

BRIARCLIFF CHURCH

Small Group Study Guide: The Fruit of the Spirit

Week of August 30 (Week 1)

Galatians 1:16-25



INTRODUCTION

The fruit of the Spirit is not primarily about self-improvement but about spiritual transformation that deeply impacts our lives. In Galatians 5, Paul teaches that believers are called to live in the freedom Christ provides by walking with the Holy Spirit rather than following the desires of the flesh. As we spend time with God, the Holy Spirit gradually produces His character in us, resulting in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. This sermon introduces the biblical foundation for spiritual fruitfulness and helps us understand that growing in Christ is both a struggle and a work of God's grace.

OBSERVING AND APPLYING THE TEXT

I. FRUITFULNESS IS A FIGHT (GALATIANS 5:16-18)

- 1. What does Paul mean by "walk by the Spirit" in verse 16?**

- 2. Why does Paul say the flesh and the Spirit are opposed to one another (v. 17)?**

- 3. What situations in your life most clearly reveal the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit?**

- 4. How can you practically "walk by the Spirit" this week?**

II. FRUITFULNESS IS A GOSPEL ISSUE (GALATIANS 5:19-21)

- 5. What do the "works of the flesh" reveal about the human heart?**

- 6. According to the sermon, what are the three ways people often operate from their hearts?**

- 7. Which of the three heart postures do you most often struggle with, and why?**

- 8. How does the gospel free us from both self-righteousness and sinful living?**

III. FRUITFULNESS IS AN OUTSIDE JOB FIRST (GALATIANS 5:22-25)

- 9. Why does Paul describe these qualities as the "fruit" of the Spirit rather than the "works" of the Spirit?**

10. What does Galatians 5:13 teach about the purpose of Christian freedom?

11. Are there areas where you are depending more on self-effort than on the Holy Spirit for growth?

12. How does the image of the aspen grove challenge our understanding of spiritual growth?

Key Takeaway

The fruit of the Spirit grows as believers remain connected to Christ, depend on the Holy Spirit, and live out the gospel in community. Fruitfulness is a fight, a gospel issue, and ultimately God's work in us as we surrender ourselves to Him.