

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

FREEDOM IN CHRIST IS TO LIVE EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT (Part 2)

C. The fruit of the Spirit (22-23)

1. Paul contrasts the inward working of the Holy Spirit to the outward working of the flesh, *But the fruit of the Spirit*
 - a. He identified behavior (works) that results from following the old nature.
 - b. Now, he identifies behavioral characteristics (fruit) that show control by the Holy Spirit.
 - 1) Jesus described how a Christian must abide in Him to be fruitful, John 15:4-5, *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*
 - 2) Donald Campbell, *The word "fruit" is singular, indicating that these qualities constitute a unity, all of which should be found in a believer who lives under the control of the Spirit.*
 - c. His list may be placed into three categories, God-ward, interpersonal, personal.
2. Paul's list (22-23a), *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;*
 - a. God-ward qualities
 - 1) *Love*
 - a) It means *to have love for someone or something, based on sincere appreciation and high regard.*
 - b) It is the Greek word, agape, *self-sacrificing affection for others.*
 - 1] John 3:16, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*
 - 2] Donald Campbell, *Such self-sacrificing love that sent Christ to die for sinners is the kind of love that believers who are Spirit-controlled manifest, William Barclay, It means that, no matter what people may do to us by way of insult or injury or humiliation, we will never seek anything else but their highest good. It is therefore a feeling of the mind as much as of the heart; it concerns the will as much as the emotions. It describes the deliberate effort—which we can make only with the help of God—never to seek anything but the best even for those who seek the worst for us.*
 - c) Characteristics of love
 - 1] It is a reflection of the nature of God.
 - a] 1 John 4:16, *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*
 - b] Charles Spurgeon, *Love is a very practical virtue, and yet it is so rich and rare that God alone is its author. None but a heavenly power can produce it; the love of the world is sorry stuff.*
 - 2] It is foundational.
 - a] Colossians 3:14, *And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.*
 - b] It is the underlying motive of our actions, 1 Corinthians 6:14, *Let all that you do be done in love.*
 - c] It is the basis of unity, Colossians 2:2, *that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ,*
 - d] It is love for all people, 1 Thessalonians 3:12, *and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you,*
 - e] It identifies a follower of Christ, John 13:35, *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*
 - 3] It is the proper restraint against license, Galatians 5:13, *For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*
 - 4] It equips one to be discerning, Philippians 1:9, *And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment,*
 - 5] It is wonderful, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, *Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.*

- 2) *Joy*
 - a) It means *deep-seated gladness regardless of circumstances.*
 - 1) Philippians 4:4, Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.
 - 2) John 15:11, *These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*
 - 3) Joy despite circumstances rests on God's sovereign control of all things, Romans 8:28, *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*
 - b) The source of joy is the indwelling Holy Spirit, 1 Thessalonians 1:6, *And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit,*
- 3) *Peace*
 - a) It means *a state of freedom from anxiety and inner turmoil, to be quiet in one's inner self regardless of circumstances.*
 - 1] Mark 5:34, *And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."*
 - 2] John 14:27, *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*
 - 3] It defies human understanding, Philippians 4:7, *And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
 - b) It is sourced in God.
 - 1] It is being right with God.
 - a] Romans 5:1, *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - b] William Barclay, *Here, it means that tranquillity of heart which derives from the all-pervading consciousness that our times are in the hands of God.*
 - 2] It is based on Christ's finished work on the cross.
 - a] Colossians 1:20, *and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*
 - b] Ephesians 2:14-17, *For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.*
 - c) Paul may be speaking to peace in the body of Christ in Galatia where factions were destroying peace.
 - 1] Colossians 3:15, *And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.*
 - 2] Romans 12:18, *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.*
- b. Interpersonal qualities
 - 1) *Patience*
 - a) It means *a state of emotional calm in the face of provocation or misfortune, without complaint or irritation.*
 - 1] Some Bible versions translate *patience* as *long-suffering, forbearance.*
 - 2] James 5:10, *As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.*
 - 3] Donald Campbell, *It entertains no thoughts of retaliation even when wrongfully treated.*
 - b) A Christian's patience is based on God being long-suffering toward mankind.
 - 1] 2 Peter 3:9, *The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*
 - 2] Colossians 3:12, *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,*
 - c) It is nurtured by love, Ephesians 4:2, *with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,*

- 2) *Kindness*
 - a) It means *benevolence and graciousness*.
 - 1] Some Bible versions translate *kindness* as *gentleness*.
 - 2] 1 Corinthians 13:4, *Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant*.
 - b) It is seen in the actions of God.
 - 1] Ephesians 2:7, *so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus*.
 - 2] Donald Campbell, *Kindness is benevolence in action such as God demonstrated toward men*.
 - 3] Ronald Fung, . . . *his kindness is not unprincipled or sentimental*.
- 3) *Goodness*
 - a) It means *generous, reaching out to others in a positive way, moral excellence*.
 - 1] Titus 3:4, *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,*
 - 2] Donald Campbell, . . . *an uprightness of soul and as an action reaching out to others to do good even when it is not deserved*.
 - b) It goes beyond what is required.
 - 1] Ronald Fung, . . . *is happy to do far more than is required by mere justice*.
 - 2] It deals with words and deeds not just disposition; generous in actions.
- c. Personal qualities
 - 1) *Faithfulness*
 - a) It means *reliability, trustworthiness, one in whom confidence can be placed*.
 - 1] Romans 3:3, *What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?*
 - 2] Luke 16:10, *One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much*.
 - b) It is trustworthiness in dealing with others.
 - 1] Titus 2:10, *not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior*.
 - 2] It is dealing reliably with others even as God deals with us.
 - 2) *Gentleness*
 - a) It means *gentleness of attitude and behavior, in contrast with harshness in one's dealings with others*.
 - 1] Some Bible versions translate *gentleness* as *mEEKness*.
 - 2] Galatians 6:1, *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted*.
 - 3] Matthew 11:29, *Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls*.
 - 4] William Barclay notes three main meanings, *being submissive to the will of God, being teachable, and being considerate*.
 - b) It describes a person where gentleness is tied to strength and humility.
 - 1] 1 Corinthians 4:21, *What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?*
 - 2] Charles H. Spurgeon, *Some people are very hard, stern, severe, quick-tempered, passionate, but the true follower of Christ will be gentle and tender, even as He was*.
 - 3) *Self-control*
 - a) It means *the ability to master oneself concerning desires and actions*.
 - 1] Some Bible versions translate *self-control* as *temperance*.
 - 2] Acts 24:25, *And as he reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you."*
 - 3] 2 Peter 1:6, *and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,*
 - b) It relates to how to deal with the fleshly desires of the old nature.
 - 1] Galatians 5:16, *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh*.
 - 2] Grant Osborne, . . . *it is the tool by which we conduct ourselves by the Spirit rather than by the flesh*.

3. Paul declared that such behavior is in harmony with the law and not opposed to it, (23b), *against such things there is no law.*

a. There are no laws that prohibit the fruit of the Spirit.

- 1) Thomas Constable, *There are laws against the deeds of the flesh because they are destructive, but there are none against the fruit of the Spirit because it is edifying.*
- 2) Ronald Fung, . . . *while law exists for the purpose of restraint there is nothing in the manifestations of the Spirit to restrain.*
- 3) It would be hard to find a person who is offended by one who treats others with respect, compassion, gentleness, kindness, etc.
- 4) Charles Spurgeon, *For the works of the flesh there is no gospel, and against the works of the Spirit there is no law.*

b. The fruit of the Spirit actually fulfills the law.

- 1) Romans 8:4, *in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*
- 2) Ronald Fung, . . . *Paul's words ultimately mean that "the law is not against those who walk by the Spirit because in principle they are fulfilling the law.*

D. The provision of spiritual victory (24-26)

1. Christians have been set free from control by the flesh (24), *And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

a. *And*

- 1) *And* may be translated *Now*.
- 2) Christians may live by the Spirit because bondage to the flesh was broken when it was crucified.

b. How Christians crucify the flesh.

- 1) Those who belong to Christ have been baptized by the Holy Spirit and identify with Christ in His death and resurrection.
 - a) The control of the flesh was broken by Christ at the cross, Galatians 2:20, *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*
 - b) Romans 6:6-7, *We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin.*
 - c) Tom Constable, *The Christian has crucified the flesh in the sense that when he or she trusted Christ God broke the domination of his or her sinful nature. While we still have a sinful human nature, it does not control us as it did before we trusted in Christ.*
- 2) The flesh is evident in passions and desires.
 - a) *Passions* are strong physical desires, particularly of a sexual nature, Romans 7:5, *For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.*
 - b) *Desires* means to covet, lust the things of others, to seek to do that which is morally wrong, note Galatians 5:16, *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.*
 - c) Actually, these two words, passions and desires, give identity to *works of the flesh*.
- 3) Christians need to constantly crucify the flesh by yielding to the Holy Spirit.
 - a) Romans 8:13, *For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*
 - b) Thomas Constable, *So victory over the sinful nature's passions and desires has been provided by Christ in His death. Faith must continually lay hold of this truth or a believer will be tempted to try to secure victory by self-effort.*
 - c) John Stott emphasizes the importance of continued opposition to the flesh.
 - 1] *First, a Christian's rejection of his old nature is to be pitiless.*
 - 2] *Secondly, our rejection of the old nature will be painful.*
 - 3] *Thirdly, the rejection of our old nature is to be decisive.*

2. Christians are to live under the control of the Holy Spirit not the law (25), ***If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.***
 - a. *If*
 - 1) This is a first class condition of fact.
 - 2) It may be translated as *since*.
 - 3) John 3:6, *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*
 - b. Since a Christian's new life is empowered by the Holy Spirit, he should follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.
 - 1) Dependence for daily direction should come from the Holy Spirit, not personal choice.
 - 2) Ronald Fung, *Living by the Spirit is similar to walking by the Spirit. The former term looks at the Spirit as the source and sustaining power of the believer's spiritual life whereas the latter one views Him as the regulative principle in his or her conduct.*
 - 3) John Stott, *It is not enough to yield passively to the Spirit's control; we must also walk actively in the Spirit's way. Only so will the fruit of the Spirit appear.*
 - 4) Warren Wiersbe, *It is one thing to overcome the flesh and not do evil things, but quite something else to do good things. The legalist might be able to boast that he is not guilty of adultery or murder, but can anyone see the beautiful graces of the Spirit in his life? Negative goodness is not enough in a life; there must be positive qualities as well.*
3. Demonstrate the Holy Spirit's control by loving one another (26), ***Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.***
 - a. A Spirit controlled life will produce the fruit of the Spirit not the works of the flesh.
 - 1) Philippians 2:3, *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*
 - 2) *Conceited* means *to be falsely proud.*
 - 3) *Provoking one another* means *to irritate because of a prideful attitude, to challenge another in order to build up oneself.*
 - 4) A Christian's life should be one of grace not pride.
 - b. Christian liberty lies in serving others not in legalism which puffs up oneself.
 - 1) The works of the flesh are an attempt to satisfy oneself.
 - 2) The fruit of the Spirit are meant to serve others.
 - 3) John Stott, *This is a very instructive verse because it shows that our conduct to others is determined by our opinion of ourselves . . . The correct attitude to other people is not 'I'm better than you and I'll prove it', nor 'You're better than I and I resent it', but 'You are a person of importance in your own right (because God made you in His own image and Christ died for you) and it is my joy and privilege to serve you.'*

CONCLUSION

- A. There are no laws against the fruit of the Spirit because exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit fulfills the Law.
- B. Since new life in Christ is empowered by the Spirit, Christians should follow the leading of the Spirit.
- C. True Christian liberty is identified by serving others not by building up oneself.