

## **The Holy Spirit – Fruit of the Spirit**

One of the major influences of the Holy Spirit over the believer's life is seen in the fruit of the Spirit. This fruit is the evidence of a transformed life where the inner man is strengthened with might through the Holy Spirit. As soon as an individual puts their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit begins changing the human temperament by conforming them into the image and nature of Christ. This is both an instantaneous and continual transformation from glory to glory by the Spirit of God. Being marked by the fruit of the Spirit is evidence of His abiding presence and power in believer's lives. Several verses of scripture reveal the varied aspects of the fruit of the Spirit and the new character of the Christian believer. This fruit is the practical manifestation of Christ in the life of each believer.

**Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

After the Christian believer begins partaking of Christ's nature, the fruit of the Spirit becomes their true normal characteristic. They have become partakers of the richness that is in Christ and as a result produce fruit that is a testimony of that vital connection.

**Psalms 1:3 NKJV** He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

Before His ascension, Jesus told those gathered with Him they would receive power to be His witnesses after the Holy Spirit came upon them, (Acts 1:8). A major part of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is this dynamic change in believer's character and nature that brings a living testimony of Christ. Every branch that abides in Christ should produce fruit, (John 15:2). The Lord gave warning that any that did not bear fruit would be removed.

*The singular fruit of the Spirit is manifest with varied characteristics.*

Follow through the various texts that refer to the new nature and character of believers. All of these characteristics demonstrate and define the fruit of the Spirit.

**Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

**Romans 14:17 NKJV** For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Righteousness is added to peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

**Romans 15:13 NKJV** Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Believers are marked by and abound in hope by the power of the Spirit.

**1 Timothy 4:12 NKJV** Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Each of these are marks of a believer's character or nature. The Holy Spirit has influence over believer's word, conduct, love, spirit, faith and purity.

Watch how this is developed in the following verses.

**2 Timothy 3:10 NKJV** But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance,

In the previous verses, the Apostle Paul spoke about his persecutions and afflictions. The manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit remains steadfast regardless of the kinds of events a believer endures. Rather than these things weakening the expression of the Spirit's presence and power, persecutions and afflictions manifest the depth and reality of what God is doing in us.

**2 Timothy 2:24-25 NKJV** And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,

Paul continues to expound on the strength of the change that occurs in believers by showing how we give no room for offense in anything. In 2 Corinthians 6:3-10, he used his own experience as a testimony of the strength of the fruit of the Spirit in his life. Listen to the varied situations that he faced.

**2 Corinthians 6:4-5 HCSB** But as God's ministers, we commend ourselves in everything: by great endurance, by afflictions, by hardship, by difficulties, by beatings, by imprisonments, by riots, by labors, by sleepless nights, by times of hunger,

The word "*commend*" means to cause something to be known by action or to make known. After he listed varied apparently negative things that he endured, in all of these things Paul showed how he "*commended*" himself to others.

**2 Corinthians 6:6 NKJV** by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,

He continued demonstrating how the fruit of the Spirit was manifest through verse 10. In all kinds of situations, the Holy Spirit's fruit was the prevalent expression. This is the witness that every believer should have. It is the testimony of a life that has been transformed.

**Ephesians 5:8-9 NKJV** For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

This is true of every believer's life. What we were is not what we are. We were all children of the darkness, but we have been brought into the glorious light of sons of God. We have been gloriously changed by the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit within us.

**2 Peter 1:5-7 NKJV** But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

*The testimony of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit is the fruit of the Spirit.*

Fruit bearing is only possible if we live in cooperation with the Spirit of Christ. This is why we are told to "give all diligence" or "make every effort to respond." Fruit is a natural, instant, and prevalent product of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Christ's character will be manifest if our connection to Him is unhindered. At the same time, it is impossible to produce the true fruit of the Spirit through the natural processes of character building and development. We all know individuals who have commendable character traits. They may be loving, kind, good, joyful, etc. There is a dramatic difference when Christ is fully formed in us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is a testimony of our personal vital connection to Christ.

**John 15:4-5 NKJV** Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Every concept of true Christianity manifests a pattern of the character of the fruit of the Spirit. The Lord expects fruitfulness and condemns any that do not bear it. The fruit of the Spirit is related to our connection to Christ, from Whom we gain new life.

*The fruit of the Spirit cannot be hidden, it will be manifest and will distinguish believer's lives.*

This is why the character and nature of a true believer reflects the Lord Jesus Christ in every aspect and circumstance of life.

*The fruit of the Spirit is contrasted with the fruit of the flesh.*

**Galatians 5:19-21 NLT** When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition,

dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

By manifesting these things, the person dominated by the flesh demonstrates that they are not dominated by the indwelling Spirit of God. The Christ-centered life will be dominated by the fruit of the Spirit.

*Fruit bearing reveals the true source of a persons character.*

**Galatians 5:16 NIV** So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

*In relation to fruit-bearing, Jesus gave the secret to bearing much fruit.*

In John 15, Jesus said two things will cause fruit-bearing.

*First, we must abide in Him.*

**John 15:4-5 NKJV** Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Fruit-bearing is natural and expected in everyone who abides in Christ. In fact, every branch that does not bear fruit will be removed. The nature and character of everyone that is in Christ is changed by that connection and abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

*Second, every branch that bears fruit, He prunes.*

**John 15:2 AMP** Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit [that stops bearing] He cuts away (trims off, takes away); and He cleanses and repeatedly prunes every branch that continues to bear fruit, to make it bear more and richer and more excellent fruit.

This is a critical verse for the continued development of the fruit of the Spirit in believers. Pruning is the removal of things that inhibit or prohibit growth and development. The Lord is constantly guarding everyone in whom His Spirit is working. He wants us to be as productive and vital as possible.

*What role do we have in maintaining fruitfulness?*

*We must abide in Christ.*

Each individual believer must maintain an unbroken relationship with Christ. We must take note that we have been saved, redeemed, and have been born into the family of God. Since we have this new life in Christ, we must abide in Him.

**Galatians 5:25 NKJV** If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

**Galatians 5:18 NKJV** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

**Galatians 5:16 NKJV** I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

We must develop and maintain a sensitivity to the Spirit. When we do, we will produce evidence of His work in us. The fruit of the Spirit will be evident to us, to others and to God. The development of the fruit of the Spirit is a strong indication of a believer's abiding in Christ.