

It's my intention for the next several weeks to examine what's commonly called the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal.5:22-23)—but tonight, I merely want to introduce the theme, by examining it more broadly...

A. Fruit is the evidence of a changed state and heart

1. The first thing that needs stressing is—this fruit is only produced in Christians by the Holy Spirit of God...
2. Thus—no person can ever bear the fruit of the Spirit—unless they first undergo certain necessary changes...
3. [1] A changed state—that is—we must first of all be liberated from the law as a covenant of works...
4. Gal.5:18—"But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law"—that is—those led by the Spirit evidence they are no longer under the law...
5. There are only two kinds of people in the world—there are those led by the Spirit and those under the law...
6. To be led by the Spirit is to be indwelt by the Spirit—which shows itself in—"the fruit of the Spirit..."
7. In contrast to this—by nature we are under the law—that is—we are under the law as a covenant of works...
8. This covenant was originated with Adam in the Garden of Eden, as the federal head of the human race...
9. In short—God promised Adam and his posterity eternal life if he obeyed and threatened death if he disobeyed...
10. Thus—because he broke that covenant—his seed are born under the demand and condemnation of it...
11. Now—to put this as simply as I can—I want to suggest that two things are true of those under the law...
12. [a] They are enslaved—that is—those under the law are under the commanding power of the law...
13. The law as a covenant commands perfect obedience—but it doesn't provide the ability to obey the law...
14. Rom.8:7—"Those carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be..."
15. Rom.6:14—"For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace..."
16. [b] They are condemned—that is—those under the law are under the condemning power of the law...
17. Gal.5:23—"Against such there is no law"—that is—the law of God no longer condemns a spirit led life...
18. Those who are Spirit led, whose lives are characterized by the fruit of the Spirit, are not under the law...
19. Rom.7:4—"Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God..."
20. There are three important words in this verse—death, marriage, fruit—and they necessarily come in that order...
21. Here's the imagery—we are all by nature married to the law—that is to the law as a covenant of works...

22. When we become Christians the old man is crucified (he dies)—thus we are free from to remarry...
23. The new man is married to Christ—that is—we are in covenant with grace, called the covenant of grace...
24. Now—from this new union comes fruit—not children—but fruit to God—that is, the fruit of the Spirit...
25. Thus—those under the law as a covenant—are not led by the Spirit, and are able to bear fruit to God...
26. [2] A changed heart, Gal.5:24—"And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires..."
27. This is a fact of every Christian—"they have crucified the flesh"—the old man has been put to death...
28. This is what flesh means—it refers to fallen and depraved humanity—humanity in opposition to God...
29. Thus—though the flesh has been crucified (it no longer reigns)—it yet remains in the best of Christians (v17)...
30. Perhaps I can put it this way—though Christians are no longer in the flesh—the flesh remains in them...
31. Rom.8:8-9—"Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His..."
32. Matt.7:15-20—"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them..."

B. Fruit is the work of the Holy Spirit of Christ

1. V22—"But the fruit of the Spirit"—that is—the fruit produced by the Spirit, the fruit from the Spirit...
2. Thus—the apostle contrasts "the works of the flesh (fallen human nature)" (v19), and "the fruit of the Spirit" (v22)...
3. The works of the flesh come from the flesh, they are produced by the flesh—the fruit of the Spirit comes from the Spirit, it's produced by the Spirit...
4. Hos.14:8—"Ephraim shall say, What have I to do anymore with idols? I have heard and observed him. I am like a green cypress tree; Your fruit is found in Me..."
5. [1] He plants—that is—the first thing the Spirit does is—He plants us in Christ—He joins us to Christ...
6. V24—"And those who are Christ's"—that is—those who belong to Christ, who are in union with Christ...
7. It's our union with Christ that causes all the changes—every aspect of our salvation flows from Christ...
8. John 15:5—"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing..."
9. Phil.1:9-11—"And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by [through] Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God..."
10. [a] What are the fruits of righteousness—that is—fruits that fulfill the righteousness of God's holy law...

11. I suggest this is the exact same thing Paul means in Gal.5:23—"against such [fruit of the Spirit] there is no law..."
12. [b] Where are these fruits found—"being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ..."
13. These fruits or graces, are "through Jesus Christ"—produced by His Spirit as He unites us to Christ...
14. [2] He waters—that is—He not only joins us to Christ, but He communicates grace from Christ to the soul...
15. Isa.44:3-4—"For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring; they will spring up among the grass like willows by the watercourses..."
16. Zech.12:10—"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only *son*, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn..."
17. John Gill—"I will pour on them...the Spirit of grace—by which is meant the Holy Spirit of God, who is called the 'Spirit of grace'; not merely because he is good and gracious, and loving to his people, and is of grace given unto them; but because he is the author of all grace in them; of gracious convictions, and spiritual illuminations; of quickening, regenerating, converting, and sanctifying grace..."
18. [3] He prunes—that is—the Spirit is the great beautifier of souls—He conforms us into Christ's image...
19. 2Cor.3:18—"We all, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord..."
20. Thus—let me point out—working fruit within us and conforming us into Christ's image—are the same thing...
21. Or, put another way—Christ had the fruit of the Spirit in perfection—as He had the Spirit without measure...
22. A.W. Pink—"The Spirit's fructifying of the believer is the conforming of him unto Christ, first in his heart, and then in his life..."
23. Furthermore—the Spirit prunes us by convicting us of our sins—making us know our remaining corruption...
24. Jn.15:8—"And when He has come, He will convict the world of in, and of righteousness, and of judgment..."

C. Fruit is the responsibility of saints

1. The fact that fruit is the work of the Spirit, in no way denies our responsibility to cultivate and promote it...
2. Accordingly, this broader passage (vv16-26)—is bookended with the exhortation to "walk in the Spirit" (v16, v25)...
3. Now—the first thing I want you to notice is—these verses are commands that Christians are to obey...
4. We are commanded to "walk in the Spirit" or "live in the Spirit"—we are to allow the Spirit to work within us...
5. A.W. Pink—"There is to be a concurrence between the Christian and the Spirit: our responsibility is to cherish and cultivate our graces, and to resist and reject everything which opposes and hinders them..."
6. Furthermore—elsewhere throughout Scripture, we are commanded to promote each of these graces...

7. For example—we are commanded to love, to rejoice, be peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled...
8. [1] Pray for the Spirit's influence, Lk.11:13—"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him..."
9. Sol.4:16—"Awake, O north wind, and come, O south! Blow upon my garden, that its spices may flow out. Let my beloved come to his garden and eat its pleasant fruits..."
10. [2] Avoid grieving the Holy Spirit, Eph.4:30—"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption..."
11. If the Spirit of God is the divine beautifier or fructifier—then we must do nothing to hinder His work...
12. Gal.5:17—"For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish..."
13. [3] Meditate in the Word of Christ—God's word is the primary means the Spirit uses to produce fruit...
14. Ps.1:2-3—"But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper (Ps.92:12-14)..."