

THE HOLY SPIRIT



May 23, 2021
“Fruit of
the Spirit”

OPENING PRAYER

O Gracious God, today we pray that as we grow in our awareness of the Holy Spirit, you would help us to walk in the Spirit's rhythm. Bring to mind times in our life when we know we did not get through on our own strength, when we had more courage than we could have on our own, when we experienced more joy and love than we imagined possible, because of your Spirit. While we know not every season will hold a “mountaintop” experience, we do pray that we could see steady growth in our “fruit” as you prune us and make us into the people you long for us to be. We pray in the name of your Son, with gratitude for his Spirit's fresh wind at Pentecost. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:

Galatians 5:16,22-23 (NIV)

¹⁶ So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

John 15:9-17 (NIV)

⁹ “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. 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. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.”

Romans 8:1-4 (NIV)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

INTRODUCTION

To grow in our spiritual life, the scriptures call us to “walk in the Spirit” or live by the rhythm of the Holy Spirit. Paul says the evidence of walking in the Spirit is the “fruit” characterized by “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” (Galatians 5:22-23.) Our lives will witness to Christ, not so much through our words, but through our fruit, born through the Spirit’s inner transformation.

QUESTIONS

- 1) Can you describe a time in your life that you were aware the Holy Spirit was moving in your life? In the life of someone you know?
- 2) As you read Galatians 5:16, 22-23, do you find yourself checking boxes, marking ways you are doing well and ways you are doing poorly? What might be the problem with reading the passage this way? Share your thoughts.
- 3) Read John 15:9-17 We know that the best way to walk with the Holy Spirit is to “abide” or “remain” in Jesus’s love. We also learn that Jesus “chose you,” specifically to “go and bear fruit.” Do Jesus’s words bring up questions for you? Do you ever wonder why Jesus chose you? Or what fruit you are supposed to produce? Share your thoughts with the group.
- 4) Read Romans 8:1-4 Chapter 8 in Romans is often described as the high point of the Apostle Paul’s writing. Here, we learn that Christ offers us “freedom” through the Holy Spirit. As you grow in your faith, do you have a growing sense of freedom from weight of sin, and of death? Discuss with the group what that freedom could mean for how you live your life.

FINAL APPLICATION

Revisit Galatians 5:22-23 and meditate on the fruit of the Spirit. When have you been able to give and receive much love? What brings you joy? In what ways are you kind and compassionate? As you consider your answers, realize that you are already growing in the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Affirm this growth in your group members. Meditate on the list once more and ask God to convict you of the ways you need to grow, asking for grace to continue to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in your lives. Pray together, as you seek to grow in community.