

THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

"The Fruit of the Spirit"

Galatians 5:22, 27

Introduction

1. The Bible teaches that every person is born a sinner (Ro. 5:12). As such, he practices sin (Ro. 3:23).
2. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ, God's Son, was sent into the world to pay the debt of man's sin against the holy God (John 3:16; Ro. 3:24-26).
3. The Bible teaches that having believed on Jesus Christ, a person receives the Holy Spirit instantaneously as the divine Power to live the life of a believer (Ro. 8:9). The presence of the Holy Spirit in one's life provokes a conflict with the old way of living (Gal. 5:17).
4. The Bible teaches that the only way to behave as a believer is expected to by God is to submit to the Holy Spirit, walk in His power, and thus inevitably to express growth. Anything less is truancy from the professed belief.
5. As the pre-belief life has its works (Gal. 5:19-21), so the post-belief life has its fruit (singular!). This fruit comes spontaneously due to one's organic union with the Lord Jesus Christ and the actuation of the Holy Spirit in the obedient believer's life. The fruit produced by the Spirit is at once unified and diversified. Study it:

1. FRUIT -- related to MENTALITY v. 22

Here are three sections of the fruit which concern the believer and God. They relate to habits of the mind. What an amazing new mind set expressed by the Spirit of God within!

a. Love

This is the basic principle of all the other sections of the fruit. It is the prevailing element of true Christianity (cf. 1 Cor. 13; John 13:35; 1 John 4:7). This is not something manufactured by self-determination. Rather, it is produced in the heart by the Spirit (Ro. 5:5).

b. Joy

Here is a holy cheerfulness. It is love exulting and is well rooted in faith (Ro. 15:13; 1 Pet. 1:8). It is a place of strength (Neh. 8:10) and the expression of the Spirit of God (Ro. 14:17; 1 Thess. 1:6). This is the triumphant overflow of a Spirit-filled believer.

c. Peace

This relates to a God given state of calm, quiet, repose, and absence of discord. It is an expression of a blessed relationship wherein everything is experienced as moving in its appointed place. It affects both mind (thought life) and heart (emotions) (Phil. 4:6, 7). Such an experience is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in control of one's total being. To know its reality is to confirm the validity of Scripture!

2. FRUIT -- related to SOCIETY v. 22

Here are three more sections of the fruit which concern the believer and his fellows. They relate to the social qualities towards others. What an incredible mind set demonstrated towards others around!

a. Longsuffering

This is the fruit of the Spirit which causes patient endurance under injuries inflicted by others. It is ill-treatment long continued without complaint. Elsewhere it is referred to as part of the "vocation" (calling) of the believers (Eph. 4:1, 2). Make no mistake about it, the Spirit alone is able to bear such fruit!

b. Gentleness

Here is benevolence and sweetness which characterizes one's disposition with others. It exposes itself actively in self abandonment. Kindness gives the sense, as does the term "gentleman(woman). It expresses itself in readiness to forgive and relieve (cf. Titus 3:4).

c. Goodness

This fruit section is somewhat like the previous one. It conveys a disposition to oblige and concerns the activity more than the spirit of things. Here is the profession both to will and to do what is good (cf. Ro. 15:14; Eph. 5:9; 2 Thess. 1:11).

3. FRUIT -- related to ACTIVITY vv. 22, 23

Here are the final three sections of the Spirit's fruit (singular!). They relate to self and principles of conduct.

a. Faith

Since the fruit concerns believers, this is probably not faith in Christ. Three thoughts may be involved: confidence in God, faithfulness or fidelity, and trustfulness (having no suspicion of God) (cf. Titus 2:10; 1 Cor. 13:7).

b. Meekness

This is a quality which expresses equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down because it is not occupied with self. While it does not express weakness, the term is opposite to self assertiveness or self interest (cf. Col. 3:12; Num. 12:3).

c. Temperance

This is the final section of the nine which comprise the "fruit of the Spirit." It is a mighty word indeed. It concerns all aspects of life and expresses clearly the thought of self control (cf. Acts 14:25; 2 Pet. 1:6).

Conclusion The "works" of the flesh have a law against them, but not so the "fruit" of the Spirit. Law exists so as to restrain. This is utterly unnecessary and out of order for the fruit of the Spirit. Oh, Spirit of God, bear in our hearts lavishly and profusely Thy fruit -- today and forever! Amen.