

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

(Galatians 5:22-23)

The Fruit of the Spirit are the characteristics of God which every believer should possess. God fills us with these qualities after we accept Christ into our hearts. If at any time in our lives we find that we are not producing these Godlike qualities, we should make every effort through prayer, fasting, reading and meditating on God's word, to ensure that these qualities are manifesting in our lives.

LOVE

The high esteem which God has for his children and the high regard which they, in return should have for him and others. (I Corinthians 13 gives us a perfect example of the type of love we should exemplify as Christians.)

JOY

A positive attitude or pleasant emotion; delight. Gladness, contentment and cheerfulness. (The joy of the Lord is our strength according to Nehemiah 8:10). The joy that God gives rises above circumstances and focuses on the very character of God.

PEACE

Inner tranquility. A combination of hope, trust and quietness of mind and soul brought about by reconciliation with God. (Christians should always strive to be peacemakers, for the Bible states, "***Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.***" (Matthew 5:9).

LONGSUFFERING

Patiently enduring pain and/or difficulties. (This is a virtue that many Christians dread, however, we must realize that experiencing various difficulties builds character in us and gives us the ability to help others who also experience difficulties).

GOODNESS

The quality of being good. Praiseworthy character; moral excellence. Goodness is more than just doing good things. Many people do "good things" for recognition and other reasons, but a person that is filled with goodness does good deeds purely from the heart, not expecting anything in return.

GENTLENESS

Kindness, consideration, a spirit of fairness and compassion. The Apostle Paul declared that Christians should have a spirit of gentleness towards all people. (Philippians 4:5; II. Corinthians 10:1.) Christians should have a pleasant demeanor that exemplifies the gentleness and compassion of Christ.

FAITH

A belief in or confident attitude towards God. (It includes reliance upon and commitment to Christ.) It must be noted that faith is more than merely saying, "I believe," but faith is putting that belief into action by actually applying the Word of God to our daily situations and believing God for whatever the needs are.

MEEKNESS

An attitude of humility towards God and gentleness toward men, springing from the recognition that God is in control. (Although some people consider meekness as weakness, they are not at all the same. Weakness is due to negative circumstances such as lack of strength or lack of courage. Meekness is a strength and courage under control, coupled with kindness.

TEMPERANCE

The meaning of the word temperate in English translations of the Bible should not be restricted to the kind of self-control a person exerts by abstaining from alcoholic beverages. The temperance of which the Bible speaks is far more inclusive. It indicates a self-control that masters all kind of sensual desires, such as excessive sexual desires or the excessive desire for material comfort. Through temperance the Christian disciplines body and spirit, so that he/she is more capable of striving for his/her spiritual reward. (I Corinthians 9:24-27)