

TEXT Galatians 5:22-26

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Psalm 1:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13; 2 Peter 1:4-8

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to list the fruit of the spirit and explain the benefits of this in one's life. They will also realize the importance of the fruit of the Spirit in a person's life as a testimony to others.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men. — Galatians 6:10

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. — Galatians 5:25

ANSWER TITLE: **Something Special to Share**

SEARCH TITLE: **The Fruit of the Spirit**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The Book of Galatians was written probably sometime between 50 and 60 A.D., by the Apostle Paul to the churches in Galatia, a district of Asia Minor.

In Galatians, Paul shows that no rites or ceremonies of the Jewish Law, nor any of their own works, could avail in the justification of a sinner, but that faith in Christ is the only means of salvation. The fruit of the Spirit becomes evident in our lives after we are saved, and grows as we continue to live, or walk, in the Spirit.

The Galatians were a branch of the Gauls, originally from north of the Black Sea, who migrated westward and finally settled in Asia Minor. This area was called Galatia, and most of the people were Gentiles. Some of the Jewish teachers insisted that Gentiles could not

be Christians without keeping the Law of Moses. Paul wrote that circumcision was a necessary part of Jewish law, but was not a part of the Gospel of Christ and had nothing to do with salvation.

The Apostle tells us there is no law against any of the virtues that make up the fruit of the Spirit. Christians are not under the Law, but under grace; for the fruit of the Spirit plainly shows that such people are led by the Spirit. Paul informs us that those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. They are now sincerely endeavoring to die unto sin, as He had died for it. It is not enough that we cease to do evil, but we must learn to do well. Our Christianity obliges us not only to oppose the works of the flesh, but to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit too.

YOUR OPENER

The Fruit of the Spirit

TEXT: Galatians 5:22-26

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Psalm 1:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13; 2 Peter 1:4-8

KEY VERSE: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. — Galatians 5:25

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul shows that since the time of Christ’s death no rites or ceremonies of the Jewish Law or any of man’s own works can avail in the justification of a sinner. Jesus Christ is our only means of salvation (Acts 4:10-12). The fruit of the Spirit becomes evident in our lives when we are saved, and grows as we continue to live and walk in the Spirit.

RESPONSES

1. Responses may vary, but your students should conclude that these nine virtues together make up the fruit of the Spirit. You might wish to compare this to a prism dividing light into its spectrum of colors. Each color is distinct and yet together they make light. The students should also realize that all of these nine virtues will be in evidence if the fruit is truly of the Spirit.

2. Discussion of this question should bring out the thought that the flesh cannot produce spiritual fruit. The flesh is only able to produce undesirable results. Through its efforts, the works of the flesh will never allow anyone to inherit the Kingdom of God. Additional Scriptures to include in this discussion: Romans 6:20-22; 8:8-13; Galatians 6:8.

3. The discussion should center around the fact that there is no law against any of these virtues exemplified in a person who is walking in the Spirit. Propose the question: Is there any law against being loving, joyful, peaceful, etc.? All of these emanate from the same root.

4. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Looking at each one specifically, discuss some of the benefits that are derived from having these virtues. What kind of existence would one have without love? Studies of children who are given physical necessities but no love show extensive emotional impairment. What does joy bring into a life? Consider how depression can lead to mental illness or even suicide. Proceed through the list. In conclusion, your students should see that a person bearing the fruit of the Spirit can enjoy a life of victory, not having guilt or condemnation.

1. Why do you think the nine virtues listed in our lesson are referred to as “the fruit” and not “the fruits”?

2. Explain why the flesh must be crucified if we are to be fruit-bearing Christians.

3. What do the nine virtues of the Spirit have in common?

4. List the fruit of the Spirit. Then name some benefits that Christians enjoy from having each of these virtues in their lives.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. Why can a Christian still feel peace when things go wrong?

6. Describe an incident in which the fruit of the Spirit really proved to be a benefit to the one who exhibited a specific virtue.

7. How can the fruit of a tree be used to determine the worth of the tree that is bearing it? See Matthew 7:16-18.

8. Self-image is an important concept in our society. Distinguish between self-improvement and the fruit of the Spirit.

9. How can you be sure you have the fruit of the Spirit in your life?

5. Your students' answers should help bring an understanding that this fruit is not seasonal. It is not a mere surface emotion, but a deep-seated peace, founded in the knowledge of sins forgiven, and strengthened by a constant walking in the Spirit.

6. Allow your students time to discuss in detail some particular incident; for example, when someone gave a soft answer that turned away wrath. When the fruit of the Spirit is in evidence, it shines forth as a witness to the world even more eloquently than words.

7. The students should understand that the fruit of the Spirit is the result of being a born-again Christian. The fruit is the testimony of the person's life and actions, and is sufficient to judge the worth of the "tree." If the tree is holy the fruit will be holy. If the tree is unholy the fruit will be unholy.

8. Help your students realize that no matter how much the self is refined or cultivated it is still self. Charm, knowledge, or skill can all be void of the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is God-given and develops with God's help. Discussion could also bring out the point that while a person may be well-thought-of by his peers in worldly circles, if he does not have the fruit of the Spirit in his life, in God's sight he is nothing.

9. The students must understand that the fruit of the Spirit only becomes evident after one is truly saved—transformed by God's grace from one who has been walking after the flesh into one who is walking in the Spirit. As Jesus said in John 15:5, "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Describe a personal incident in which the fruit of the Spirit really proved to be a benefit to you.

A fruit tree with delicious-looking fruit causes people to desire to have some. The fruit is also a means of identifying the type of tree. Parallel this to a life evidencing the fruit of the Spirit.

How do we know good deeds are required of us in order to make Heaven our home?

Why do you think the term *fruit* of the Spirit is used rather than *fruits*?

What is the fruit of the Spirit? How could you tell a friend what the *fruit of the Spirit* means?

Why is the fruit of the Spirit important in our lives today?

Is the fruit of the Spirit in our lives capable of growth? How?

In addition to the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, what are some of the other benefits we have because we are Christians?

How can a Christian still feel the joy of the Lord when things go wrong?

In the ANSWER story, Cindy's grandmother suggested that Galatians 5:22 might help solve a problem at school for Cindy. Relate that verse to solving problems. What was Cindy's problem and its solution?

THINGS TO DO

Type out some short situations (two or three sentences long) which illustrate each fruit of the Spirit. Have your students match them up with the "fruit" that each situation exemplifies.

To teach the fruit of the Spirit, make a paper tree with fruit on it. Cut a tree's foliage out of green paper, nine apples out of red paper, and a brown trunk. Back the apples with something to make them stick to the tree. Label the apples: love, peace, faith, meekness, joy, temperance, goodness, gentleness, and longsuffering. Give each stu-

dent an apple and when he has explained what the word means, let him place his apple on the tree. If you don't want a movable tree, draw one on a posterboard as you present the lesson. Or, you could also use a gumdrop tree for this.

Material needed: can opener, a can of vegetables, and a can of fruit the same size. Carefully switch labels and illustrate that people cannot tell if we are Christians by our label—only by our fruit.

Give each child a small basket (or one made from construction paper). From colored paper, cut out some shapes of fruit, and on each one write the name of one fruit of the Spirit. Have enough for each child to earn a complete set. As they recite the fruits to you, give them one fruit for their basket for each fruit of the Spirit mentioned.

Answers for ANSWER

Christian Values

The fruit of the Spirit is a valuable part of your Christian life. Each letter below has been given a certain value. Find the total for each Christian characteristic.

Example: F R U I T = 6 + 18 + 21 + 9 + 20 = 74¢

LOVE = 12 + 15 + 22 + 5 = 54¢

JOY = 10 + 15 + 25 = 50¢

PEACE = 16 + 5 + 1 + 3 + 5 = 30¢

LONG-SUFFERING = 12 + 15 + 14 + 7 + 19 + 21 + 6 + 6 + 5 + 18 + 9 + 14 + 7 = 153¢

GENTLENESS = 7 + 5 + 14 + 20 + 12 + 5 + 14 + 5 + 19 + 19 = 120¢

GOODNESS = 7 + 15 + 15 + 4 + 14 + 5 + 19 + 19 = 98¢

MEEKNESS = 13 + 5 + 5 + 11 + 14 + 5 + 19 + 19 = 91¢

TEMPERANCE = 20 + 5 + 13 + 16 + 5 + 18 + 11 + 14 + 3 + 5 = 100¢

FAITH = 6 + 1 + 9 + 20 + 8 = 44¢

A=1¢ B=2¢ C=3¢ D=4¢ E=5¢ F=6¢ G=7¢ H=8¢ I=9¢ J=10¢ K=11¢ L=12¢ M=13¢ N=14¢ O=15¢ P=16¢ Q=17¢ R=18¢ S=19¢ T=20¢ U=21¢ V=22¢ W=23¢ X=24¢ Y=25¢ Z=26¢