

The fruit of the Spirit - Sharing God with our World
Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control - Fruit that lasts.

Galatians 5:13-26

The problem with fruit -

It must be harvested at the right time

It does not last -

Spiritual Fruit

Comes naturally in our relationship to Christ

Must be cultivated daily to last

Review

Love, Joy, Peace - inner fruit reflecting God in us

Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness - fruit of relationships

Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control - fruit that lasts.

I. Faithfulness (pistis) - Fruit that holds on

A. Definition - Reliability, Trustworthiness

John 15:16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit--fruit that will last--and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

B. The Source - God's Faithfulness

Psalm 86:15 But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

1 Corinthians 1:9, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 1 Thessalonians 5:24

C. Old Testament examples

Noah - built the Ark for 120 years - had never seen rain

Abraham - waited 25 years after promise for a son

Daniel - worked and prayed for 70 years to see restoration

D. Expected by Christ

Hard sayings - *Luke 9:62 Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."*
Luke 14:26, John 8:31

E. Product of Focused life

Our commitment is always based in our values

I will commit to what I value *Matthew 6:33* -

II. Gentleness (prates) - Humility in action

A. Definition - meekness (*Aristotle - half way between excessive anger and indifference*) it is strength under control

Contrast with Kindness and Goodness

Kindness - how we react to cruelty of others

Goodness - our reaching out in generosity to others

Gentleness - the way we instruct and correct others

B. Seen in the life of Christ

Matthew 11:29 Matthew 23:37

C. Example Paul in Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 2:7 But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children.

D. Especially needed in instructing and correcting others

Galatians 6:1 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.

1 Corinthians 4:21, 2 Timothy 2:25, Titus 3:2.

III. Self-control (egkrateia) mastery over sinful human desires

A. Definition - possessing power, having mastery, holding in check passions and desires *1 Corinthians 9:25-27*

B. Biblical understanding

God is in control of all things *Isaiah 45:6-7*

Some things are totally out of our control - *Matthew 6:27*

We are expected to control our passions *2 Peter 1:5-6*

C. What we struggle with *1 John 2:16*

Lust of the flesh - natural desires out of the plan of God

Lust of the eyes - coveting the goods of the world - ingratitude to God

Pride of life - seeking the glory that belongs to God alone

D. To gain self-control we must give up control *Philippians 2:13*

Actions needed to produce lasting Fruit

1. Commit all to God *2 Timothy 2:13* If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny who he is.

2. Humble yourself before God *1 Peter 5:6* So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor.

3. Surrender control of your life fully to Him *Romans 12:1* Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God this is your true and proper worship.