηστότης

- **Reflection of God:** He is “kind to the ungrateful and evil men” (**Lk. 6:35**); **1 Pet. 2:3** references the “kindness of the Lord”
- God shows kindness, as seen in **Eph. 2:7**
- This word connotes a submissive and teachable spirit toward God that manifests itself in genuine humility and consideration toward others
- God’s kindness shows His attitude and action toward sinners; it should be enough to lead us to repentance and also results in salvation being giving to mankind, also rooted in His love (**Rom. 2:4; Tis. 3:4**)
- Love is *kind* (**1 Cor. 13:4**)
- Those who are kind treat others with kindness, as God has done so (**Eph. 4:32**)

F. **GOODNESS** αγαθωσύνη

- **Reflection of God:** Christ was called good and attributed that characteristic to God (**Mark 10:18/Luke 18:19; Neh. 9; Psa. 36; Psa. 27:13**); God will fulfill His goodness in us (**2 Thes. 1:11**)
- This represents a grand kindness, a spiritual excellence, which ushers in practical generosity
- The comparison made in **Matt. 22:10** shows evil and good people at the Parable of the Marriage Feast
- The word goodness is closely associated with the word righteous. If one is not righteous, it is impossible for that person to be considered good (cf. **Rom. 3:10-12**)
- Paul calls Christian Gentiles to be “full of goodness” as a characteristic of someone who is “sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (**Rom. 15:14,16**)
- Commanded to be good (**Gal. 6:10**)

G. **FAITHFULNESS** πίστις

- **Reflection of God:** “Great is thy faithfulness” (**Lam. 3:22**); Jesus has a name “Faithful and True” (**Rev. 19:11**)
- Refers to fidelity or the quality of being true, trustworthy and reliable in all one’s dealing with others. This is different from the general application of the word referring to faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Faithfulness was a requirement Paul told Timothy to look for in men who he seeks to commit to teach (**2 Tim. 2:2**)
- Christians are to be found with faith (**1 Cor. 4:2**)
- The man is to be found full of faithfulness (**Acts 6:5**)

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Galatians 5:22-23

H. **GENTLENESS** πραύτης

- Reflection of God: The gentleness of Christ is being called upon to exhort the Corinthian church (**2 Cor. 10:1**)
- Involves being teachable (**Jam. 1:21**), considerate (**1 Cor. 4:21**)
- It is used to describe someone with an attitude that is teachable or submissive, similar to kindness
- We are to showing every *consideration* (**Tis. 3:2**)
- We are to display a gentle spirit to all men and come to the Word of God with a gentle spirit (**Php. 4:5; Jam. 1:21**)
- Christ also demonstrated gentleness (**Matt. 11:29; Mark 3:5**)
- One profound statement Jesus made was, “Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth” (**Matt. 5:5**)
- Gentleness comes from above (**Jam. 3:17**)
- Paul came to the Thessalonians (**2 Tim. 2:24-25**)

I. **SELF-CONTROL** ἐγκράτεια

- Reflection of God: “...considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings...” (**Heb. 13:7-9**)
  - Jesus is dependable, Jesus remains consistent in who He is
- Being self-controlled refers to the control of one’s own passions and desires
- This would indicate the opposite to be self-indulgence (**Matt. 23:25; cf. 2 Tim. 3:3**)
- Paul uses the illustration of runners in a race to show how self-control and discipline do not indicate the hope of gaining something perishable like a wreath but imperishable, like salvation (**1 Cor. 9:24-27**)

J. **SUCH THINGS**

- Against such things there is no law κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος
  - God approves “too much fruit”
    - Be greatly gentle/patient/joyous/self-controlled
  - Only man will judge you for fruit
- “Such things” refers to the things that may be listed alongside the present list, but were not
- You will never be judged by God for displaying too much fruit
- “8 walk as children of Light 9 (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth)” (**Eph. 5:8b-9**)
  - Believers’ lives should demonstrate righteousness and truth
- “11 Do not participate in the **unfruitful** deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.” (**2 Peter 1:8**)
  - Expose unfruitful deeds, do not participate

VI. **CONCLUSIONS**

- A. The result of fruit comes from the growth initiated and continued by God, which we are still able to witness
- B. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit
- C. Be actively absent from it (**2 Pet. 1:3-7; Php. 2:12-13**)
- D. Set your mind on the things of God (**Col. 3:2; Rom. 8:5**)
- E. Kill the flesh (**Col. 3:5-9**)
- F. Live in a manner reflective of a redeemed Christian (**Col. 3:10-17**)