

# LESSON 10

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## Spiritual Fruit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

Jesus ascended nearly 2000 years ago. His followers have held Him up as the example for every true Christian. Some by the power of the Holy Spirit have developed a character so like His that they have reminded people of Him. When soul winners have testified about Him, listeners have said, “Oh, yes, I know him, he’s my neighbor.” Or, “Yes, I know him, he works beside me at the factory.” Even from the deepest jungle has come the reply, “Yes, yes, we know him, he used to visit us and tell us about God.” They were talking about people who had allowed the Holy Spirit to produce the nature of Jesus in them.

It is fitting that in this final lesson we consider the *character traits* of a true follower of Jesus, and how these are developed in the believer by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The apostle Paul calls them the *fruit of the Spirit*. They can all be summed up in one word: *love*. They are the attributes of God that are produced in a believer’s life by the Holy Spirit. I like to call the fruit of the Spirit expressions of *Christian character*. Examine yourself as you study. Can others see Jesus in you?



### **lesson outline**

Fruit Required

Fruit Reviewed

Fruit Rewarded

### **lesson objectives**

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning of the term *fruit of the Spirit* based on 1 Corinthians 13 and Galatians 5:22-23.
- State why fruit is required in order for speech, service, and sacrifice to be effective.
- Evaluate your Christian character and determine what is needed for Christian maturity.
- Eagerly anticipate the eternal rewards of allowing the Holy Spirit to develop Christlikeness in you.

## learning activities

1. Study this lesson in the same way you have studied previous lessons. Find and read all Scriptures given, and answer all study questions. Give special attention to the self-evaluation question, number 10.
2. As background for this lesson, read John 15, 1 Corinthians 13, Galatians 5, and 2 Peter 1:5-11.
3. Take the self-test and check your answers.
4. Review the material you have studied in Unit 3. Then answer the questions for Unit 3 in your Unit Student Report booklet. Follow the directions given in the booklet.

## key words

endurance  
martyrdom

motivation  
persevere

purging  
traits

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## lesson development

### FRUIT REQUIRED

**Objective 1.** *Select true statements which explain why the fruit of the Spirit is needed in a Christian's life.*

As you studied Lesson 9, did you wonder why the apostle Paul wrote about the gifts of the Spirit in chapters 12 and 14 of 1 Corinthians, and interrupted his discussion with chapter 13? You will find the answer to this question by turning to chapter 13. Read the first three verses. Now count all the pronouns you see in those three verses. In the translation I am using, the pronoun "I" appears eight times!

What is Paul trying to tell us? His focus here is definitely on himself as a person. He is saying, "Take away everything I have said and everything I have done, and you have *me*, standing alone. At that moment, *what I am* is far more important than *what I have said* or *what I have done*."

As we saw in Lesson 9, the Holy Spirit comes to help us *do* for God. More important to me as a person, He helps me to *be* what God wants me to *be*. Doing *for* God benefits others most. Being *like* God benefits me most. Both are pleasing to God, but *doing* without *being* is empty and meaningless.

Let's examine more closely what the apostle Paul says about the importance of the fruit of the spirit, or Christian character. In doing this, we will replace the word *love*, which he uses, with the term *Christian character*.

### In Speech

**Objective 2.** *Recognize what it means to have true Christian character to back up your testimony.*

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels but do not have true Christian character to back up my testimony, it resembles the noisy gongs and clanging cymbals of a heathen temple. My testimony causes people to come to my temple in search of God. But if His nature is not seen in me, they turn away disappointed. My testimony is no better than the gongs and cymbals that call people to the empty temples of the heathen. My true nature does not match my testimony.

The Holy Spirit has come into the temple of your body and wishes to produce the fruit of the Spirit there. Then when you testify of what God can do in the lives of those who receive Him, you will be a living example of your testimony. People will say, "Yes, I know what God is like. He is like you."

**1** What does it mean to have true Christian character to back up your testimony? (Choose one answer.)

- a) It means you have a powerful message which will attract people to Christ regardless of how you live.
- b) It means that you show the love of Christ at all times, and people are attracted to Christ by what you *are* as well as by what you *say*.

### In Service

**Objective 3.** *Complete statements which summarize the importance of being as well as doing.*

If I have the gift of prophecy, which is the greatest of the utterance gifts—and if I can understand all mysteries and all knowledge, which would be the highest of all the revelation gifts—and if I have mountain-moving faith, which is the greatest of the power gifts—but do not have Christian character, I, myself, am *nothing*.

There is no effort by the apostle Paul here to minimize the gifts. These are gifts of the Holy Spirit. They are the highest manifestations of the mind and power of God that a human being can exercise. They will greatly benefit people in need. Church members will be built up. Supernatural wisdom and knowledge will be shared. Mountains will be moved. God will be praised, and I may be esteemed as a gifted servant of God. *However, if I don't possess the fruit of Christian character, I stand empty before God.*

Jesus affirmed this when He said, “By their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:16). Then He added,

“Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’” (Matthew 7:22-23).

Service for God is, as a part of worship, the highest ministry a person can perform. However, when the Christian servant stands before His Master, he will be judged according to what he *is* and rewarded for what he has *done* (Matthew 24:45-51).

There is a reason for this. The Holy Spirit is preparing rulers for Christ’s coming kingdom. Since they will reign with Christ, they must be like Him. Positions will be assigned on the basis of Christlikeness, rather than performance alone. Christ will rule with a rod of iron in absolute fairness, righteousness, and love. Therefore, He will look for rulers with pure Christian motivation and Christ-like attitudes. (See Revelation 2:26-27.)

Political offices are sometimes won on the basis of boasted achievements and future promises, rather than godly character.

In Christ’s kingdom what you *are* will count more than what you have *done*. This is the message of 1 Corinthians 13.

This makes every believer equal. The church member has the same opportunity to be like Jesus as the highest church official. Both possess the same Holy Spirit in the temple of their bodies, and He seeks to produce the fruit of the Spirit in them.

**2** Fill in the blanks to complete these statements:

- a** First Corinthians 13 says that what we ..... is more important than what we .....
- b** Those who want to reign with Christ must .....
- c** Jesus said we would be known by our ..... This means that we will show what we are by our .....

**In Sacrifice**

**Objective 4** *Explain the relationship between sacrifice and showing Christian character based on 1 Corinthians 13:3.*

If I give all I possess to the poor, and even if I surrender my body to the flames, yet if I do not possess Christian character, *I gain nothing.*

God loves the poor. Through the writing of the apostle James, He warns that in the last days the rich people will weep and wail because of the way they have oppressed the poor workmen, who have not been given the wages they have earned (James 5:1-4). God is pleased when wealth is shared with those who are in need. Giving to the poor is closer to the manifestation of Christian character than speaking for God, or exercising other gifts, but it does not measure up to the standard of the fruit of the Spirit. What you give will certainly benefit the poor, at least for awhile, but your motivation for giving must come from the nature of Christ within you if it is to count for something when you stand before Him.

When Paul speaks of giving his body to the flames (1 Corinthians 13:3) we don’t know whether he is referring to martyrdom or to some kind of self-sacrifice for a religious cause

that was common in his day. Whatever the case may be, he was in essence saying: “Even if I submit myself to the most painful death possible to show my religious dedication, if I do not possess the fruit of the Spirit, Christian character, *it will profit me nothing.*”

**3** What is the standard of the fruit of the Spirit?  
.....

**4** When is giving to the poor, or self-sacrifice, acceptable and pleasing to God?  
.....

**5** Why do you suppose the apostle Paul gave the illustration of giving one’s body to be burned to emphasize the importance of possessing the fruit of the Spirit?  
.....  
.....

**6** Draw a circle around the letter preceding TRUE statements which explain why the fruit of the Spirit is necessary in a Christian’s life.

- a** The apostle Paul indicated that what I am is more important than what I say or what I do.
- b** Speaking in tongues has little or no value when compared with spiritual fruit.
- c** If I do not have the character of Christ, whatever I do is without meaning.
- d** People will be attracted to Christ more by what I say than by what I am.
- e** I can possess all of the gifts of the Spirit and still be *nothing*.
- f** If I do not want to stand empty before God, I must possess the fruit of the Spirit.
- g** Jesus said we would recognize His disciples by their gifts.
- h** Our future position in the kingdom of God will be based on our Christlikeness.

**FRUIT REVIEWED**

**Definition**

**Objective 5.** *Identify words which define what love is or does.*

Christian character is vital, but what is it, and how do I know if I have it? The verses with which we began this lesson give us the answer. In them we find the various aspects of Christian character, of the fruit of the Spirit. As you study them, ask yourself if you possess these attributes of Christ.

7 List the nine fruit of the Spirit given in Galatians 5:22-23.

.....  
.....

True Christian character expresses itself in the fruit of the Spirit, which is summed up in *love*. Out of love come all of the other attributes of God that are developed in the believer by the indwelling Holy Spirit. That is why 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 can be called God’s standard of measurement for a true Christian.

The word *love* in Scripture is the translation of the Greek word *agape*. This is a love that flows directly from God: “God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us” (Romans 5:5). It is a love of such depth that it caused God to give His only Son as a sacrifice for our sins (John 3:16). It is the love of Jesus for us: “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers” (1 John 3:16; see also John 15:12-13).

We have paraphrased what one Bible scholar, A.T. Pierson, says about love and the fruit of the Spirit:

- Joy* is love rejoicing,
- Peace* is love in trustful rest,
- Patience* is love on trial,
- Kindness* is love in society,
- Goodness* is love in action,
- Faithfulness* is love in endurance,
- Gentleness* is love in training,
- Self-control* is love in discipline.

If you possess this kind of love, which is true Christian character, you will be *patient* (see 1 Corinthians 13:4-7).



Whatever you have to endure, you will not lose your temper and say or do things which you will later regret.

You will be *kind* to those who do you harm.

You will *not envy* the positions or possessions of others but you will be content with God's provision for you.

You will *not boast* of your own achievements but will let another's lips speak your praise, and then you will give the glory to God.

You will *not be proud*, because you know that everything you have is a gift from God, and whatever you do is done by His strength.

You will *not be rude*. A true Christian treats everyone with respect regardless of his or her position or status in life.

You will *not be self-seeking*, but rather you will consider God first and others before yourself.

You will *not be sensitive or easily angered*, but you will practice being unoffendable.

You will *not keep a record of wrongs* done to you, but you will always quickly forgive.

You will *not delight in evil* of any kind, but you will remember how Christ was willing to suffer because of it.

You will *rejoice in the truth*.

You will always *protect* that which is right.

You will always *trust* and believe that which is true.

You will always *hope* for that which God has promised.

You will always *persevere* (stand fast), enduring whatever is necessary until faith becomes sight—until that which you hope for becomes reality.

**8** Circle the letter preceding definition of what love is or does.

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| a) Self-controlled       | i) Peaceful       |
| b) Self-seeking          | j) Envious        |
| c) Self-sacrificing      | k) Easily angered |
| d) Gentle                | l) Perseveres     |
| e) Humble                | m) Protects truth |
| f) Rude                  | n) Proud          |
| g) Patient               | o) Hopeful        |
| h) Rejoices at all times | p) Good           |

## Application

**Objective 6.** *Apply the fruit of the Spirit as it is manifested in the life of Christ to how it is revealed in your life.*

I can hear you say, “Whoever could measure up to a standard like that?” Actually, only one person has. His name is Jesus. You can put His name before every character trait, and it fits perfectly! Jesus asks nothing of us that He did not do Himself, and He did it in the power of the same Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

Christ is our example. It is not possible to imitate or copy Him in our own strength alone. We must allow ourselves to be fashioned in His image by the Holy Spirit. We are partakers of His nature (2 Peter 1:4). The extent to which we partake will determine how close we come to the measure of a perfect person in Christ.

**9** Here are some examples of the divine nature of Christ manifested in His life on earth. Match each Scripture passage (left) with the fruit of the Spirit it illustrates (right). Read each Scripture carefully.

- |        |                  |                 |
|--------|------------------|-----------------|
| .... a | John 14:27       | 1) Love         |
| .... b | Isaiah 53:7      | 2) Joy          |
| .... c | Hebrews 4:15     | 3) Peace        |
| .... d | 2 Peter 3:9      | 4) Patience     |
| .... e | Luke 22:42       | 5) Kindness     |
| .... f | 1 John 3:16      | 6) Goodness     |
| .... g | Matthew 4:1-11   | 7) Faithfulness |
| .... h | Isaiah 53:8-9    | 8) Gentleness   |
| .... i | John 8:3-11      | 9) Self-control |
| .... j | Hebrews 12:2     |                 |
| .... k | Acts 10:38       |                 |
| .... l | Matthew 18:21-22 |                 |

Now let’s examine ourselves. Most of us are a little like one of the students who attended our Bible school. Rudy really disliked examinations. He would sigh and groan and seldom

answer all of the questions. For one exam he left them all blank, and wrote across the bottom of the paper, “Christ is the answer.” But the teacher was equal to the situation. She wrote across the top of his paper: “Christ **100**; Rudy **0**.”

That might be amusing, but it has something to say about our final examination day. I know Christ’s Christian character score is 100, but I certainly want my score to be better than Rudy’s was, don’t you?

Paul tells us we will be judged through Christ, by His gospel (Romans 2:16). Perhaps 1 Corinthians 13 will be the very passage which will be used at the judgment seat of Christ as a basis for choosing those who will hold responsible positions in His coming kingdom. This definition of the fruit of the Spirit that Paul has given us could be a self-test that we can study as often as we wish to prepare for our final examination.

All that God requires in Christian character is given in these Scripture passages we have studied as fruit of the Spirit. They are all attributes of God, His character traits. You cannot produce them yourself—you must allow them to grow out of your personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. He will produce these fruit in you.

**10** In your notebook, make a chart similar to the example given below, and list all the fruit of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22-23 and 1 Corinthians 13. Mark your progress in developing each of these fruit. Ask the Holy Spirit to produce each fruit in you to the measure of Jesus Christ. How do you measure up?

FRUIT	I can see this fruit in my life:					
	Never 0	Seldom 20	Sometimes 40	Frequently 60	Usually 80	Always 100
Love						
Joy						
Peace.						
etc.						

## FRUIT REWARDED

**Objective 7.** *State three rewards of fruit-bearing, and give a Scripture to support each.*

Once I was a teenager, but now I am a grandfather. Believe me, there have been many learning experiences between the two. Some were pleasant, and some not so pleasant, but all were necessary.

“Necessary for what?” you may ask. Well, if they were necessary only for this life, by the time I’ll be ready to live, life will be over! No, the Holy Spirit is preparing me for something bigger in the near future—something greater than I can even imagine! The fruit of the Spirit, my Christian character, is being developed in me by the Holy Spirit for my place in *eternity*!

Let’s look at the last six verses of 1 Corinthians 13 and note some of these eternal benefits.

### It Is Timeless

Christian character is the only part of eternity you can possess right now. Everything else comes to pass:

“But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away” (v. 8).

Prophecies will be needed no more when we see Jesus, so they will end. They will become only memories after they have been fulfilled.

Tongues, both known and unknown, will be silenced when a far superior kind of communication becomes possible through the Spirit. There will be no more language barriers.

The limited knowledge we have will pass away, because prophecy, tongues, and present knowledge are at best only partial revelations of God for this present life. Only the state of our character development as it is at the end of this life will remain. Love never fails—it will remain. Christian character is timeless (1 Corinthians 13:8, 13).

**11** (Choose the best answer.) The reason we will not need tongues, prophecy, and limited knowledge in Christ’s eternal kingdom is that

- a) when we are in His presence we will no longer need these partial revelations, because we will see Him and know Him as He is.
- b) we will have no need for communication in His kingdom.
- c) when we reign with Him we will have no further need for the power of the Holy Spirit working in us.

**It Brings Maturity**

We begin our life in the Spirit with the new birth, as we have seen in earlier lessons. Then as we are nourished in the Word under the watchful care of the Holy Spirit, we grow by instruction and experience.

We are all children of God in various stages of spiritual maturity once we have experienced the new birth. The length of time each of us has been a Christian, however, has little to do with the state of our Christian maturity.

The Holy Spirit can produce the fruit of Christian character in our lives only as we cooperate with Him. Some Spirit-filled believers spend many years learning only a few lessons. Tongues, prophecy, and even knowledge are helpful, and they are wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit, but their presence in our lives is not always an indication of our Christian maturity. The measure of adulthood in God, as we have already seen, depends on how well we have allowed the Holy Spirit to produce the character traits of Jesus in our lives.

**12** Read John 15:1-5. These are the words of Jesus. What condition does He give for you to bear fruit?

.....

Remaining in Christ involves *union* with Him (vs. 1-2), *purging* or *trimming* (discipline) by the Father (v. 2), and *fruit-bearing* (v. 5). These are the conditions of fruitfulness.



UNION

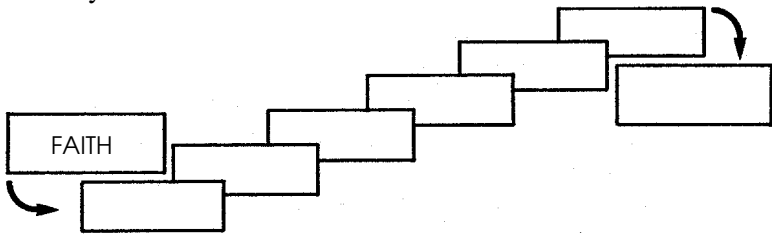


TRIMMING



FRUITFULNESS

13 In 2 Peter 1:5-8 we find the *process* for cultivating the fruit of the Spirit. Complete the chart below by listing the progression which Peter exhorts us to follow in developing Christian maturity. Note where it all ends.



Peter goes on to say:

“For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins” (2 Peter 1:8-9).

**It Brings Fullness**

When we finally stand before Jesus, our example, we will know what a fully-developed Christian should be like. As the apostle Paul said, “Now we see but a poor reflection: then we shall see face to face: (1 Corinthians 13:12). Now it is like looking in a foggy mirror, but then we shall see ourselves as God sees us. Now we have faith to help us and hope to spur us on, but these are not eternal. Both will become sight when we see Jesus.

The only way to experience the fullness of our reward is to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. As Peter reminds us,

“If you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10-11).

**14** State three rewards of fruit-bearing, and give a Scripture to support each.

.....  
.....

### **Self-test**

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Circle the letter in front of the best answer to each question.

- 1** The term *fruit of the Spirit* refers to
  - a) spiritual gifts.
  - b) prophecy and sacrifice.
  - c) Christlikeness.
  
- 2** The characteristics of spiritual fruit are developed in a believer by
  - a) the Holy Spirit.
  - b) instruction and experience.
  - c) his own efforts to be like Jesus.
  
- 3** The believer's part in developing Christian character is to
  - a) try to imitate or copy Christ.
  - b) live according to the law.
  - c) allow the Holy Spirit to develop the fruit in him.
  
- 4** The fruit of the Spirit, or Christian character, can best be summed up by the word
  - a) *agape* (love).
  - b) service.
  - c) faith.
  - d) witness.
  
- 5** Which of these is most important for a Christian?
  - a) What I say
  - b) What I am
  - c) What I do
  - d) What I feel
  
- 6** I can have all of the gifts of the Spirit and still have nothing unless I also have
  - a) power.
  - b) tongues.
  - c) revelation from God.
  - d) love.



**7** In the kingdom of God, the positions of those who reign with Christ will be based on their

- a) past performance.
- b) desires.
- c) Christlikeness.
- d) worship experience.

**8** Self-control is love in

- a) action.
- b) discipline.
- c) temptation.
- d) society.

**9** The only thing that will remain in eternity is

- a) hope.
- b) prophecy.
- c) faith.
- d) Christian character.

**10** The process for cultivating the fruit of the Spirit given in 2 Peter 1:5-8 begins and ends with which two words?

- a) Faith—self-control
- b) Goodness—godliness
- c) Faith—love
- d) Love—perseverance

Be sure to review the lessons in this unit. Then complete your unit student report for Unit 3 and return the answer sheet to your ICI instructor.

You have now completed your study of this course. It is our prayer that you have experienced a greater personal relationship with the Holy Spirit as a result of this study. Truly He is a personal, powerful, and practical friend. For further study, we recommend the ICI course in this series, *Abundant Living: A Study of Christian Character*, which is a more expanded study of the fruit of the Spirit. God bless you as you study!

## answers to study questions

**8** You should have circled all letters *except* b), f), j), k), and n).

**1** b) It means you show the love of Christ at all times, and people are attracted to Christ by what you *are* as well as by what you *say*.

**9** This is the way I matched them:

- a** 3) Peace.
- b** 8) Gentleness.
- c** 9) Self-control.
- d** 4) Patience.
- e** 7) Faithfulness.
- f** 1) Love.
- g** 9) Self-control.
- h** 6) Goodness.
- i** 5) Kindness.
- j** 2) Joy.
- k** 6) Goodness.
- l** 4) Patience.

**2** **a** are, do.

**b** be like Him.

**c** fruit, Christian character.

**10** Your answer.

**3** Love, or Christian character.

**11** a) when we are in His presence we will no longer need these partial revelations.

**4** When it is done with the kind of love that Christ has for us.

**12** In order to bear fruit, you must remain in Him.

**5** Your answer. I would say that he wanted to impress upon us that showing love as Christ shows it is the only thing that will count in eternity. He used self-sacrifice as the most extreme act a person could *do*, to show that what we *are* is more important.

13

BROTHERLY  
 KINDNESS  
 GODLINESS  
 PERSEVERANCE    **LOVE**  
**FAITH**            SELF-CONTROL  
 KNOWLEDGE  
 GOODNESS

- 6 a True.
- b False.
- c True.
- d False.
- e True.
- f True.
- g False.
- h True.

14 Spiritual fruit, or love, is *timeless*: 1 Corinthians 13:8, 13. It brings *Christian maturity*, or Christlikeness: 2 Peter 1:8. It brings *fullness*: 2 Peter 1:10-11.

7 Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

**For Your Notes**