

The 9 fruit of the Holy Spirit

1. **LOVE.** This is not the romanticized or sexual love of the street or of society's rebels. It is the divine love that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). It makes one love the lowly, the unlovely, and the unclean. It makes one love members of another race or denomination. It does not look down upon those whose gift/s differ from our own.

In Corinth this love was missing and the gifts became a source of competition among the 'spiritually elite'. That is why Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13:1: "*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*"

The presence of a gift is not the evidence of the Holy Spirit's filling. You may have gifts, but prophet, miracle worker, helper, but ask yourself, do you have the fruit? This is where Satan can fool and deceive us. He can imitate the gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12, 13 and 14, but he cannot imitate or produce the fruit of the Spirit. The real evidence is found in the fruit one bears as he / she ministers the gifts.

Oh, that we might be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19). This Holy Spirit produced love makes us love others. "*Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God . . .*" (1 John 4:7). Do you have the real evidence of the Holy Spirit's filling? It is described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: "*Love suffers long, and is kind; love envies not; love vaunts not itself [boasting about its gift/s]; love seeks not its own; is not easily provoked; thinks no evil; rejoices not in iniquity but rejoices in the truth; love bears all things; believes all things; hopes all things and endures all things.*" The world is waiting to see this evidence, and true believers need to show it to them. Do this by manifesting the love that proves one has the Holy Spirit's fruit.

2. **JOY.** Joy is not the superficial and fleeting happiness that springs from sports or television etc. Instead, it is the joy of the Lord which is one's strength (Nehemiah 8:10). It is a consistent contentment in times of suffering, sorrow, and even death. It is "*joy unspeakable and full of glory*" (1 Peter 1:8).

3. **PEACE** also fills the minds and hearts of those who are Holy Spirit dominated. This is not peace with God that accompanies salvation (Romans 5:1), but the "*peace of God, which passeth all understanding*" (Philippians 4:7). This peace produces a sublime calm of heart and mind in spite of every disturbance, heartbreaking circumstance, or challenge, and glorifies God before an unsaved and wicked world.

4. **LONGSUFFERING** within a true believer is a quality that only the Holy Spirit can produce. It is the opposite of impatience. It cannot be produced by members of Adam's race, but must be wrought within a Christian by God. "*The Lord God, [is] merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth* (Exodus 34:6). This is why the ungodly receive countless opportunities to be saved, for: *The Lord . . . is longsuffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Peter 3:9). This same attitude may be the true believer's portion, for God "*strengthens us with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness*" (Colossians 1:11). We are to "*walk with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*" (Ephesians 4:2, 3), and "*be patient toward all men*" (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

5. **GENTLENESS**. Again, this is a fruit from God, it cannot be attained by human effort or by imitation ; for ". . . *the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated . . .*" (James 3:17). Paul could also say: ". . . *we were gentle among you . . .*" (1 Thessalonians 2:7). Bickering, fighting, fussing church members forget that the servant of the Lord must not strive; but "*be gentle unto all men*" (2 Timothy 2:24).

6. **GOODNESS** is produced at salvation and made to bloom in one's life as the Holy Spirit fills a true believer. Jesus said: ". . . *none is good . . .*" (Luke 18:19). Paul said: ". . . *there is none that doeth good, no, not one*" (Romans 3:12). Men and women talk about doing good, and most often it is only egotism seeking praise and reward. However, the Holy Spirit within produces real goodness toward others.

7. **FAITH**, in this listing, is actually faithfulness. Lamentations 3:23, speaking about God, states: ". . . *great is thy faithfulness.*" This same faithfulness in a Christian may become a daily reality. One does not have to be up and down spiritually. God's faithfulness, wrought in a Christian by the Holy Spirit, can make him / her faithful daily.

8. **MEEKNESS** is the hardest fruit to possess. Meekness does not consist of trying to be less than one really is, but rather when one does not pretend to be more than he / she really is. However, this is not false humility, which is as bad as pride. The flesh cannot generate meekness because it is only puffed-up flesh. It takes the filling of the Holy Spirit to put on meekness (Colossians 3:12).

9. Finally, **TEMPERANCE** is self-control. The term speaks for itself and, praise God, the Holy Spirit produces it in those who have the fullness of the Spirit.

Remember, God demands a high and holy standard of life. We are to walk in the Holy Spirit and seek the fruit instead of just gifts. A true believer must turn from all known sin to a daily reliance on the Holy Spirit if he / she is to evidence the fullness and fruit of the Holy Spirit.
