

MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY



FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

In his letter to the Galatians, the Apostle Paul mentions the conflict within us between the desires of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. Notice that he mentions the “fruit” of the Spirit (singular, not plural). That’s because the nine examples he sites are characteristics of how that fruit appears. Nine different descriptors of the Spirit’s beauty growing in us as we become more and more like Jesus.

I compared the nine descriptors of the fruit in ten different translations of the Bible. Only three of them are common to all ten translations: love, joy, and peace. These are also the first three on the list. As Christ followers, we are becoming more and more like Jesus each day. So, today let’s look at some things Jesus had to say about these three characteristics of the Spirit’s fruit.

Love

The religious leaders of Jesus’ time were always quizzing Him, trying to catch Him making incriminating statements and prove His blasphemy. His response in this instance, as was often the case, was to teach rather than rebuke.

Matthew 22:34-40 (NIV)

“Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied: ‘ the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘ your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Luke 6:32 (NIV)

“If you those who you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners those who them.”

Luke 6:35 (NIV)

“But your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.”

Joy

Jesus wants us to have true joy in this life. He shows us the way to that joy. The definition of joy is to experience great pleasure or delight. This is what Jesus represents and wishes for each of His believers...yes, you and me!

John 15:10-11 (NIV)

“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. I have told you this so that my may be in you and that your may be complete.”

But, even in times of turmoil, grief, loss, or pain, Jesus promised to be with us.

John 16:22 (NIV)

“So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will _____, and no one will take away your _____.”

Peace

Jesus wished for us to experience peace...the peace that passes understanding, a soul at peace. He taught us as His followers to be ambassadors of peace. Jesus Himself spoke peace to His disciples and challenges us to do the same. How many of us offer a blessing when visiting a stranger, or even a friend or relative? Jesus challenged us to do this:

Luke 10:5 (NIV)

“When you enter a house, first say, ‘_____ to this house.’”

After His resurrection, when Jesus appeared to His disciples, His first words were welcoming and reassuring:

Luke 24:34-36 (NIV)

“and saying, ‘It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.’ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread. While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, ‘_____ be with you.’”

May love, joy, and peace expand within you as you continue to grow in the Spirit! May they shine from you and through you as you meet our fellow bikers, saved and unsaved, on the highways and byways of life.