

## **The Fruit of the Spirit**

Galatians 5:22-23

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

In Chapter 5, we have been considering the gospel—the true gospel of Christ—that brings true freedom. It brings the sinner out of a life of bondage, out from under the condemnation and guilt of the law, into the life of the Spirit. A life which begins and is marked by an internal warfare where the Spirit lusts against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit, so that you cannot do what you wish. We saw that this internal warfare keeps us, or ought to keep us, from the works of the flesh, as we looked at last week, verses 19 to 21. Some vile sins that are just a sample of the capacity of the corruption of the human heart, of which those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

And so, the internal warfare of the Holy Spirit against the flesh is to keep us from the works of the flesh. But this morning, we see what the internal work of the Holy Spirit does positively. Not only does He keep us from certain sins and the practice of certain sins, rather the Holy Spirit also produces in us, positively, fruit. What is termed in this passage of Scripture, the fruit of the Spirit.

Now, the works of the flesh is simply life apart from the Spirit. For those who believe in Jesus, the indwelling Holy Spirit lives within us and, as I said, keeps us from practicing whatever was listed in that list and other sin also. But we also look that if we don't walk in the Spirit, we will fulfill the lusts of the flesh. And so, there is a sense there that we can also experience committing these sins, although not practicing these sins; these sins are possibilities for us.

And so, we learn that the works of the flesh is a life apart from either the indwelling Spirit or a life apart from walking in the Spirit, and it's a life of pain and hurt and sorrow upon sorrow for those that do not walk in the Spirit and for those who do not have the Spirit. But here, we see the opposite: that the fruit of the Spirit is life in the Spirit. You see, the

indwelling Spirit produces fruit in us, and it serves to evidence that we belong to Christ, that the fruit of His indwelling is in us, but also these lists of fruit here that is mentioned in this passage of Scripture teaches us of the possibilities of a full Christian life and experience if we walk in the Spirit.

And all I'm simply trying to say by this is that the Christian has the indwelling Holy Spirit, and there should be some of these marks in his life, so that as overall, generally, his life is characterized not by the works of the flesh but by the fruit of the Spirit. If not, he has no life in the Spirit. But on top of that, we can live out these to the fullest in our lives as we walk in the Spirit, as we choose to yield to the influences of the Holy Spirit upon our life, in His warring work within our souls.

Now, there are some key preliminary considerations that we must look at before we regard the fruit of the Spirit individually. The first of which is the first word in verse number 22, "but the fruit of the Spirit." And straight away, we are introduced to the fact that this category of fruit and these samples of fruit is a contrast to the works of the flesh. It is contrastive. What Paul is showing here is that this is life in the Spirit; this is life in the flesh, and they are diametrically opposed to one another. Life in the Spirit is utterly different from life in the flesh. And the difference is important because it helps us see the difference between the holy and the profane. It helps us see that what God is doing in His new creation is patterning a people after His likeness, after His image, that do not look like the world but rather look like the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. But the fruit of the Spirit is diametrically opposed to the works of the flesh. And Christianity ought to be marked by that difference in the world.

There should be in the hearts of those who belong to Christ a living testimony of the power of the Holy Spirit that demonstrates in their life a life of true success before God, true happiness before God, a life that they can look at and say, "If I don't live like this, there's no point in living." And then, how can I get this life in the Spirit? This is part of letting our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. So, they're contrastive.

They're also demonstrative, which means they demonstrate something. And this is from the word "fruit." Fruit demonstrates. What I mean by that is fruit always points back to something else. It demonstrates various things. It demonstrates, first and foremost, the nature of a tree. You see fruit hanging on a tree; it's apples. Therefore, you know the kind of tree; it's an apple tree. So, the fruit of the Spirit demonstrates the kind of life, whether it is a believing life or an unbelieving life. It also demonstrates the condition of the tree. You go up to a tree; you see the health of the tree by the fruit of the tree. You see whether that tree is dead, whether it is alive, or whether the

tree is sickly. And so, when we're thinking of fruit, we're thinking in terms of the nature of the tree. It shows the nature of the tree, demonstrates that. It shows the condition of the tree, whether it is healthy or sickly or whatever it may be, but it also demonstrates that there is a source of life. No fruit hangs on the tree apart from its union to the tree. No fruit grows or continues to grow without the life source. "The blessed man is a man who is like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth his fruit in his season. And his leaf does not wither, and whatsoever he does shall prosper. But the ungodly are not so; they're like the chaff which the wind drives away." The wind drives away the chaff. Chaff is not united to a tree. The chaff is not planted by the rivers of water. But those that are planted in God, who possess the Holy Spirit, have fruit from their lives that belong to them but is produced in them by the source of life, the Holy Spirit. So, it demonstrates that there is a source of life.

And this brings us to the next point, which flows very connected to this. That means the fruit is derived. It is derivative, which means the fruit comes from the Spirit. But contrastive, the fruit demonstrative of the Spirit, derivative. It's the Spirit that produces the fruit in our lives. That means He is the source of the fruit. That means His is the glory of the fruit that hangs upon our tree. You walk into your garden, if you have a garden in Gregory Hills, you can hardly have a garden. You walk into your grandpa's garden, and he has this wonderful plum tree or a fig tree. And you come to the tree, and you pick its fruit, and you taste and you eat, and you are blessed and encouraged and strengthened by that fruit. "Wow, this is an amazing fruit. Never cut down this tree." The glory of the fruit belongs to the tree, doesn't it? And more than just the tree, in terms of the outward form of the tree, the life source of the tree. And so, you bless the tree. You bless its life because of the fruit which hangs from it. And so it is with the fruit of the Spirit. The Spirit is the efficacious cause of the fruit. There will be no fruit apart from the work of the Spirit. Yet, this does not mean that the fruit is not ours. He produces it in us. And this does not mean that we are passive entirely in the process, but rather we participate in the produce of the fruit by yielding to the work of the Spirit and by trusting in His power, not in our own flesh. That is important. "It is God who works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure." But before that, it says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

It was George Bethune who said this: "The fruit is not grafted on the branch, but the branch is grafted on the living vine, and by the power of the life derived from it, brings forth fruit. The love, the joy, the peace, and the rest are the believer's, but the glory of them belongs to the Holy Spirit." And so, as we come to this, we must therefore not look at the fruit of the Spirit as Paul showing us a new law that is needed to be obeyed.

The old Ten Commandments were there in the Old Covenant; the new Ten Commandments are the fruit of the Spirit. No, no, no, you've missed the point. This is not Paul's argument here. This is descriptive of life in the Spirit. This is descriptive of those who walk in the Spirit. This is those that belong to the Spirit.

And nor is it a call to passivity because all these things in the fruit of the Spirit have practical outworking in our lives. This is not about you sitting down and all these things happening in you, and then you not expressing them. He works in us that we might work it out, and you'll see that as we go along. The fruit of the Spirit is love and joy and peace and longsuffering and patience. They have social implications; they're relational, and they're meant to be affecting the life of the community to which those people of the Spirit belong.

And nor is it exhaustive, so that this list is not all that the Spirit produces in us. It says in verse 23, "Against such things, there is no law." And I believe that this is a sample because you can go through the rest of the New Testament and other places of Scripture and find that there are things missing in this list, like humility, which the Spirit produces in us. So, these are like a sample and not exhaustive, but they are a sample that represents life in the Spirit by which our lives ought to be marked by. These are spiritual graces that affect our inward disposition and our social conduct, that form in the believer's life Christlikeness.

And so, let us consider the fruit of the Spirit. I'll briefly work our way through them. I would encourage you to, in your own time, look them up and study them out throughout the New Testament. Do a word study on each of the fruit of the Spirit mentioned here. By the way, it's a singular collective, which is simply like saying the fruit in the bowl. There might be different fruits in the bowl, but the fruit in the bowl. And the fruit of the Spirit—the first three here—are love, joy, and peace.

Now, these are personal and primarily personal and experiential, but they also are practical in that they affect outward relationships and life. What I mean by that is that externalism cannot produce these in any way, shape, or form. This is more than just acts of love. This is more than just putting on a smile. This is more than just telling yourself that you feel peaceful because of ignorance of the circumstances around you. This is Spirit-wrought love, Spirit-wrought peace, and joy within our lives that comes by the work of the Holy Spirit within us.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, and that love begins when we first taste of the love of God for us. As 1 John 4:19 speaks about it, it says, "We love Him because He first loved us." And in the blessings of justification in Romans

chapter 5, we are told that the Spirit pours forth the love of God into our hearts. And we are told that the experience of God's love that comes to the believer through the gospel comes to us through the Holy Spirit. "The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." And the Spirit produces in us a conscious experience of God's love for us and to us. And it's powerful. It's the opposite of fear. "Perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment. And he who fears is not made perfect in love." But as the Spirit communicates the love of God to our hearts, He dispels all fear. He dispels the distrust and insecurity that we feel because of life when we know that the God who rules over heaven and earth and over life loves us with an everlasting love. And nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. No death, no persecution, no principalities, powers—nothing, you name it, in heaven and on earth or under the earth—nothing can sever us from the love of God in Christ.

And the Spirit, through the Gospel, in His inward indwelling work, reminds us and helps us to first and foremost taste and see that the Lord loves us and that He cares for us. And the Spirit works us in our life. And it is from that experience of God's love within our hearts that we actually know how to love others. We love as Christ loved us because we've tasted of His love. I mean, this is everywhere in the Bible, but "husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her." You want to taste the love of God by the Spirit in your heart through the cross of Jesus so that you can day by day love your wife when she's difficult or when she's not living up to your standards, vice versa. We look at the love of God for that. "He gave Himself for us," and 1 John says, "and therefore we ought to love the brethren with that same kind of love."

So, the Spirit works love into our hearts so as to produce in us a love for others. And it's amazing that love comes first because really, all the rest of the fruit of the Spirit flow out from love. In verse number 13, he says, "By love serve one another." And he says, "All the law is fulfilled in this one saying, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" And Paul says, "Okay, this is how it works. God saves you, He puts His Spirit in you, and He shows you a love that you did not deserve. And it informs and shapes and challenges and persuades you and pushes you to love your neighbor as yourself." And this is the fruit of the Spirit—love, the overflow of God's love to others.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, but it is also joy. And joy does not speak of the lighthearted laughter and merriment of people that just go out and party and having a good time because they won the lottery or something like that, you know, or the jackpot. That is not the concept of joy. Because all that is circumstantial, isn't it? All that is rooted in a circumstance. It

is not joy in God; it is not the joy of the Spirit because the joy of the Spirit, and joying in God, is a joy that comes from the Spirit, not from your circumstance. And therefore, this joy that Paul is referring to is much deeper than just being happy. It's much richer than just having a smile on your face and getting yourself pepped up for the day. No, the joy that God gives us by the Spirit is a joy that has a sense of contentment. It has a sense of delighting in God. It has a sense of blessedness. But it is not dependent on my outward circumstances that change every day like the wind. It is the kind of joy that was experienced by Paul and Silas when they were shut up in a Roman prison in Acts chapter 16. And there in a Roman prison, the Bible says that they prayed and sang praises to God. How is that done?

The joy that can cause you to sing in the midst of a difficult marriage, the joy that can cause you to sing in the midst of trials and afflictions and persecutions, the joy that can cause you to sing in the midst of difficult children, the joy that can cause you to sing in the midst of hardship at work when your boss is giving you a hard time and you're not being treated the way you should be treated. From the Spirit rises a joy, a contentment in God, that causes us to basically come to the place where we can give thanks in everything, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us. Not be like the murmuring Israelites in the wilderness, where all they could see was the problems and trouble that were before them and could not be content with the manna that fell from heaven and the water that came from the rock and the person that God put them in front of to lead them, and also with all their blessedness that they had before them, and they couldn't see it because they were blinded by their discontent.

But the Spirit produces joy in God, which is the opposite of a hopelessness and a despair which causes us to be complainers and murmurers. And the fruit of the Spirit also then is peace, and peace is the conscience assurance akin to the assurance of our conscience. It's the calm tranquility of mind that issues in a heart that is stilled from the storms of life, the storms of anxiety, the storms of fear, which govern our emotional life. How often is that the case? Storms and trouble and hardship and anxiety and our life looks like just the ocean when the disciples were in there and Jesus was walking on the water. That's kind of how our life looks like at times. The thunder coming down from above, the waves are rising up above our head, and the winds blowing, and we're in this boat, and our heart is like rocking like mad because we're in the midst of anxiety and fears that govern our emotional life.

But the Spirit works so as to help us experience peace in the midst of that storm. So that what the Bible says, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes under-

standing, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." How? By the Spirit. The peace of God through the Holy Spirit so as to give us tranquility of mind in the midst of life's storms. This is the opposite of anxiety and unrest.

And it's amazing because those who make peace are those that experience peace. If you are troubled in yourself, you'll be troubled in your relationships. If you have storms in your own hearts and you have trouble in your own life and you do not derive your peace from the Spirit by walking in His influences in your life, then you will find that your relationships will be more and more rocky and disrupted. Those that experience God's peace are those that be able to make peace. It's an amazing thing, but in Ephesians chapter number two, if you read there, he talks about Jew and Gentile, these two warring, if you could say, parties of people that now are together in one peaceful relationship in Christ Jesus. And Christ made peace through the blood of His cross, so He disrupted this lifelong tension that existed for thousands of years between these two ethnic people groups in the cross. And then He encourages the believers then to live in peace and to walk in peace and to know the peace of the Spirit of God in their lives, and it's all rooted in the fact that Christ is our peace.

And it's exactly the same way in our own lives. As we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and our consciences are resting on the forgiveness that God has wrought for us in Christ, and the work of the Spirit communicating that to us, then we are able to have peaceful relationships. And then the next three deal with longsuffering, kindness, and goodness. Longsuffering is quite simple; it means to suffer long. You could just have patience there if you like, or endure trial, or reproach, or certain difficulty that comes your way. It has an idea of being tolerant. Now, I know we think of tolerant as compromise. This is not what it's referring to, but the idea of being tolerant is very important. It means having a long fuse, not a short fuse. It could be likened to God, who is longsuffering, in that He is slow to anger and plenteous, therefore, in mercy. So, He's patient and He's longsuffering.

The people in the book of 1st, 2nd Peter, they say, "Where is the sign of His coming? Since the fathers have slept, all things continue as they are. Is God going to judge the world? Is Jesus going to come again?" The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but He's longsuffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. It's a tolerance that could even be accused as being compromising, but it's a sense in which there is a long rope given, and there is patience.

And then there's kindness, which is charitableness of spirit. Just as God

sends the rain on the just and on the unjust, and we don't deserve the blessing of rain and harvest and season, but He shows kindness, acts of kindness to those who don't deserve it. There's a readiness in God to assist the suffering, to help the needy, to give for the benefit of others. So the fruit of the Spirit works in us not only longsuffering to be patient with others but also to be ready to help others in need. "He that sees his brother has need and shuts up his compassions, his bowels of compassions, how dwells the love of God in him?" His idea of love extending out in acts of kindness is the idea, and the Holy Spirit does this. He doesn't just put love in our hearts to experience love to God, but he also exemplifies that in our life through acts of kindness so that we express that in our relationships to others.

And then we see also that He not only gives longsuffering, He works kindness, He works goodness, and goodness is that integrity and transparency. That moral excellency of life that is so hard to find with people today. I'm convinced that job interviewers care more, starting to realize that it's better to have someone who is a good man, if I could put it that way, one who is transparent, one who is honest, one who is a person of integrity, much more than their qualifications and experiences. Anyone who runs a business will tell you that. Just give me a man who, yes, he needs to know what he's doing, but if he's got a heart that is a man of integrity, we can work with him, we'll spend the time, we'll labor with him. And this is what the fruit of the Spirit brings into the life of Christians, a goodness that is that integrity and transparency, not a phoniness or a hypocritical you-know-ness where you say, "Oh yes, I've gone out to visit these jobs today," but you only went to one or something like that. No, goodness, and the Spirit of God produces that in the lives of those in whom He indwells.

And then the last three is faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Now, these are marked by the mastery of oneself. It's amazing, the Spirit works in us so that we can control ourself, self-control, but it's the fruit of the Spirit. How does that work? Well, this is what He's doing. He's producing in us such strength and power so that we can restrain ourselves. Shows that we're involved in this, doesn't it? And so here we have three, and we have faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Now, these are the opposite to the works of the flesh, as all of these are, but how much so these: drunkenness, revelries, sexual immorality, lewdness, uncleanness, this life that just is impulsive and just acts out what it desires, and what the Spirit does is the exact opposite of that. It keeps you from doing the things that you wish that aren't good, that aren't pleasing to God, and therefore He produces in us a mastery of self.

And in faithfulness, what He does is He produces in us a trustworthiness, a loyalty, a dependency, someone whose character is reliable, one who keeps his word. This is the opposite of an inconsistent person or that

unpredictable friend that you just don't know. You know, sometimes you feel like, "I'm just going to get it done myself." That usually happens when you're working with the person that you're just unsure about, or you're really anxious, and you're just a bit of a control freak. It's one or the other. But the point is, sometimes it's because there are some real undependable people around you. You're like, "You're just better off doing it yourself because, you know, I spend more time worrying about whether they're going to do it or not, and if I have to set five, six reminders to remind them to get it done." But what the Spirit does in the hearts of believers is He makes them consistent, and He makes them predictable, in the sense that they don't produce in others an uneasiness or an uncertainty in the lives of others. And how good is that for your relationships? The fruit of the Spirit is faithfulness. He produces that in us.

Also, a gentleness, which is a meekness, which basically is strength under control. A life that is tempered, mild, and humble in spirit. A life that is dependent upon God, who governs all circumstances. This does that, that a life that is mastered by God, not one that is, once again, taking life into his own hands and doing what they want to do. It's the opposite of a control freak or one who has loses their dependence upon God and wants to take control of all of it. That woman in 1 Peter 3 is to have "a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." And what that simply means is that she's a woman who hopes in God. She trusts in God. She knows that her husband's not perfect. She knows that he is, well, more than not perfect. But the point is that she rests in God, knowing that God will deal with my husband in a way that I can't, and so I don't need to control or be anxious in such a way as to try and secure outcomes for myself, but I can be meek and tempered and mild in my spirit, trusting in God, depending upon Him. Like Moses, the meekest man in all the earth, the Bible says. Why? Because how else can you lead 600,000 men, plus women and children—however that number comes to, probably over a million people—through wilderness, essentially on your own? You got to trust God. If we stress a couple of hours for each one of our children, and we have five, that's most of the day in stress. If I stress for the congregation of 50 to 60 of you, and I stress, you know, every minute for each one of you, then that's every hour gone for the whole day of stress. But if I learn meekness and leaning upon God and trusting in God, if you learn meekness and leaning upon God and trusting in God, you will find that you won't act with harsh force trying to secure your own outcomes because you're afraid of the end, but you will know that God is like a shepherd who leads his people along.

Gentleness, lastly, there's self-control. And self-control is self-explanatory, but let me just put this to you: it's a person who's governed by principles and not by passions. A person who is self-controlled functions in terms of

priority, functions in terms of importance, and in principle. He does not function out of reaction and does not function because of urgency alone. Rather, or impulse, he acts consistently with God's ordained principles and therefore he controls himself so as not to be governed by passion and impulse, but one who is stayed on God.

The Bible says in verse number 23, after we look at all these fruit—I mean, after we go through this, I think to myself, "Well, Lord, I need more of this in my life. Help me to walk in the Spirit more conscientiously day by day." But look what it says here in verse number 23, "Against such there is no law." Okay, scan the Old Testament, look at the 613 commandments of the law of Moses, take up the Ten Commandments of God, go to any kingdom on earth and ask them for their law book, look at the laws of nature, gather together all the lawyers of all the ages and the judges to stand together, and put to them the fruit of the Spirit and say, "If a person lives consistently with all this fruit, could you produce any law from any of your books or any of your systems or in the entire universe that could condemn such a man as that?" And you will get the resounding answer, "No," because against such there is no law. That thought is mind-blowing because the law of the spirit of life that produces this in you lives in you right now. What Paul is saying: walk in the Spirit, live in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of your flesh. It's not about having another law; it's about having communion with God's Spirit.

You see the value of this? God takes up residence in His temple, and He works out all His holiness in here, the life of His people. And as we yield to His tender embrace, we live a life consistent with the holiness of God's law. So against such things, there is no law. The point is this: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." What Paul is trying to show us here is that all of this glory and all of this beauty that is yours through the Holy Spirit has come to us through the blessedness of the gospel of free grace. God's salvation for us in the cross was not just to deal with the penalty of our sin; He also is saving us from the power of our sin. And the fruit of the Spirit, as I mentioned earlier, is Christlikeness. And if you look at the life of Christ, all you see is the embodiment of the fruit of the Spirit. You see, we practiced the works of the flesh all of our days in sin and violation against the holiness of God and against His law. We lived contrary to the ways of the Spirit, contrary to the law of God, contrary to holiness. But Christ Jesus lived in harmony with the fruit of the Spirit. We were not going to inherit the kingdom of God because all of our lives was the works of the flesh, but God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law. And as He redeemed us who were under the law,

as Chapter 4 says, He sent us the Spirit into our hearts, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father." It was Jesus who displayed perfect love. It was Jesus who joyed in His Father all the time, every hour, content in His God. It was our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of Peace, the one who suffered long under the hands of cruel and vile men, the one who displayed kindness like no other, the one whose integrity was unmatched in goodness, the one who was faithful in fulfillment of the will of His Father, who could not be condemned in one point in His obedience, the one who was gentle—a bruised reed shall He not break, and a smoking flax He will not quench—the one who had self-control.

He fulfilled the law of God perfectly, all the demands of justice that were fallen against us, all of our sins that we failed, all the law that we failed to keep, Christ Jesus our Lord lived perfectly, and He died for our sin. And then He gave us the Spirit, united us to Himself, so that His life might be lived in us. He did all this so that His power might be seen in us. Hence, the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ lives within us. He died for our sin, therefore, that you and I might die to sin, that we might not live no longer live in it anymore. You see, do you understand what's happening here? The gospel has brought us into life in the Spirit, where this warring work of the Holy Spirit is fighting and warring against the works of the flesh to make you this morning more like Jesus Christ the Lord. And this is evidence of your salvation, and this is the possibility of the full blessed life you can have if you walk in the Spirit.

This list is not full of gifts, but it's graces, because gifts are no true sign of salvation, neither is knowledge. And here in this passage, he doesn't say that the fruit of the Spirit is a big head. And I can demonstrate this by Matthew Chapter 7:21, "Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord,' there's their knowledge, they know of Him. Listen to their gifts, 'Have we not prophesied in Your name? Have we not cast out devils? Have we not done many wonderful works and miracles?' And Jesus will profess unto them, 'I never knew you; depart from me,' listen to these words, 'you workers of iniquity.' But he who does the will of My Father in heaven, that is the one that is truly mine, the one that I know. And he doesn't do the will of the Father in heaven by his good works of keeping the law; he does the will of the Father in heaven because the Spirit of the Father in heaven lives in him and produces in him a life of fruitfulness, so that he is not a worker of iniquity that practices the works of the flesh despite all his gifts and prosperity, but rather he is empowered to live wholly unto God, so that the life of Christ emanates from his life."

So the question this morning is, does your life mirror Christ? That is the most fulfilling, happy life you can ever live. It's your best life now. Yeah, your best life now. Not your million dollars in the bank account. Your

best life now is the fruit of the Spirit. Your best life now is having communion with the Holy Spirit. Your best life now is love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance, self-control. Against such, there is no law. Don't you want this life? Don't you want this for your relationships? Don't you want this for every area in your community, in the church? Don't you want this for your children? Don't you want this?

Or you can have this if you come to Jesus Christ in brokenness, realizing that He alone is your Savior, and take up the cross, believing in Him alone for salvation. But Christian, you can have more of this if you would but yield to the influences of the Holy Spirit. God is restoring what has happened at Eden. Adam and Eve lost original righteousness; they had fallen into sin, and from then has been a whole world of the works of the flesh. But God begins by restoring communion with His fallen creatures and brings in them that love and harmony of relationship between Him and with others, and in the new creation, it shall all be the fruit of the Spirit in its fullness in us because that's Christlikeness. And when He comes, we shall see Him as He is. Glory be to God.

Listen to the Spirit of God who says to you, "My fruit is better than gold, yes, then fine gold; and my revenue then choice silver." Let us pray.