



THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 1

The Holy Spirit is the beginning of the end—the end game of salvation, that is. All God has in store for us in our resurrection glory and eternal reign begins with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

And as mysterious as the Holy Spirit is, many of us learn about him from the earliest age. We're taught to repent of our sins and ask Jesus into our hearts. So simple, so childlike. But when we do that, the Holy Spirit is all over it!

The Spirit convicts us of sin, gives us new birth, opens our hearts to the gospel, and moves into our lives. It's not wrong to think of Jesus living in our hearts, but how does he do that? *By the Spirit!* Sin is dropped from our core processor and the Spirit is downloaded to empower a brand new life. That's salvation.

And of all the things the Holy Spirit does, this summer we are focusing on his fruit, which we can summarize like this: *Christlike character in community.*

This is so important to remember. The Spirit's goal is not to make us Zen-like in isolation, but Christlike in relationships. By yielding to the Spirit, we start looking peculiarly like Jesus. We live on earth like the heavenly community we are.

READ IT

- M Galatians 5:22-23
- T Genesis 1:1-2; Psalm 139:1-16
- W John 3:1-17
- Th John 14:15-27
- F Acts 1:8; 2:1-21

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23

PRAY IT

- P Praise
- R Repent
- A Ask
- Y Yield



LIVE IT

- Walk your neighborhood and pray for the Holy Spirit to convict people of sin and grant them repentance and salvation.
- Create a tree in a visual spot in your home to remind you of the study. Add the fruit each week and possibly the memory verse.
- Pause at least three times a day to pray in your heart, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening" or "Lord, I'm yours and fully available to you." If you get an inspired idea, heed it; take it as from God.





LOVE

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 2

Love: it's pretty much the whole ballgame.

Jesus said love is the greatest commandment. (Matthew 22:37)

Paul said love sums up the whole law. (Galatians 5:14)

John said God is love. (1 John 4:8)

That last sentence is important: God is love, but love is not "God." God is a person, not a force or feeling. So we begin with him, a divine Person revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. If we don't start there, we'll get both love and God wrong. We'll think love is squishy sentimental feelings, and then we'll say, "God is a warm puppy or a day at the beach."

Those are great blessings, for sure. But God has way more personality than that, and his love has way more power. Love is more like God giving a billion blessings in Creation—and then giving himself away, in death, for our Redemption. That's love.

Here's a simple definition: **Love is self-giving for the good of another.**

Love is a fruit of the Spirit because "Love comes from God" (1 John 4:7). So when God's Spirit lives in us, God's love comes out of us! And that's the only way to become truly loving. We have to receive God's love first. "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

READ IT

- M Psalm 103
- T Romans 8:35-39
- W Luke 10:25-37
- Th 1 Corinthians 13: 1-8a
- F 1 John 4:7-16

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

PRAY IT

- P Praise
- R Repent
- A Ask
- Y Yield



LIVE IT

- Walk your neighborhood and pray that each home would receive Christ's love. Ask God to open doors for you to show them love.
- Complete a random act of selfless love for a neighbor, friend, or family member by sending a card, baking something, or cutting their grass.
- Truly divine love extends even to our enemies. Who is one person that you can reach out to with a gesture of kindness and reconciling love this week?





JOY

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 3

Joy and happiness, are they the same?

A common driving force in our world and culture is the pursuit of happiness (or “happyness” for our Will Smith fans out there). We think that we can gain, gather, seek, achieve, or capture happiness. But the truth is that happiness is something that greatly depends on our external circumstances.

Joy, however, is a choice. Joy has to do with attitude. Joy is something that can be present inside of us because true joy comes from God.

Compassion International describes the difference between joy and happiness like this: “It’s possible to feel joy in difficult times. Joy doesn’t need a smile in order to exist, although it does feel better with one. Joy can share its space with other emotions – sadness, shame or anger. Happiness can’t. Happiness is not present in darkness and difficulty. Joy never leaves it. Joy undergirds our spirits; it brings to life peace and contentment.”

This week, we take a look at the true, ever-present joy that is available to those who trust in Jesus. It is not a feeling based on circumstance. It is based on the strength of the Lord.

READ IT

- M Psalm 16
- T Isaiah 9:1-7
- W Luke 2:1-20
- Th Acts 16:16-34
- F James 1:2-4

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Psalm 16:11

PRAY IT

- P Praise
- R Repent
- A Ask
- Y Yield



LIVE IT

- Send a video, text, or note to someone to spread the joy of God or write a thank you note to someone—few things spread joy like appreciation.
- Walk your neighborhood and pray that people seek joy. Ask God to give you an opportunity to “Be a joy” to someone while on your walk.
- Put up a poster board or chalkboard where everyone in the house can see it. Write down three things each day in your life that bring you joy.
- Create chalk art on your sidewalk or driveway to bring others joy.





PEACE

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 4

Peace in Hebrew is the word *Shalom*. I'm sure some of you are familiar with it. It's also a common way to greet each other as well as a way to say goodbye when parting with friends or loved ones. But peace is more than a nice way to say hello.

One of the ways the ancient rabbis describe the world before the Fall of Man is by using the word Peace. This means that there was *perfection*. The relationship with God and humans was in perfect peace. The relationship between humans was in perfect peace. The same goes for how humans felt about themselves and also their relationship with creation. Perfect peace. *Shalom*. Of course, we know that this is not the world we live in today.

Our broken world has been scarred by sin. Sin grabbed on to everything good that God created and twisted it. That's the world we experience. But that's not the end of the story.

By His death on the cross, Jesus purchased our broken and sin-scarred relationship with God. This means that we can once again experience *Shalom* with God. Peace is not just the absence of conflict – it's the presence of God. May we experience that peace *and* live out that peace in the world around us.

READ IT

- M John 16:29-33
- T Daniel 6
- W Mark 4:35-41
- Th Luke 1:57-80
- F Philippians 4

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

PRAY IT

- P Praise
- R Repent
- A Ask
- Y Yield



LIVE IT

- Walk your neighborhood and ask God to reconcile families to him, to each other, and to the rest of the neighborhood. Ask God to build new connections that weave the fabric of the community.
- Paint a rock with the word peace and hide it in your neighborhood or along a walking trail.
- Discuss - Where do you see a lack of peace in the world right now? How can God bring peace?





PATIENCE

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 5

Patience: Are you a patient person? It shouldn't surprise anyone that most people would answer that question with either an emphatic, "NO!" or "I'd like to be more patient". Patience is not something that we expect in our world anymore. Everything is instant. Everything is fast. It can feel like everything is right at our fingertips.

But should we be more patient? Could we be more patient? Are we going too fast and consuming so much that we miss what God has for us? The answer to all of those questions is an emphatic, "YES!" The good news is that patience is produced by the Holy Spirit.

As we look at stories and verses about patience this week, we have to realize something incredibly important. Patience comes from God. It is a part of the fruit that the Holy Spirit produces in and through you.

Do you want to learn to be more patient? The first thing you have to do is trust that God is the one who can make you more patient. We have such an amazing example in Jesus who is constantly and consistently patient with us. What an amazing God we have: He models patience for us and then gives us opportunities to show that same patience in our relationships.

READ IT

M Psalm 27:7-14
T Jeremiah 29:1-14
W Luke 2:25-38
Th John 5:1-15
F 2 Peter 3:8-16

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

Wait for the Lord;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the Lord.

Psalm 27:14

PRAY IT

P Praise
R Repent
A Ask
Y Yield



LIVE IT

- As a part of prayer time, talk about the importance of listening to God. Sit in silence each day slowly increasing your time depending on age.
- Bake something or cook a meal together. Parents: exercise patience by letting your children do as much prep as practical, however imperfectly. Kids: exercise patience by listening to instructions and sticking with the project.
- Walk your neighborhood slowly and notice everything around you. If walking with kids, let them set the pace and stop to look at things along the way. Ask God to help you to slow down and be in the moment.





KINDNESS

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 6

Kindness: It's not uncommon for parents to teach their children to be kind. Of course, the definition of kindness could mean different things to different people. But to most people, to be kind means to be nice. Oftentimes in our world, to be nice means to keep to yourself and not make too many waves. But is this what God had in mind when He made kindness a part of the Fruit of the Spirit?

This week, one of the texts we're going to read is known as "The Golden Rule". Do to others as you would have them do to you (Luke 6:31). Take note of the action required with following the Golden Rule. Jesus says one simple word, "Do". This means that if you would like something done to you, you need to actively pursue and do that thing for another. Kindness is shown through action.

In Ephesians 2, we're told that God's kindness to us is *expressed* in Jesus (2:7). In Romans 2:4, Paul reminds us that, "God's kindness is intended to lead us to repentance." How did God show His kindness? Through Jesus' death and resurrection. May we live by the law of Christ in sacrificial kindness.

READ IT

M 2 Samuel 9:1-13
T Luke 19:1-10
W Luke 6:27-36
Th Romans 2:1-4
F Matthew 25:31-46

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Luke 6:31

PRAY IT

P Praise
R Repent
A Ask
Y Yield



LIVE IT

- Walk your neighborhood praying for a spirit of kindness in our world. Try to smile and speak to anyone you encounter on your walk.
- Perform a random act of kindness: leave a note, a bottle of water or candy for your sanitation workers, delivery person or mail person, carry loose change or single dollar bills and put something in every donation container you encounter this week, pay for someone behind you at a drive through. Be creative!!
- Share the best way someone has been kind to you each day.





GOODNESS

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 7

Goodness, like Love, is a massive word that captures all the nature of God. There's a story in Exodus 33 in which Moses asks God, "Show me your *glory*." And God says, "I will cause all my *goodness* to pass in front of you" (Ex. 33:18-20). Apparently the sheer weight and shining worth of God—*his* glory—is equivalent to his goodness.

But God wouldn't just pass by. He says, "And I will proclaim my name in your presence." And that name came with attributes like compassion, grace, patience, love, faithfulness, forgiveness—and punishment of unrepentant sinners. It's all part of God's name, glory, and goodness.

God *is* good, *does* good, and *creates* good all the time. And that's *good news* because we just muck things up with our sin. But when God cleanses us of our sins and places his Spirit inside us, we become capable of doing good too.

It's interesting that business is about bringing "goods and services" to the marketplace. Any tangible product is called a "good," even if it isn't. But when the Holy Spirit empowers our work, it becomes holy and truly good—a reflection of God's character that adds value to others. Those are the goods and services we want to bring to the world.

READ IT

- M Psalm 145
- T Matthew 19:16-30
- W Luke 8:1-15
- Th Ephesians 5:8-11
- F Matthew 5:13-16

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

PRAY IT

- P Praise
- R Repent
- A Ask
- Y Yield



LIVE IT

- List out the ways God has been good in your life. Write them on a paper each day and put them in a bowl. Have each person draw one at dinner and talk about it as a family.
- Walk your neighborhood asking God to help you identify who needs to experience His goodness. Pray for those He puts on your heart. Thank God for all the goodness you see on your walk.
- Make a household log of your "Good Deeds of the Day." See how many different expressions of goodness you can accumulate.





FAITHFULNESS

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 8

Faithfulness always tops the charts of favorite attributes of God. We love that he can be counted on all the time. His word is his bond and he always keeps his promises. “I meant what I said and I said what I meant, an elephant’s faithful one hundred percent,” Horton famously said—which is a very God-like statement.

But God isn’t just faithful to his word, he’s faithful to his character. He has fidelity all the way down. He always thinks, feels, speaks, and acts with infinite integrity. He never changes. (That’s one reason we call him our Rock.)

It was faithfulness to his saving promises that sent Jesus to the cross. And faithfulness brought the gospel across time and space to us. And faithfulness will lead us safely into God’s eternal kingdom—provided we are faithful: “The one who endures to the end will be saved” (Matt. 24:13).

But our faithfulness doesn’t ultimately depend on us. Like all the other fruit, it comes from God. He makes us cling to Jesus. He keeps our faith alive. He empowers us to fulfill our commitments to him and to others. And if we fail? Well, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

READ IT

- M Genesis 8
- T Psalm 89:1-14
- W Isaiah 11:1-10
- Th Matthew 25:14-30
- F 1 Peter 4:7-19

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies.

Psalm 57:10

PRAY IT

- P Praise
- R Repent
- A Ask
- Y Yield



LIVE IT

- Walk your neighborhood just reflecting on God’s faithfulness. Talk to each other about all the ways He has been faithful.
- Reflect on God’s faithfulness over the years. Create a timeline marking major spots where you or your family can identify God’s faithfulness or page through family photo albums together. Recount the faithfulness of God, and each other, across the years.
- Sign up to be a faithful and consistent volunteer in the church or a local non-profit.





GENTLENESS

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 9

Gentleness is strength under control. We teach it to our children when they pet kittens or catch fireflies. Their powerful enthusiasm needs to be reined in for everyone to survive. How much more when an omnipotent God deals with fragile mortals like us?

Gentleness makes God knowable and relatable. If Jesus didn't dial back his glory when he came to earth, we couldn't even have looked at him. But the Word became flesh and lived among us. Gentle. Servant-like. So we beheld his glory and experienced his grace and truth (John 1:14).

This wasn't disingenuous of God. It wasn't a front. No, gentleness is a core attribute of God. He is "gentle and humble in heart" (Matt. 11:29). His power is always under his perfect control. God can fling a universe into existence; or pass a bruised reed without doing further damage.

As we yield to his Spirit, we become gentle too, and that has a unique power. Proverbs 15:1 says a gentle answer turns away wrath. But Proverbs 25:15 says a gentle tongue can *break a bone!* In other words, we don't have to power up to make an impact. In fact, our best influence will be exercised with gentle words and actions that communicate the Spirit of Christ.

READ IT

- M 1 Kings 19:1-18
- T Isaiah 40:9-11; Psalm 23
- W Matthew 11:28-30
- Th Mark 10:13-16
- F Colossians 3:12-17

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

PRAY IT

- P Praise
- R Repent
- A Ask
- Y Yield



LIVE IT

- Referring back to this week's memory verse, identify the things we need to give over to Jesus.
- Walk your neighborhood praying for a spirit of gentleness in homes. If walking with kids, encourage them to tip toe past homes or gently touch flowers or trees.
- Play "keep it up" with a balloon or a beach ball. Nobody can touch it twice in a row, and the balloon/ball can't touch the floor or the ceiling. Talk about what makes gentleness so hard.





SELF-CONTROL

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT WEEK 10

Self-control is an intriguing quality to place at the end of the list, as the capstone of the fruit of the Spirit. On the surface, it may seem oddly contradictory. Aren't we supposed to yield to the Spirit's control? How then can self-control be his fruit? Add to this the fact that self-control doesn't exactly correspond to an attribute of God. Of course, God is never out of control. But he has no impulse whatsoever to sin, so he never has to rein himself in.

But we do. Galatians 5 lists all sorts of ugliness that arises when our flesh is unrestrained. But by the Spirit's power our new nature holds sway, and it holds the vestiges of sin at bay. That is the essence of self-control.

The root New Testament Greek word is *kratos*, meaning dominion or rule. We borrow it in English with words like **democratic**, "rule by the people," or **autocratic**, "rule by oneself." But whereas an autocrat rules over others, the self-controlled person simply governs himself. Not in **autonomy**. Not as a law unto himself, but in submission to the Spirit, under God's law of love.

Which brings us back, full circle, to the beginning of the list!

READ IT

- M Matthew 3:13—4:11
- T 1 Peter 2:21-25
- W 2 Peter 1:3-11
- Th James 3:1-12
- F 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Ask

- What do I learn and love about God here?
- What does this passage make me wonder?
- What do I see about me; my identity and situation?
- What does this text call me to believe and do?



MEMORIZE IT

For God gave us a Spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

2 Timothy 1:7

PRAY IT

- P Praise
- R Repent
- A Ask
- Y Yield



LIVE IT

- Practice fasting. Fast for a day, from a meal, from coffee, sweets or electronics.
- Talk about what the biggest time-wasters are in your life. Intentionally quit those things earlier than you normally would. Cut the time in half that you give to these things, and redeem that time with a better activity. Share what time-trade you made.
- Walk your neighborhood praying that you are able to yield to the spirit's control as you interact with neighbors and family members. If walking with children, take turns being the leader.

