



The fruit of the Spirit is...

LOVE

JOY

PEACE

PATIENCE

KINDNESS

GOODNESS

FAITHFULNESS

GENTLENESS

SELF-CONTROL

The law is not against such things.

GALATIANS 5:22-23



FRUIT | OF | THE | SPIRIT

How would you know if a man was living by
the Spirit of God or by another way?

We all like the idea of being **FRUITFUL**, but unless we identify what that would look like in real-life, that word doesn't mean anything.

The **Men at Magnify** will be taking the next 9 weeks to practice searching the Scriptures, exploring what the whole Bible has to say about each fruit and how to cultivate it in our lives.

Each week we will...

- Dig into Scripture on our own and with our group.
- Learn valuable Bible Study habits and tools.
- Define and describe each fruit of the Spirit according to Scripture.
- Be able to identify that fruit "in the wild".
- Grow in understanding how to prune what needs to grow and weed out whatever needs to be killed off.

So let's roll up our sleeves, do some digging into the Bible, and find out for ourselves what it means to be **FRUITFUL** men.

STAND FIRM



CORE PRINCIPLES

As we study each fruit of the Spirit one by one, we want to keep some big-picture principles in mind—principles that help us understand and apply what we are seeing.

- The fruit of the Spirit is what the **Holy Spirit** produces in you. You cannot produce them without the Spirit.
- They are each a part of **God's perfect character**. God reproduces in you what is already perfectly His.
- They are **mutually reinforcing**. As you grow in one, it supports the others.
- The fruit of the Spirit is **not optional**. They are part of the goal of the Christian life, and the natural outworking of the Spirit's presence. No fruit implies no Holy Spirit.
- They are **marks of maturity**. As you mature in Christ, you will be increasingly fruitful.
- We produce fruit because we **pursue fruitfulness** by the Spirit. What the Spirit produces in you does not happen by accident or without effort. While there are some aspects of the Christian life that involve surrender, we are never called to be passive. Producing fruit takes work.
- Fruitfulness may **come and go**; sanctification is not a perfect upward climb or marked by sharp transformations. Instead, sanctification involves general upward progress over time while day to day life may go up and down along the way.
- Fruitfulness is a byproduct of loving what God loves, aligning our hearts with His. Better understanding can help this. **Practice** helps even more. We tend to grow in fruitfulness most through using what we have learned.
- The Galatians 5:22-23 list of fruit is **not exhaustive**! God produces more good in us than just these nine characteristics.

RESOURCES

In your homework, we hope to get you to roll up your sleeves & do a little digging for yourself in the Bible.

This process helps you to develop a broader connection between passages of Scripture that relate to each other. This can feel frustrating & difficult at times, but the pay-off of deeper insight & knowledge of God & the Scriptures is WORTH IT!

Here are some helpful ideas to aid you in this process...

- 1) Begin with what you **already know**. Think through what passages of Scripture you know about the given topic/idea & look for those.
- 2) Use the **provided passages** as a “helping hand” to keep the ball rolling.
- 3) Consider purchasing a **Study Bible**. These can be helpful resources to digging a little deeper into interpretation & understanding of the text. They also often have a topic index & word definitions that can help provide more clarity. Check with a pastor or trusted, mature Christian friend on a good recommendation.
- 4) **Online tools** can be helpful, but watch out: they can also short-change your experience. While simple to use & often extremely convenient, online resources can also create weakness in recall, memory, & dependency. You’re less likely to memorize & internalize something if you are constantly relying on the internet to find a solution for you.
However, they can be very helpful; especially for word studies, quick reference checks, etc.

BE SURE TO UTILIZE THE “BIBLE STUDY RESOURCE HUB” ON THE MEN’S BLOG!
magnifychurch.org/mens-blog/bible-study-resource-hub

Important Reminder!

We depend upon the Holy Spirit to guide us “into all truth” (John 16:13) & know that in Jesus, we will get understanding (1 John 5:20).

Rely upon Him & trust that the Lord will open the eyes of your heart (Eph. 1:18).

*“You will seek me & find me, when you seek me with all of your heart.”
(Jer. 29:13)*

FRUIT & FRUITFULNESS

“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)

The Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians is a well-known passage in the New Testament, but fruit and fruitfulness are a recurring theme throughout the Bible. As we begin our study, we want to have in mind the big picture of what God has said about spiritual fruit and its significance in our lives.

Old Testament Themes

While actual fruits make their appearance all over Scripture, the idea of fruit takes on a unique role when applied to our lives as a **metaphor**.

Right from the beginning, fruitfulness is used as a **biological metaphor**.

To be fruitful is to reproduce after your kind.

- Example 1: “And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply...’” (Gen. 1:28)
 - Repeated to Noah’s sons after the Flood (Gen. 9:1)
- Example 2: Blessings to Israel include fruitfulness (e.g. Lev 26:9)
 - A mark of flourishing (e.g. Psa 105:24)

Closer to our purposes is the way fruit is used as a **non-biological metaphor** in Proverbs and the prophets.

- As a sign of health (Psalm 1:3)
- As consequences of specific actions (Prov 1:31)
 - Prov. 14:14: “The backslider in heart will be filled with the fruit of his ways, / and a good man will be filled with the fruit of his ways.”
- As the overall product of life
 - Prov. 11:30: “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life”
- Emphasis on the role of good roots to produce good fruits
 - Prov. 12:12: “Whoever is wicked covets the spoil of evildoers, / but the root of the righteous bears fruit.”

Spiritual Fruit in the Gospels

John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus. Look at his warning:

- Matt. 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. 9 And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. 10 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

In other words, your actions (fruits) reveal the truth about your heart.

Jesus expounds on the principle

- Matt. 7:15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.”

Same thing: if you want to know the state of a man’s heart, watch the fruit his life produces. Good fruit is a sign of spiritual health.

Fruit also appears in many of Jesus’s parables:

- **Parable of the Sower/Seeds:** Matt 13:34 (also Mark 4:20; Luke 8:14-15)
 - Fruitfulness a sign of life—which translates to rebirth through the Gospel
- **Parable of the Tenants:** Matt 21:33-46 (also Mark 12:2; Luke 20:10)
 - The Father deserves the fruits of His field—which translates to the right actions stemming from the right hearts of His people
- **Parable of the Unfruitful Vineyard:** Luke 13:6-9
 - God is patient but persistent fruitlessness is a sign that there is no life.

KEY PASSAGE: the Vine and Branches

- John 15:1 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

Fruit in the Epistles

Paul is the author of Galatians, where the Fruit of the Spirit passage is found. But he also talks about fruit in other contexts as well.

- Romans 6:21-23: “But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.”
- and Romans 7:4-5: “For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.”
- The Fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:16–24: “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”
- Ephesians 5:8–11: “. . . for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

Fruit in the Epistles (cont.)

- Philippians 4:16–17: “Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.”
- Colossians 1:5–6, 9–10: “. . . because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, . . . And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God”

Other Scripture writers like James, Jude, and the author of Hebrews also make contributions.

- Hebrews 12:11: “For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”
- Hebrews 13:15 - “Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.”
- James 3:17 - “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.”
- Jude 12 - “These [false teachers] are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; . . .”

Conclusions

Here are some takeaways from our study:

- If you are a real Christian, your actions will reveal that.
 - Real repentance produces change
 - Abiding in Christ produces change
 - Walking by the Spirit produces change
 - Change sometimes takes time, but will eventually come about
 - There is no such thing as a healthy Christian that persists in fruitlessness
- Spiritual fruit is a blessing to the person bearing it.
- Spiritual fruit is a blessing to those around you.
- Spiritual fruit is a blessing to God.
 - God deserves our fruitfulness because of what He has done for us.
- Fruitfulness is a product of abiding in Christ by the power of the Spirit.

ONE FINAL NOTE: God defines the fruit; we cannot—as some have done—redefine fruit in non-Christian terms and hope to validate our lives. If you have questions about this, talk to Trent or Josh.