

The Fruit Of The Spirit

Galatians 5:22-26

MEMORY VERSE

GALATIANS 5:25

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A long sheet of butcher type paper (enough for 2 activities), assorted colors of construction paper, tape and a blindfold.

Sponges (approximately 7-8), enough small rewards (pencils, stickers, etc.) for the number of children in your class, masking tape and markers.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Walking in the Spirit

Form pairs, give each child a strip of long paper. Let the partners help each other trace nine footprints in a footstep pattern. According to age either allow the children to write or write yourself the different fruits on each foot reminding us to walk in the Spirit.

LESSON TIME!

What does a Christian look like? What should a Christian look like? In today's lesson we will examine the Bible's answer to these very important questions.

Have you ever had a tough time trying to decide what clothes to wear to school? Worried about not having the right shoes or clothes? Do you ever worry about what you look like? Am I too fat or too skinny, too tall or too short? Am I ugly or do people think I am weird or stupid or nerdy? If you have you are not alone. Everyone has felt the same way at least once in his or her life.

The question for us to answer today is not what people think we should look like, but what God thinks we should look like. Our lesson today teaches us about what a true Christian should look like. It isn't talking about our physical appearance but our spiritual appearance. The Bible calls our spiritual appearance the fruit of the Spirit. This fruit is much more important than our looks, our dress, or our personality. **God desires to produce in us the fruit of His Spirit.**

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.

What exactly is the "fruit of the Spirit"? Paul, the writer of the book of Galatians, is explaining to the Christians of Galatia that it is obvious what non-Christians look like. They do not have the help of the Holy Spirit of God, so they do the wrong things instead of the right things. They live after the flesh. They do whatever their bodies want to do. The things that they do may be immoral, impure or hateful things (vs. 19).

The reason they do these things is because of a sinful nature. All of us are born with a sinful nature. That is why our parents had to teach us to share our toys and tell the truth. We naturally will make mistakes and do the wrong things. But when we become Christians God comes into our lives and gives us a new nature (2 Corinthians 5:17).

God gave us a new spirit, His Holy Spirit to live inside of us. (1 Corinthians 5:17) The way other people can see that we have the Spirit of God inside of us is when we show them the fruit of God's Spirit. This fruit is not produced by our own abilities, but by allowing God to produce this fruit through our lives. **God desires to produce in us the fruit of His Spirit.**

“Pin the Fruit on the Tree”

Make a poster of a tree and hang on the wall. Using various colors of construction paper, cut out orange circles (or shapes and colors for other fruits) and write one of the fruits of the Spirit on each. You may want to make several sets depending on the number of children in your class, or just use them over and over. Place a small looped piece of tape, so that it is sticky on both sides, onto each fruit. Blindfold the children (who would like to participate) and let them “pin the fruit on the tree.”

Next you can use the poster to illustrate that Jesus is like the tree and we are like the branches, which can produce fruit. Refer to John 15 which talks about how Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. Write the names of the children on the branches and the name of Jesus on the trunk. Explain to the children that Jesus is the trunk, we are the branches and as long as we are attached to Jesus we will produce fruit just like a tree

When people see the fruit of the Spirit in our lives they will want to have some. They will want to taste it. They will want a tree like our tree. They will want Jesus. **God desires to produce in us the fruit of His Spirit.**

The following is a list of the fruit of the Spirit:

Love: A self-sacrificing type of love. It is the same kind of love that was demonstrated in Jesus giving Himself for us. Love in this passage is that fruit of the Spirit that dominates all the others, a love that can only spring out of God’s love for us (John 3:18).

Joy: A deep abiding inner rejoicing (beyond happiness). Promised to those who abide in Christ (John 15:11)

Peace: Inner quietness and tranquility are gifts from Jesus (John 14:27). So even in the midst of adverse circumstances "surpasses all understanding." (Philippians 4:7)

Longsuffering: Patience even when provoked. We see our best example in Jesus as He was crucified. No retaliation when wrongfully treated. (1 Corinthians 13:4) An example is when you are nice to those who are mean to you.

Kindness: Active benevolence, being nice to others. Just as God has shown to us in sending Jesus. (Romans 2:4, Ephesians 2:7) It is when we are being nice to those who are in need.

Goodness: Desire within to do good to others. It is when we are nice to others, just because.

Faithfulness: Trustworthy and reliable. (Luke 16:10-12)

Gentleness: Considerate of others (1 Cor.4:21, Col. 3:12)

Self-control: The ability to tell ourselves “NO!” When we want to do something wrong the Holy Spirit will give us the power to not give in. Only God, through His Spirit can give this power (Galatians 5:18).

GALATIANS 5:24-26

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Whenever we want to do something that is unkind, unloving, mean or bad we need to kill the idea or crucify it. We do not have the power to do this on our own. Jesus provided this strength for us in His death on the cross. Now we are not under bondage to sin thanks to the grace of God (Romans 6:12-14). Colossians tells us that it is the grace of God that teaches us to say no when we want to do bad things.

Since we have the Holy Spirit of God living in us we should walk with God, allowing His Spirit to produce tons of fruit in our lives. **God desires to produce in us the fruit of His Spirit.**

Choosing the Right Path

You will need sponges, small rewards (pencils, stickers, etc.), masking tape and markers. Have small rewards prepared for those who choose to “walk in the Spirit,” but do not let the children know about them. Tape two paths on the floor with masking tape, one marked “Spirit” and one marked “flesh.” At the end of each path make a large circle (tape) called the “reward circle.”

Write different and terrible ordeals on the sponges with markers, such as: pain, hunger, lose job, lose money, lose friends, humiliation, scorn, etc. These are some of the things that happen to us when we walk in the Spirit. Give all of the sponges to two “tormenters.”

Let kids line up and one at a time choose a path to walk. If they choose the “flesh” path, nothing happens, but if they choose the “Spirit” path, the terrible ordeals are hurled at them. Give the small rewards only to the ones who choose to walk in the Spirit. You may want to give them all a second chance to walk in the Spirit, then give each of them a reward.

Explain that when we walk in the flesh this means we do what feels good, and what is easy, but can never end with eternal reward. But when we walk in the Spirit, even though it is not the easy path, it is the path that brings eternal rewards.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to allow the Holy Spirit to produce fruit in their lives. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.