

## Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Written by Dr. John E. Russell Sr - Last Updated Monday, 17 June 2013 14:18

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### Text: Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23, NIV

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23, KJV

But the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes] is love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness (benevolence), faithfulness, 23 Gentleness (meekness, humility), self-control (self-restraint, continence). Against such things there is no law [that can bring a charge]. Galatians 5:22-23, AMP

### Introduction:

Note that the fruits of the Spirit are character traits that the Holy Spirit is seeking to build in the Christian. In short, the Holy Spirit is making us Christlike. This is part of God's plan:

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to {His} purpose.  
For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined {to become} conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;  
and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.  
Romans 8:28-30, NASB

This work of the precious Holy Spirit within us requires that we cooperate with Him. He has already recreated our human spirits, giving us the holy and love nature of God. We must not yield to the old nature, but to the new. Let us look at the fruits of the Holy Spirit that Paul gives, in the order in which he lists them.

## Love

### Text: 1 Corinthians 12:31-14:1

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But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.  
1 Corinthians 12:31, NIV

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.  
1 Corinthians 12:1-31, NIV

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy .  
1 Corinthians 14:1, NIV

[Note: The word translated *charity* in the KJV is *agape*. The NIV and other translations translate *agape* correctly as "love." The meaning of the English word *charity* has changed since the KJV was translated. It now means "public or private provisions for the help of needy people."]

**Definition:** Love (*agape*) is the God-kind of love—the God-given motivation to seek the best for the beloved on the highest moral plane. The three human loves are (1)

*eros*

which is romantic, sexual love; (2)

*philia*

, which is friendship love and

*storge*

, which is family love. The love which Paul lists first in the fruits of the Spirit is

*agape*

. He describes this love:

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Love endures long and is patient and kind; love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy; is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily. 5 It is not conceited-arrogant and inflated with pride; it is not rude (unmannerly), and does not act unbecomingly. Love [God's love in us] does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it-pays no attention to a suffered wrong. 6 It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail. 7 Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances and it endures everything [without weakening].

1 CO 13:4-7, AMP

**Introduction:** Paul begins the list of the fruits of the Spirit with love (*agape*), thereby emphasizing it above the rest. Paul also shows that love (*agape*) is the most important in the great love chapter (1 Corinthians 13).

Jesus Himself commanded us to love other Christians:

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all [men] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

John 13:34-35, KJV

Jesus also demonstrated his love for us when he was crucified: "... Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do "

(Luke 23:34, KJV).

Jesus also commands us to love God, others and ourselves:

Master, which [is] the great commandment in the law?

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love (*agapao*) the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love (*agapao*) thy neighbour as thyself.

Matthew 22:37-39, KJV

Jesus tells us to love our enemies:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love (*agapao*) thy neighbour, and hate thine

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enemy. But I say unto you, Love (agape) your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

Matthew 5:43-44, KJV

Jesus commands us to do something that is humanly impossible. We do not possess the love of God (*agape*) as human beings, only God does. But, with the commandment comes the enablement. God places his *agape* in our hearts when he comes to live within us in the form of the Holy Spirit! This happens at the new birth.

### 1. Love is the Pinnacle (1 Corinthians 13:1-3):

It is,

1.1 Better than the gifts of the Spirit. (The gifts of the Spirit are important. Love motivates the Holy Spirit when He gives them. We must have the same motivation.)

1.2 Better than giving money. (Giving one's time and money is important. We need to give in order to help fulfill the Great Commission and to help in other ways. However, any motive for giving other than in love is below what the Lord expects.)

1.3 Better than being martyred. (We cannot earn salvation by giving our lives. Jesus has already paid for our salvation. If God wills that we give our lives for Him, let us have the same *agape* motivation that Jesus and Stephen had.)

### 2. Love is Pure(1 Corinthians 13:4-7):

It is,

2.1 Not jealous or boastful but patient and kind.

2.2 Not arrogant or rude but endures all things.

2.3 Not self-insistent but bears all things.

2.4 Not provoked or vengeful but believes the best of everyone.

2.5 Not joyous over wrong but rejoices over right.

### 3. Love is Perpetual (1 Corinthians 13:8-13):

3.1 Prophecy will cease but love will continue. (Prophecy will be fulfilled.)

3.2 Tongues will cease but love will continue. (We shall have perfect communication when God completes our salvation.)

3.3 Knowledge will cease but love will continue. (God shall give us a better and more full type of knowledge.)

3.4 Faith will cease but love will continue. (We shall have received that for which we have

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believed.)

3.5 Hope will cease but love will continue. (The Christian hope is the resurrection. After the resurrection, our hope will be fulfilled.)

### 4. Love is Possible:

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Romans 5:5, KJV

And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

Romans 5:5, NIV

And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. And of which of you that is a father shall his son ask a loaf, and he give him a stone? or a fish, and he for a fish give him a serpent? Or [if] he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall [your] heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Luke 11:9-13, KJV

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

1 John 4:16, NIV

**Conclusion:** Paul states that love is "the most excellent way" in 1 CO 12:31. Paul also says to "Follow after charity (*agape*)" in 1 Corinthians 14:1. How do we love? We love by faith. Love is a choice. God has already given us the ability to love—the choice is ours!

Tertullian said, about AD 200, "The heathen are wont to exclaim with wonder, 'See how these Christians love one another . . . and how they are ready to die for one another.'"

"To follow after love" means that we must commit to love everyone as God does. This commitment is a deliberate choice (or premeditation) to love everyone regardless who the person is or regardless of the circumstances. As we exercise the love that God has already

given us, he will increase our capacity to love more. Let us obey Christ and love one another.

See also:

[The Four Loves](#)  
[Love and Faith](#)

## Joy

**Definition:** *Joy* in Galatians 5:20, is a translation of the noun *chara*, "joy, gladness," similar to the verb, *chairō*, "to rejoice." It is a supernatural grace of the Holy Spirit, Who lifts our spirit in both good and bad circumstances. It is the result of being indwelt with the Holy Spirit of life. (Joy is associated with life. See Vine, S.v., *euphrosune*, "joyfulness from a good frame of mind".) Paul writes,

And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

1 Thessalonians 1:6, KJV

**Introduction:** Unsaved people experience poverty in spirit. Oh, they experience transitory substitutes for joy such as chemical highs, worldly acclaim, dedication to a cause less than that of Christ, sex, some human loves that are dysfunctional and unbalanced, power and money. But they miss Christ's true riches such as holiness, love, peace, joy and hope. Go  
*d's gift of joy is part of the true riches of Christ*

### 1. What it is not:

1.1 It is not laughter. However, laughter is good medicine:

A cheerful heart is good medicine.  
Proverb 17:22a, NIV

On the other hand, laughter is brief and transitory. It also depends on circumstances.

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1.2 It is not happiness. However, happiness is good. Happiness is elusive and can be lost like a child loses happiness when he loses a toy. Sadness and sorrow can steal our happiness. Pain and loss can dispell happiness like turning a light off in a room.

There is something better and it cannot be lost. Like a still river, it runs deep. Bad circumstances or sorrow do not overcome it. It is joy.

### 2. What it is:

2.1 Joy is a gift from God. Human beings do not possess it naturally. It is God's gift to all who will receive it. Joy is the concomitant of the Holy Spirit—it exists in the human heart when the Holy Spirit lives there.

2.2 How we receive joy. When we accept Christ as our Savior, the Holy Spirit makes his home in our hearts. He brings God's healing love, hope and joy:

And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

Romans 5:5, NIV

So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Isaiah 55:11-12, NIV

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 14:17, NIV

**Conclusion:** Why not accept Christ as your Personal Savior now? Experience His joy right now!

### Peace

**Definition:** The word translated *peace* in Galatians 5:22 is *eirene*, which means, "completeness, soundness, health, prosperity, peace, quiet, tranquillity, contentment, harmony in both intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships."

*Eirene*

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corresponds to the Old Testament Hebrew word  
*shalom*  
and means basically the same thing.

The words *shalom* and *eirene* were commonly used as greetings. However, peace as a fruit of the Spirit is more than a greeting. It is a supernatural state of inner tranquility.

*Eirene*

as used in the New Testament means far more than its Old Testament Counterpart,

*shalom*

. Jesus said,

Peace I leave with you: my own peace I give to you. It is not as the world gives its greetings that I give you peace. Let not your hearts be troubled or dismayed.

John 14:27, WEYMOUTH

Always be glad in the Lord: I will repeat it, be glad. Let your forbearing spirit be known to every one—the Lord is near. Do not be over-anxious about anything, but by prayer and earnest pleading, together with thanksgiving, let your request be unreservedly made known in the presence of God. And then *the peace of God, which transcends all our powers of thought* [italics mine], will be a garrison to guard your hearts and minds in union with Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:4-7, WEYMOUTH

The peace that Jesus gives, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, is a *supernatural* peace. That is, it is more than a greeting and it greatly transcends mere natural human peace. There is none other like it in both quality and quantity. Human peace is tentative, short-lived and inferior. Jesus' peace is eternal and perfect.

**Introduction:** Nations seek peace with each other. Individuals cry out for internal peace. Just like the ever receding rainbow, one can see it, but it is always just out of reach. That is, until Jesus came and died for us. And one will *never* know the precious gift of peace until he accepts Christ as his Personal Savior.

**1. Jesus is the source of our peace.** We must listen to Him and obey Him. Constant communication with the Lord is vital. The writer of Hebrews says,



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Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses [listed in Hebrews 11] surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2, NASB

1.1 Jesus reconciled us to God by His death on the cross. On the basis of Jesus death, God justifies us in a legal sense. This includes both forgiveness of our sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us. We are given the legal standing with God that Jesus has. We have *peace with God*:

THEREFORE, SINCE we are justified (acquitted, declared righteous, and given a right standing with God) through faith, let us [grasp the fact that we] have [the peace of reconciliation to hold and to enjoy] peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One). Through Him also we have [our] access (entrance, introduction) by faith into this grace (state of God's favor) in which we [firmly and safely] stand. And let us rejoice {and} exult in our hope of experiencing {and} enjoying the glory of God.

Romans 5:1-2, AMP

But God shows {and} clearly proves His [own] love for us by the fact that while we were still sinners, Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One) died for us. Therefore, since we are now justified (acquitted, made righteous, and brought into right relationship with God) by Christ's blood, how much more [certain is it that] we shall be saved by Him from the indignation {and} wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, it is much more [certain], now that we are reconciled, that we shall be saved (daily delivered from sin's dominion) through His [resurrection] life.

Romans 5:8-10, AMP

1.2 Jesus imparts His peace to us. On the legal basis of His *imputed* righteousness, He is able to *impart* his peace.

Whereas justification—which includes forgiveness of sin and imputation of Christ's righteousness—occurs in the mind of God, the impartation of God's holiness and peace occurs in the believer. We experience Jesus' peace,

"...the peace of God, which transcends all our powers of thought..." (Philippians 4:7,

WEYMOUTH). The

end result is that

*we have the peace of God*

## 2. Things that can rob us of peace:

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2.1 If we are not grounded in the Word of God, then we do not know God's will for us. Satan can put sickness on us, destroy our children and rob us of material things (e.g.: Job). If we know that it is God's will to meet these needs, then we can exercise faith for them when we pray. For instance, James tells us that God will give us wisdom when we need it:

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, {being} a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

James 1:6-8, NASB

But the principle of trusting God for wisdom holds true in other areas. If our needs and the needs of others are not met, then Satan has succeeded in robbing us of some of our peace. In this case, we keep that peace by searching the Bible to determine God's will concerning our needs, then praying the prayer of faith.

2.2 Sin can rob us of our peace. When we sin, it produces guilt. Guilt works on all levels of consciousness and causes mental distress and physical illnesses. The way back to peace is to confess our sin immediately with the intention of forsaking it:

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and {yet} walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

1 John 1:6-10, NASB

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for {those of} the whole world.

1 John 2:1-2, NASB

If we sin, our fellowship with God is affected, causing us inner turmoil. We must confess sin immediately and not let this condition continue.

Strife with fellow believers affects our relationship with them and robs us of peace. As soon as a problem develops between us and others, we must apologize and get back into harmony with them. We must choose to love others as a lifestyle.

**Conclusion:** Let us thank God for his peace. Let us enjoy the peace of God. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to develop and help us keep the peace that Jesus gave us. Let us carefully guard that peace.

### Patience

**Definition:** *Patience* (*longsuffering*, KJV, AMP), a noun, is the translation of *makrothumia*, a compound Greek word, from

*makros*

, "long, (1) of place: remote, distant, far off, large (2) of time: long, long lasting" +

*thumos*

, "temper, passion, angry, heat, anger forthwith boiling up and soon subsiding again," therefore,

"longanimity, patience, endurance, fortitude, constancy, steadfastness, perseverance,

forbearance, longsuffering, slowness in avenging wrongs" (Strong 1890, S.v., "ma

*krothumia*

")

.

Vine sees a distinction between longsuffering and patience,

Longsuffering is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger, and is associated with mercy, and is used of God, Ex. 34:6 (Sept.); Rom. 2:4; I Pet. 3:20. Patience is the quality that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial; it is the opposite of despondency and is associated with hope, I Thess. 1:3; it is not used of God. (Hog and Vine, *Notes on Thessalonians*, 183-184).

Matthew Henry capsulizes the definition as "patience to defer anger, and a contentedness to bear injuries" (*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*).

**Introduction:** The fruit of patience or longsuffering is critically needed in Christians today. Anger must be handled properly or it will be destructive and it can even lead to murder. (Download my free book, *The Ten Commandments* and read Part II, "Handling Anger," of the Sixth Commandment. Download this book free at <http://BusterSoft.com/JRCM/>

.) We must also remain steady when Satan comes against us with trials. The Holy Spirit is

working within the heart of the believer to develop this fruit.

### 1. Tribulation produces Patience:

And not only [so], but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worth patience;  
Romans 5:3, KJV

"Tribulations" and "tribulation" are the same word, *thlipsis*, "from [the verb] *thlibo*; *pressure*(literally or figuratively): - afflicted, (-tion), anguish, burdened, persecution, tribulation, trouble" (Strong 1890, S.v., "*thlipsis*")  
.□

### 2. The Holy Spirit directly produces the fruit of patience in believers:

2.1 By the New Birth: Jesus said,

"Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit".  
John 3:7-8, NASB

When one accepts Christ as his Savior, the Father justifies him—sets the believer right with Himself on the basis of Jesus' death on the cross. Then the Holy Spirit recreates the believer's spirit in the new birth, giving the believer the holy and love nature of God. He becomes a son of God.

2.2 By the Baptism of the Holy Spirit:

AND WHEN the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all assembled together in one place, When suddenly there came a sound from heaven like the rushing of a violent tempest blast, and it filled the whole house in which they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues resembling fire, which were separated {and} distributed and which settled on each one of them. And they were all filled (diffused throughout their souls) with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other (different, foreign) languages (tongues), as the Spirit kept giving them clear {and} loud expression [in each tongue in appropriate words].

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### Acts 2:1-4, AMP

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: You Jews and all you residents of Jerusalem, let this be [explained] to you so that you will know {and} understand; listen closely to what I have to say. For these men are not drunk, as you imagine, for it is [only] the third hour (about 9:00 a.m.) of the day; But [instead] this is [the beginning of] what was spoken through the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, God declares, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all mankind, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy [telling forth the divine counsels] and your young men shall see visions (divinely granted appearances), and your old men shall dream [divinely suggested] dreams. Yes, and on My menservants also and on My maidservants in those days I will pour out of My Spirit, and they shall prophesy [telling forth the divine counsels and predicting future events pertaining especially to God's kingdom].

### Acts 2:14-18, AMP

Before being Baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Peter had wavered and denied the Lord Jesus. After Pentecost, he boldly proclaimed the Gospel. He patiently endured tribulation until his death. Tradition states that Peter was crucified upside down. Peter became a good role model of patience after being baptized in the Holy Spirit!

2.3 By His constant working within the believer to change him into the likeness of Christ:

For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined {to become} conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

Romans 8:29, NASB

Jesus was our role model *par excellence* in patience. He never wavered from doing His Father's will.

**Conclusion:** Let us determine to cooperate with the Holy Spirit as he works to make us patient.

## Kindness

**Definition:** The word translated *kindness*, NIV, AMP (gentleness, KJV) is *chrestotes*, a noun, "goodness of heart, moral goodness, integrity, benignity, kindness, virtuousness, benevolence."

It comes from

*chrestos*

, "usefulness, that is, moral excellence (in character or demeanor)" (Strong 1890, S,v., "

*chrestotes*

"). Vincent comments, "a kindness which is useful or serviceable" (

*Vincent's Word Studies*

). Matthew Henry says, "gentleness, such a sweetness of temper, and especially towards our

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inferiors, as disposes us to be affable and courteous, and easy to be entreated when any have wronged us" (

*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*

).

**Introduction:** The fruit of kindness is needed in this unkind world. Paul describes the world as walking in the flesh. He describes the works of the flesh before he lists the fruits of the Spirit:

Now the doings (practices) of the flesh are clear (obvious): they are immorality, impurity, indecency, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger (ill temper), selfishness, divisions (dissensions), party spirit (factions, sects with peculiar opinions, heresies), Envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you beforehand, just as I did previously, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19-21, AMP

One might say that the essence of the works of the flesh is selfishness. Kindness comes from love (*agape*), which produces a character trait which is opposite of selfishness—a *giving* nature. Kindness is the result of loving others.

See the points under "Love," the first fruit of the Spirit, above.

**Conclusion:** Do you know anyone who does not welcome kindness? I don't. When we are kind to *everyone*, saint and sinner, we exemplify the Lord Jesus Christ. We become a stepping-stone to Christ for the sinner and an encouragement to the saint.

## Goodness

**Definition:** The word translated *goodness* in the NIV, KJV and AMP is *agathosune*, a noun, from the word

*agathos*

, an adjective, "of good constitution or nature, useful, salutary, good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy, excellent, distinguished, upright, honourable" (Strong 1890, S,v., "

*agatho*

*sune*

").

Vincent gives this observation:

It [*chrestotes*] is rendered kindness in Eph\_2:7; Col\_3:12; Gal\_5:22. Paul, and he only, uses *agathosune* for goodness. The distinction as drawn out by Jerome is that *agathosune* represents a sterner virtue, showing itself in a zeal for truth which rebukes, corrects, and chastises, as Christ when He purged the temple.

*Chrestotes*

[  
*kindness*

] is more gentle, gracious, and kindly Bishop Lightfoot defines it as a kindly disposition to one's neighbor, not necessarily taking a practical form, while *agathosune*

[  
*goodness*  
] energizes the

*chr*  
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[  
kindness

] Romans 3:12, *Vincent's Word Studies*

**Introduction:** The Holy Spirit produces the fruits of the Spirit in the believer. The fruit of goodness comes from the character of God.

### 1. Jesus said that only God is good, in the absolute sense:

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good (*agathos*) Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him,  
Why callest thou me good (

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*agathos*

)? [there is] none good (

*agathos*

) but one, [that is], God"

(Mark 10:17-18, KJV)

### 2. However, Jesus used good (*agathos*) to describe a faithful servant:

His lord said unto him, Well done, good (*agathos*) and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Matthew 25:23, KJV

**Conclusion:** It is God's will that we be conformed to the image of Christ. Part of being Christlike is to have the fruits of the Spirit in our being, i.e., to have the *character of Christ*. Let us cooperate enthusiastically and intelligently with the Holy Spirit as he forms Christ's character within us!

## Faithfulness

**Definition:** The word translated *faithfulness* in the NIV and AMP (*faith* in the KJV) is *pistis*, a noun, "faith." New Testament faith is:

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1, KJV

Hebrews 11:1 is probably the most concise definition of faith found in the Bible. It is considered the classical definition of faith. Faith is both the substance of things hoped for and the evidence that things exist that are not yet perceived with the senses.

### Faith Is Substance. □ □□□□

The New Testament was written in *Koine* [common] Greek. The Greek word translated



"substance" in Hebrews 11:1 is  
preposition

*hupo*

, "under" and

*histemi*

, "stand" literally, "that which stands under." The derived meaning is "that which has real existence, the basic essence, the actual reality, the substance of something" [Hobart E. Freeman, ThD, Faith (Claypool, IN: Faith Publications, n.d.), 3]. It is a condition of the human heart that is as real to God as the thing we asked for will be to us when we receive it. When we receive that for which we prayed, faith is replaced by the actuality.

*hupostasis*, from the

### Faith Is Evidence.

The Greek word translated "evidence" is *elegchos*, which basically means "proof, conviction, evidence." John writes,

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

1 John 5:14-15, KJV

The existence of the God-kind of faith in the human heart is the evidence that what we have prayed for exists. Faith, based on the Word of God, is the evidence-not what we see or don't see-not good or bad circumstances. Faith is not based on human feeling, reason or sensory perception. Rather faith is based entirely on the fact of what God says. The evidence is not found in the feeling, rational, visible or sense realm.

### What Faith Is Not.

Faith is not hope. Faith is based on the Word of God alone. Hope may be based on the sands of wishful thinking or human desire, rather than on the rock of the Word of God. Doubt and hope raise the question, "What shall I do?" Faith says, "I have done!" The common phrase, "I am hoping and praying" is incorrect. "I am believing and praying" is more scriptural.

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Faith is not natural human faith. In order to function in life, we must exercise a natural faith. We have faith in natural laws such as gravity and inertia and assume that they will work the same every day. If the universe were unpredictable and untrustworthy, chaos would reign and life as we know it would be impossible. We trust inanimate machines. By turning an ignition key, flipping on a light switch, boarding an aircraft, we exercise faith in machines. We trust vegetables and animals—we assume they will perform according to our past experience. We trust other human beings. We trust our surgeon, our spouse, etc. However, faith in God is on a supernatural plane. We will examine the nature of faith in God in the next chapter.

Faith is not mental assent. John Wesley warned in his time that there was a dangerous substitute for faith that he called mental assent. He was caught in this dangerous trap and only escaped after failing as a missionary in America. Faith is of the heart (human spirit) and not merely the head (human reason). Simply agreeing that God exists and that his Word (the Bible) is true is not biblical faith. James states that demons believe in this manner and tremble in fear of judgment:

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils [*daimonion*, "demons"] also believe, and tremble.  
James 2:19, KJV

Faith is not a psychological attitude. Mere positive thinking may have some good results, but it is not biblical faith.

Faith is not sight. It is not based on mere sensory perception or human reasoning. Paul says,

We live by faith, not by sight.  
2 Corinthians 5:7, NIV

### Attributes of Faith.

Faith thanks God beforehand. If a husband tells his wife that he has placed a hundred dollar bill in her purse for her birthday, she thanks him immediately. Why? Because she trusts him. She

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knows it is hers before she sees it. Jesus says,

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

Mark 11:24, NIV

God does not answer biblical prayer with "No" or with substitutes. Paul says,

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are `Yes' in Christ. ....

2 Corinthians 1:20, NIV

### **Faith will endure to the end.**

Abraham waited 25 years for Isaac to be born. Caleb waited 40 years for his land. Noah waited 120 years for his physical salvation. Faith does not look at the calendar, but to Christ. Hope may last a few minutes or a few months. Faith will endure until it is replaced by the thing for which we are believing. D. L. Moody said, "Faith that fizzles out at the finish, had a flaw in it from the first."

Vincent says that *pistis*, in this context, should be translated "trustfulness" (*Vincent's Word Studies* ).

Matthew Henry defines faith in this context as "fidelity, justice, and honesty, in what we profess and promise to others" (*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*).

Adam Clarke says that faith is

here used for fidelity - punctuality in performing promises, conscientious carefulness in preserving what is committed to our trust, in restoring it to its proper owner, in transacting the business confided to us, neither betraying the secret of our friend, nor disappointing the

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confidence of our employer.

*Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*

Barnes comments on the word faith in this context:

The word here may be used in the sense of fidelity, and may denote that the Christian will be a faithful man, a man faithful to his word and promises; a man who can be trusted or confided in. It is probable that the word is used in this sense because the object of the apostle is not to speak of the feelings which we have toward God so much as to illustrate the influences of the Spirit in directing and controlling our feelings toward people. True religion makes a man faithful. The Christian is faithful as a man; faithful as a neighbor, friend, father, husband, son. He is faithful to his contracts; faithful to his promises. No man can be a Christian who is not thus faithful, and all pretensions to being under the influences of the Spirit when such fidelity does not exist, are deceitful and vain.

*Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible*

*Pistis* should be translated *faithfulness*, a character trait, since all the other words are character traits, or "fruits of the Spirit."

**Introduction:** God is faithful and *requires* that we be faithful. It is His will that we be conformed into the image of Christ. Christ was faithful while on earth and continues to be faithful to God and believers. One way that he continues to be faithful is by his intercession for us:

Therefore He is able also to save to the uttermost (completely, perfectly, finally, and for all time and eternity) those who come to God through Him, since He is always living to make petition to God {and} intercede with Him {and} intervene for them.

Hebrews 7:25, AMP

### 1. God is faithful to us:

And He will establish you to the end [keep you steadfast, give you strength, and guarantee your vindication; He will be your warrant against all accusation or indictment so that you will be] guiltless {and} irrefragable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah). God is faithful [*pistos*

] (reliable, trustworthy, and therefore ever true to His promise, and He can be depended on); by Him you were called into companionship {and} participation with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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1 Corinthians 1:8-9, AMP

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful [*pistos*], who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:13, NASB

### 2. God requires us to be faithful:

2.1 Jesus taught us to be faithful stewards in material things and in the Gospel:

"He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the {use of} unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true {riches} to you? And if you have not been faithful in {the use of} that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?"

Luke 16:10-12, NASB

2.1 Paul taught us by precept and example that we must be faithful:

SO THEN, let us [apostles] be looked upon as ministering servants of Christ and stewards (trustees) of the mysteries (the secret purposes) of God. Moreover, it is [essentially] required of stewards that a man should be found faithful [proving himself worthy of trust].

1 Corinthians 4:1-2, AMP

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful [*pistos*

], putting me into service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith [

*pistis*

] and love which are {found} in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 1:12-14, NASB

Faithfulness can be viewed as the reciprocal of faith, i.e., the more faithful someone is, the more faith one can place in him. And the more faithful someone is, the more responsibility can be given him. The reward of faithfulness is more responsibility. If we want to do more for God, we must be more faithful! Another way of stating it is, "Be faithful in the small things and God will entrust us with larger things!"

**Conclusion:** God the Father is faithful and Jesus is faithful. Someone was faithful to pray for

us; someone was faithful to witness to us and someone was faithful to lead us to Christ. Let us be faithful to God and to those to whom the Lord sends us.

See also:

[A Faithful Servant](#)

[The Biblical Definition of Faith](#)

### Kindness

**Definition:** The word translated *gentleness* in the NIV and AMP (meekness in the KJV) is *prautēs* (or an earlier form, *praotes*), a noun, "gentleness, mildness, meekness." Seedmaster says this concerning meekness:

Meekness toward God is that disposition of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. In the OT, the meek are those wholly relying on God rather than their own strength to defend them against injustice. Thus, meekness toward evil people means knowing God is permitting the injuries they inflict, that He is using them to purify His elect, and that He will deliver His elect in His time. (Is. 41:17, Lu. 18:1-8) Gentleness or meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest. It stems from trust in God's goodness and control over the situation. The gentle person is not occupied with self at all. This is a work of the Holy Spirit, not of the human will.  
Galatians 5:23 (Seedmaster)

Vine defines *prautēs*:

The meaning of *prautēs* "is not readily expressed in English, for the terms meekness, mildness, commonly used, suggest weakness and pusillanimity [cowardliness, lacking courage and resolution] to a greater or less extent, whereas *prautēs* does nothing of the kind. Nevertheless, it is difficult to find a rendering less open to objection than 'meekness;' 'gentleness' has been suggested, but as *prautēs* describes a condition of mind and heart, and as 'gentleness' is appropriate rather to actions, this word is no better than that used in both English Versions. It must be clearly understood, therefore, that *the meekness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the fruit of power* [italics mine]. The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help

himself; but the Lord was 'meek' because he had the infinite resources of God at His command. Described negatively, meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all (Hogg and Vine,

*Notes on Galatians*

, pp. 294-295, as quoted by Vine, S.v., "Meek, Meekness").

**Introduction:** Meekness is not weakness. Neither is it a feigned humility for personal advantage. Vincent contrasts the pagan versus the Christian usage of the word *praus*

(an adjective) from Jesus use in the Sermon on the Mount:

Blessed (happy, blithesome, joyous, spiritually prosperous--with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions) are the meek (the mild, patient, long-suffering), for they shall inherit the earth!

Matthew 5:5, AMP

Mat 5:5 - The meek (*hoi praeis*)

Another word which, though never used in a bad sense, Christianity has lifted to a higher plane, and made the symbol of a higher good. Its primary meaning is *mild, gentle*. It was applied to inanimate things, as light, wind, sound, sickness. It was used of a horse;

*gentle*

As a human attribute, Aristotle defines it *as the mean between stubborn anger and that negativeness of character which is inescapable of even righteous indignation*

: according to which it is tantamount to

*equanimity*

. Plato opposes it to fierceness or cruelty, and uses it of humanity to the condemned; but also of the conciliatory demeanor of a demagogue seeking popularity and power. Pindar applies it to a king,

*mild*

or

*kind*

to the citizens, and Herodotus uses it as opposed to anger.

These pre-Christian meanings of the word exhibit two general characteristics. 1. They express *outward conduct*

merely. 2. They contemplate relations to

*men only*

. The Christian word, on the contrary, describes an *inward*

quality, and that as related primarily to God. The

*equanimity*

[evenness of mind especially under stress],

*mildness, kindness*

, represented by the classical word, are founded in self-control or in natural disposition. The

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Christian

*meekness*

is based on

*humility*

, which is not a natural quality but an outgrowth of a renewed nature. To the pagan the word often implied

*condescension*

, to the Christian it implies

*submission*

. The Christian quality, in its manifestation, reveals all that was best in the heathen virtue - mildness, gentleness, equanimity - but these manifestations toward men are emphasized as outgrowths of a spiritual relation to God. The

*mildness*

or

*kindness*

of Plato or Pindar imply no sense of inferiority in those who exhibit them; sometimes the contrary. Plato's demagogue is kindly from self-interest and as a means to tyranny. Pindar's king is condescendingly kind. The meekness of the Christian springs from a sense of the inferiority of the creature to the Creator, and especially of the

*sinful*

creature to the

*holy*

God. While, therefore, the pagan quality is redolent of

*self-assertion*

, the Christian quality carries the flavor of

*self-abasement*

. As toward God, therefore, meekness accepts his dealings without murmur or resistance as absolutely good and wise. As toward man, it accepts opposition, insult, and provocation, as God's permitted ministers of a chastening demanded by the infirmity and corruption of sin; while, under this sense of his own sinfulness, the meek bears patiently "the contradiction of sinners against himself," forgiving and restoring the erring in a spirit of meekness, considering himself, lest he also be tempted (see Gal\_6:1-5). The ideas of forgiveness and restoration nowhere attach to the classical word. They belong exclusively to Christian meekness, which thus shows itself allied to love. As ascribed by our Lord to himself, see Mat\_11:29. Wyc. renders

"Blessed be

*mild*

men" (

*Vincent's Word Studies*

).

Note that when God accepts a sinner into His family, He has already imputed to him the righteousness of Christ. Because of Jesus' supreme sacrifice for us on the cross, we have been justified (set right with God) and given the righteousness of Christ. Therefore, we are to enter boldly (not arrogantly, but meekly) into the presence of God:



Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16, KJV

The words translated "boldly" in Hebrews 4:16, are *meta parrhesia*, "with freedom to speak in free and fearless confidence" (TDNT, Seedmaster).

### 1. Moses was meek:

(Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth.)  
Numbers 12:3, NASB

Moses is considered by the Jews to be their greatest teacher. He had a close walk with God and God used him to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage. God inspired him to write the first five books of the Old Testament. In these writings, we find him to be 4,000 years advanced in medical knowledge (Read S.I. McMillen, MD, *None of These Diseases*). The Ten Commandments continues to be the foundation of law. He prophesied of Jesus the coming Messiah. God gave him wisdom and used him in works of power. Yet, he was a humble man.

### 2. Jesus was meek:

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

(Matthew 11:29, KJV)

Matt 21:5 Say to the Daughter of Zion [inhabitants of Jerusalem], Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey [a beast of burden].

Matthew 21:5, AMP

When Jesus was before Pilate, never did His meekness and grace shine forth more:

Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?"

Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?"

Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."

Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say {correctly} that I

am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" ....

John 18:33-38, NASB

**Conclusion:** Moses was a good example for us. However, Jesus is our supreme example and role model. We are to be meek like Jesus:

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to {His} purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined {to become} conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Romans 8:28-30, NASB **Self-control**

**Definition:** The word translated "**self-control**" in the NIV and AMP ("**temperance**" in the KJV) is *egkrateia*,

a noun, based a compound word from

*en*

, "in" +

*kratos*

, "force, strength, power, might: mighty with great power, dominion." Therefore, "self-control (the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites)"(TDNT, Seedmaster).

Barnes says,

**Temperance** - The word used here, (*egkrateia*), means properly "self-control, continence." It is derived from *en* and *kratos*, "strength," and has reference to the power or ascendancy which we have over exciting and evil passions of all kinds. It denotes the self-rule which a man has over the evil propensities of his nature. Our word temperance we use now in a much more limited sense, as referring mainly to abstinence from intoxicating drinks. But the word here used is employed in a much more extended signification. It includes the dominion over all evil propensities, and may denote continence, chastity, self-government, moderation in regard to all indulgences as well as abstinence from intoxicating drinks. See the word explained in the notes at Act\_24:25. The sense here is, that the influences of the Holy Spirit on the heart make a man moderate in all indulgences; teach him to restrain his passions, and to govern himself; to control his evil propensities, and to subdue all inordinate

affection (  
*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*

*Albert*

## 1. Crucifying the desires of the flesh:

And those who belong to Christ Jesus (the Messiah) have crucified the flesh (the godless human nature) with its passions and appetites {and} desires.  
(Galatians 5:24, AMP)

## 2. Walking in the Holy Spirit:

If we live by the [Holy] Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. [If by the Holy Spirit we have our life in God, let us go forward walking in line, our conduct controlled by the Spirit.]  
Galatians 5:25, AMP

**Conclusion:** The key to self-control is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Two other helpful things are: (1) never yield to sin. If a sin becomes habitual, it is hard to break, but we can do all things through Christ. (2) to associate with Christian people. The positive peer pressure gives strength to make right choices.

**Summary of this study:** Paul gives us an insight concerning the fruits of the Spirit in these two verses:

For you, brethren, were [indeed] called to freedom; only [do not let your] freedom be an incentive to your flesh {and} an opportunity {or} excuse [for selfishness], but through love you should serve one another. For the whole Law [concerning human relationships] is complied with in the one precept, You shall love your neighbor as [you do] yourself.  
Galatians 5:13-14, AMP

Love is the greatest of the fruits of the Spirit. It may be that all the other fruits derive from love. Let us love as a lifestyle. Let us carefully watch that we do love. Let us love our Heavenly Father by obeying Him. Let us love others by choosing our words carefully and by good deeds. And lastly, let us love ourselves. God loves us and values us highly—that is the reason we should love ourselves!

**Resources for this study:**

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1. *Seedmaster* Bible study software (Includes several translations of the Bible and different commentaries, etc.).
2. *e-Sword* Bible study software (Includes several translations of the Bible and different commentaries, etc.).
3. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*.
4. Various Bibles (See below).
5. Other resources quoted in the Bible study above.

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**In Essentials: Unity; In non-essentials: Liberty; In all things: Charity**—Peter Meiderlin  
1626.

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