

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mr. and Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Douglas' mother, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Kelly Hall, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Lamar Mathis, Ms. Matchett, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mr. Sowder, Mr. Vaughn, Mr. Winns, Mrs. LeeAnn Wiser.
Out of Town: Mr. and Mrs. Nick Law (Sunday Morning - Cherry Sink)

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website:
www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com.
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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Introduction to the Fruit of the Spirit

By Derek Long

The book of Galatians deals with countering the arguments of those who were attempting to bind the Old Testament and specifically circumcision upon Christians. Twice we are reminded circumcision or uncircumcision is no longer an important matter in the sight of God (Galatians 5:6; 6:15). God wants us to have "faith working through love" (Galatians 5:6) and to be "a new creation" (Galatians 6:15). While the book makes the point Christians have been set free from the law of Moses and from sin, it does remind Christians we still have an obligation to live our lives in a manner which is acceptable to God. Galatians 5:13 says, "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." In the concluding verses of Galatians 5, we are taught not to walk after the flesh but instead to bear the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26).

The fruit of the Spirit depicts one way we can live our lives. The fruit of the Spirit consists of qualities we can choose to possess in our lives. Our life can be governed by things such as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The person who bears the fruit of the Spirit can rest assured they are doing what is right because "against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:23).

Not everyone bears the fruit of the Spirit. Some people engage in the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). The Bible is clear there are only two ways to live our life. We will either walk in the Spirit or we will fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). It is impossible for a person to both engage in the works of the flesh and possess the fruit of the Spirit at the same time. We must make a choice which path we will walk upon but remember our choice will impact whether we “inherit the kingdom of God” or not (Galatians 5:19; 6:7-9; Matthew 7:13-14).

Fulfilling the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:16-17) results in us engaging in the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). The phrase “works of the flesh” or “lust of the flesh” does not mean our bodies are inherently wicked or sinful. Jesus took on a body of flesh and yet resisted every temptation (Hebrews 4:15). The “works of the flesh” and “lust of the flesh” describe what a person does whose guidance comes purely from the fleshly part of him without any consideration for what the will of God is. Instead of being controlled by the “lust of the flesh” and living in the “works of the flesh” we need to “walk in the Spirit” and be “led by the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16-18).

What is meant by “walk in the Spirit” or be “led by the Spirit”? Walking in or being led by the Spirit is allowing something besides our fleshly impulses and momentary desires determine what we are going to do. Those who are led by the Spirit and walk in the Spirit are those who are guided by the Holy Spirit in the actions they take. The Holy Spirit is no longer directly revealing God’s will to us today because “the faith ... was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). The Holy Spirit revealed what we are to believe and revealed all the

instructions we need in order to know how to please God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3). As we read Scripture, which is not the product of men by the revelation given by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21), we are hearing the instruction given to us by the Spirit. Some people when they hear the Bible do not listen or obey. These people despite hearing the words revealed by the Spirit are not being led by or walking in the Spirit. Those who hear the Bible and allow its teachings, which were revealed by the Holy Spirit, to guide their life are being led by and walking in the Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is what is produced in the lives of those who are willing to allow their steps to be directed by God. If we are going to bear the fruit of the Spirit, we must have the attitude expressed by the Psalmist who said, “Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me” (Psalm 119:133). The spiritual person is not the person who does whatever they think is right. The spiritual person is the one who has submitted their will to the word revealed by the Spirit. As a result, the individual possesses the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

We will want to examine the fruit of the Spirit in more detail in future articles but wanted to begin with an introduction. How are we doing at living our lives based upon the guidance provided by the Spirit as recorded in the Bible? How are we doing at removing the works of the flesh? How are we doing at developing the fruit of the Spirit? All of the qualities listed as the fruit of the Spirit are things most people want but the only way to obtain such things is by being willing to be “led by the Spirit” and to “walk in the Spirit.”