

## Fruit



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Welcome to our penultimate session of Spiritual fruits and gospel fiber. Again, just a quick recap, we've looked at the freedom that we have in Christ—freedom *from* and freedom to produce the fruit of the Spirit. This helps us understand the context of the passage that we're finally getting to today.

The second topic that we looked at was power. God has given us the power to live according to this freedom. And this power is not in our own power, but it's by the power of the Holy Spirit so that we no longer have to walk according to the flesh.

In the last session we looked at war. Paul is a realist. He realizes that it's not easy. There is a battle between the flesh and the Spirit that overlaps between the two ages and this war is happening. But, if we let the Spirit of God, if we choose to allow God's Spirit in the fight, in the war, then there is victory. We are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Well, this session is fruit. We finally, now that we understand the context, we get to get to this passage. And so we look at Galatians chapter 5, if you have your Bibles, put them in the air and wave them like you really do care. Let's look at verse 19. Now, if you remember, Paul is talking about those being led by the Spirit. They are no longer under the law. Now we get to verse 19 and he's going to talk about what it looks like to be under the law and under the flesh and that present evil age. He says, "For the works of the flesh are obvious." And in the original language, he puts the word *obvious* or *conspicuous* right there. We all know what it looks like to live according to our own desires. We all know what it looks like to be legalist. Paul is, in both of these passages, going to give us a comment and then he's going to give us a list, and then he's going to give us a concluding comment.

Here, he gives us this initial comment that the works of the flesh are obvious. I like what Paul says in Romans chapter 6,

### Galatians 5

Author's Translation

under the law. <sup>19</sup>For the  
works of the flesh are  
obvious:

φανερός – phaneros

*Obvious, conspicuous, plainly known*  
and debauchery, idolatry

and witchcraft; hatred,  
discord, jealousy, fits of rage,

when he says, "You know what? Sin is no longer the boss of me, sin is no longer the boss of you. Since we have died with Christ and through baptism been raised, we no longer have to live according to our sin." And we can say "no" to sin, or like what Paul says in Titus chapter 2, that the grace of God has shown up. It has appeared so that now we can say, "Aww, heck no!" to sin and "Oh yeah!" to self-control. This is that pattern that we see throughout Paul's letters. Paul is going to come in Romans 6 and say to us, "Think about those things that you did in the past. When you lived according to sin, when sin was the boss of you, think about how ashamed and embarrassed you are of those things." Here, Paul is coming to remind us that the works of the flesh—this is not meant for the church, because it gives us a vice list. It leads to sexual immorality, impurity, idolatry, and the drinking sins and all these different sins. So he gives us this list that he's going to put in juxtaposition to the fruit of the Spirit. And then he gives us a warning.

## Galatians 5

Author's Translation

and the like.

I have warned you before  
just as also I am warning  
you that those who continue  
to practice these things will  
not inherit the kingdom of  
God.

He says, "I want to remind you." And if you look at the end of verse 21, he says, "I have warned you before, just as I'm now warning you, that those who continue to practice these things, those works of the flesh, that mark and characterize those who live according to this present, evil age, those who are walking according to this, they will not inherit the kingdom of God." And so Paul gives us this really sober, somber note. Again, he realizes that this is a battle.

When we moved from Scotland back to Houston, Texas, my kids were so excited about going to Chuck E Cheese. And I don't like Chuck E Cheese. Frankly, I'm a bit bothered by a pizza restaurant whose main mascot is a rodent. But, for some reason, I don't know if it was the jet lag or just me giving into my children, but they began to cheer. They began to chant, "Chuck E Cheese, please! Chuck E Cheese, please! Chuck E Cheese, please!" I was like, "No, I'm not going to go to Chuck E Cheese. And then my youngest got into the chant and he couldn't even say it. But he's like, "Please!"

So, for whatever reason I finally gave in to my children, and we went to Chuck E Cheese. I pulled into the parking lot and I thought it was like a minivan convention that was going on. There were so many minivans there! We get out, go into Chuck E cheese, and my kids just go crazy. I don't know if it's the pizza that they had, or if it's just so much sugar that they hadn't had before when we lived in Europe, but they were just going crazy.

And I looked at my youngest son at that time and he didn't know what to do.

A lot of the things were too hard for him. I said, "Hey buddy, I'll come and I'll help you." And we began to look around at games that he could play. There was the whack-a-mole game. Do you remember whack-a-mole? And I was like, "Oh, I remember that from my childhood, you can do that." So we go over and we're waiting. There was a teenage girl in front of us that was doing the whack-a-mole and I was determined to do better than she did. I knew that my son could do it. We get there and he can hardly hold up the hammer so I was helping him. And if you remember with whack-a-mole, the mole will come up and it'll kind of laugh and you're supposed to hit it. So the mole pops up and I help him hit it. But they keep popping up. And again, I don't know if it's jet lag or if something in the pizza got to me, but, all of a sudden, I just got really frustrated with the moles that were popping up. I ended up taking the hammer from my son, and I began to just hit those moles again and again and again, but they kept popping up! There's one time when I thought they were all done but all of a sudden they begin to pop up really quickly. I just got angry and I just wanted to hit the mole just so, so hard. And then I thought, man, why am I getting so angry? And I realized that those moles reminded me of my own temptations, my own sins, that just continue to pop up again and again and again.

## Galatians 5

Author's Translation

and the like.

I have warned you before  
just as also I am warning  
you that those who continue  
to practice <sup>works of the flesh</sup> these things will  
not inherit the kingdom of  
God.

And when they pop up, they give me those obvious works of the flesh and the regret that comes with them. So here we see that Paul marks what it looks like in the old life. And then he's going to set that over what it should look like in our lives. And specifically, inside of the church

Look at verse 22. Paul says, "But in contrast to the works of the flesh, that is obvious for everyone,"—the moles that keep popping up—"but the fruit of the Spirit, that spiritual fruit is,"—and you know it, you can say it with me, "love joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith or faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Again in the previous verse, he says, "Those who live according to those works of the law will not inherit the kingdom of God." Here he comes and says, "Those who walk according to the Spirit, against them there is no law."

Paul gives us this beautiful virtue list that takes us back to the very beginning. God is not a chicken, but He loves His children.

**Galatians 5**

Author's Translation

<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is:↳ In contrast to the  
works of the flesh

love, joy, peace, patience,

kindness, goodness,

faith/faithfulness,

<sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control.Against <sup>those who walk  
according to the Spirit</sup> them there is nolaw. <sup>24</sup>But those who belong

He loves us just the way we are, but He's not content for us to stay that way. Instead, he gives us the spiritual fruit and fiber so that we can produce the fruit of the Spirit. It's no surprise that Paul begins with this word love. If you remember from 1 Corinthians 13—that he'll go on to write later—that there's faith, hope, and love. Faith gives us that picture of the past, when we entered into salvation through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. The hope gives us a future perspective when Christ is going to come again at the shout and the voice of the archangel. But the love is the present. It's how we walk now.

Paul's going to say in this next letter, in 1 Thessalonians that, "We don't need anyone to teach us; we are God-taught." We are theodidactic, a Greek word to say that God teaches us. And what does He teach us? He teaches us to love one another. As Paul says here in Galatians, "We want to sum up all the Old Testament laws. It comes down to this, Leviticus 19:18, that you love your neighbor as yourself." Paul's first step out is love, the love that we have for Christ, the love that we have for one another. And so, love.

And then we have the joy. We know that joy is often connected with the Spirit. Again, we go back to the Old Testament and what is it? The joy of the Lord is our strength. It's that Spirit of the Lord that we walk by, that gives us that joy.

As Peter would say, this inexpressible joy, I can't even explain it, but He gives us the love and the joy and the peace that as we set our minds on Christ, where He is seated at the right hand of God, we know that peace. So the love, the joy, the peace, the patience that we have, because God is patient with us. Christ was patient with us. The Spirit of God is a Spirit of patience.

We have a love, joy, peace, patience, and kindness. This word *kindness* comes from the same word that we get *grace*. So maybe *graciousness* is the word; that we're gracious to one another (and this is going to help us understand the next section), and that we walk according to grace. God has forgiven us of our sins. Therefore, we forgive other people of their sins. God is so gracious with us. Then we are gracious with those who are against us as well. But just the goodness, the natural goodness. I love how Peter uses this as, "I want you to make every effort to add to your faith," this idea of just having goodness.

Then from goodness, he gives us this word *faith*. And if you

remember, when I was translating this, this could be faith or faithfulness. It could be the fruit of the Spirit is the idea of us trusting in God all the more. Being trustworthy would be another way to do this. just the idea of faithfulness—that we walk in faithfulness just as Christ was faithful to the will of God. So also we are faithful to the will of God, not our will, but His, be done.

And then we have gentleness. Paul loves this idea of gentleness. We see this word with Jesus as well, where He talks about how He is gentle. I think it's in Luke [Matthew 12:20], where it says that Christ is so gentle that the smoldering wick, He does not snuff out, the bruised reed He does not crush. We walk by gentleness. I have a friend in my life that this characterizes. I see him and I think, , “I want to be gentle like this person is gentle.”

And finally, *self-control*. Now this word self-control was a very popular philosophical word during Paul's time. What we see with these types of lists is usually the beginning of the list and the end of the list is what's most important. So we have the love of God and the Spirit and what kind of sums all of these things up is self-control.

Now, often we talk about the fruit of the Spirit like “I really need to learn this.” But we see that the fruit of the Spirit is not something that we learn. It's something that we choose. We don't learn patience, for example, we choose by the power of the Spirit, hitting that lever that we talked about in a previous session, to be patient. Love is not something that just happens to us naturally; in fact, we're either growing in our love for one another, or we're growing cold in our love for one another. We have this commandment to continue to walk in love, continue to grow in love, and here we see that it is a choice. It's not something that we learn, and again, it's not something that we do on our own, but instead it's making a choice to let the Spirit of God empower us to fulfill these things.

And so, self-control. It's interesting that if we would ask non-believers how self-controlled is the church, many of them would say, “Wow, they're not very self-controlled, they're gluttonous or they're angry,” or whatever it may be, but what sums all these up is the idea of self-control. And our self-control by the power of the Spirit sounds like an oxymoron, but through the power of the Holy Spirit, we self control to access the Spirit, so that we have that joy, that we have that peace, and so.

All right, we'll stop right there for this session. In the next session, we'll talk about the community of the Spirit. All of this is leading us, not for me, individual moral progression, but instead for the picture of the church. Thank you.