

Fruit of the Spirit

Part 1

Steve Berger July 23, 2017

Review

Spent the last 3 weeks talking about how to be free from sin — how to live a truly transformed life so that sin is the exception rather than rule!

- **walk in the Spirit** — empowered, minded, guided, submitted
- **live a crucified/resurrected life** — dead to sin, alive to God, 1-2 punch

Fruit of the Spirit

- unpacked all of the second half of Galatians 5, except vs.22-23, Fruit of the Spirit
- imbedded within the life of freedom is the beauty of a fruitful life!
- freedom and fruit go hand in hand!

- **Galatians 5:22-23**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

SO IMPORTANT — *it's the fruit of the SPIRIT, not the byproduct or reward of your flesh.*

These 9 fruits DO NOT come as the result of self-will or self-effort — SPIRIT not self!

CHALLENGE — *it's so hard to understand in our performance-based, naturally-minded society. we are conditioned to work and earn through natural ways and means*

The freedom of the Spirit and the Fruit of the Spirit
come by **operating in the Spirit**, not in the natural —
different ground rules in a different realm than we're used to.

Paul warned the Galatians

- **Galatians 3:3**

Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

Application — *we must be careful not to think our flesh can produce spiritual fruit and results!*

How do we experience the Fruit of the Spirit?

Abide, Ask, Accept

- **John 15:4-8**

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. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

- **Abide** — as branch, abide in Vine, closely connected to Jesus and the Word

- Luke 10:42 — *one thing* is needed, sitting at feet of Jesus, hearing Word
- abide, bear much fruit, Father will be glorified, be disciples
- don't abide — no fruit; can't do anything by yourself
- Mary and Martha represent the difference between abiding and not, Spirit and flesh. Mary abides in Jesus and hears Word; Martha is up striving, getting frustrated.

abiding and *working* produces *fruit*
no abiding and *working* produces *frustration*

- **Ask** — “abide in Jesus/Word, ask what you will”
know more of your love, joy, peace, generally & specifically

- **Accept** — “it shall be done for you”
“Lord, because You are love, joy, peace — and I’m abiding in You, and You are in Me, and I’ve asked to know those things, I accept, I receive, that I will know love, joy and peace, etc.”

Just watch the fruit of the Spirit happen!

Do you see how this is a **far cry** from saying,
“I’ve got to be more loving, I’m going to be more loving,
I’m determined to be more loving.”
Fruitless frustration!

THE FOLLOWING ILLUSTRATION MUST BE WATCHED ONLINE TO BE FULLY UNDERSTOOD AND APPRECIATED. IT IS AN ALLEGORY OF AN EXPERIENCE BY PASTOR STEVE.

Illustration — *I’m walking in a French Vineyard, surrounded by beautiful vines and branches, most were just starting to flower, and I heard a very satisfied... “Qoo aah,” and saw a branch, “I love abiding in the vine, receiving life, producing fruit season after season, it’s so awesome. But NOT every branch feels like I do.” **Several vines away, I heard a new branch grunting, groaning, moaning.** “What are you doing?” “I’m trying to make a grape.” Grunting continued... “Don’t you know that the life-giving, fruit-producing vine that you’re attached to makes the grapes, and you just need to stay connected to it — it produces the fruit? Quit striving and just abide in the vine.”*

As a branch, abide in Vine, closely connected to Jesus and the Word.

What is the Fruit of the Spirit?

- **Galatians 5:22**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love...

- **Love** — it is the **primary evidence** that the Holy Spirit is producing fruit in your life — beware of substitutions...

- **1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Application — *you can be spiritually gifted, smart, have faith, give away livelihood, sacrifice very life — without love it all means nothing, **that's how important operating in love is!***

Two things to be careful of — *not **subconsciously substitute** other things for love and think God is okay... **don't be confused** about what love is, **love is NOT** affirming or approving every behavior, that's not love, its license.*

- **1 Corinthians 13:6**

Love does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;

- **Philippians 1:9-10**

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.

Application — *love needs to super-abound through us, with **knowledge and discernment** according to God's will and ways. Then we approve what's excellent, in sincerity, without offending God.*

- **1 Corinthians 13:4-8**

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

By **abiding** in Jesus, **asking** and **accepting** more of His love,
the **Holy Spirit produces the fruit of love** in us and **through us**...
it's spiritual, supernatural...

- **Matthew 5:44-46**

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

The Holy Spirit produces that kind of love in us and through us, we can't do that!

The Fruit of the Spirit comes from being in a right relationship with the Vine — Abide, Ask, and Accept — and fruit will happen in you and through you.

Discussion Questions

1. We understand the concept that the fruits come from the Spirit, and are not a reward of the flesh; but why is it so hard for us to live that way?
2. How do we abide in the vine?
3. Are you by nature a Martha or a Mary? If you are a Martha, how can you develop a more Mary-life lifestyle?
4. Have you ever been like the vine who said, “I’m trying to make a grape”?
5. In serving God and doing His work with others, what are some substitutions that we/you make in place of “love”?
6. Why/how do we need to love with discernment — without offending God?