

# The Fruit of the Spirit

(Galatians 5:22-23)

## Pre-Session Warm Up

What do you know about fruit? [Teacher, let the children discuss the properties of Fruit: juicy, sweet, good to eat, grows on trees, etc.]

It's good for us and it's tasty, too. Fruit is a gift from God!

God gives us another kind of fruit, too. We call it the fruit of the Spirit. Let's read our verse together out loud.

The fruit of the Spirit is a gift God gives Christians to help them live lives that please Him and show His love to those who don't know God.

## Opening Prayer

Father, thank You for giving us the fruit of the Spirit. Over the weeks to come, as we learn more about the fruit of the Spirit, we ask You to make each of these attributes grow in our lives. Help us to show **love** and **joy**. Help us to have **peace** and to show **patience** and **goodness**. Help us demonstrate **faithfulness** and **gentleness**, and finally help us to have **self-control**. Please teach us Your ways. Help us use the fruit of the Spirit to show others what Your loves looks like. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Memory Verse

*But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things. (Galatians 5:22-23 NLT)*

## Lesson

[Teacher, before class, enlarge nine different fruit shapes, copy them onto colorful paper and cut them out. Choose one child to come forward.] We're going to spend some time learning about these gifts that come from God called the "fruit of the Spirit."

When you accept Jesus to become Lord of your life, God plants seeds in your heart that begin to grow. They are seeds of love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. [Teacher, as you name each piece of fruit, tape it to the child standing in front of the class.] These are God-given gifts that grow inside of us to show others what Jesus is like.

Jesus came to show us what our fruit should look like when it's fully grown. He came to show us what it looks like to really love others, to have joy in the middle of a trial, to be patient, and so on.

Let's think of ways that we show those gifts right now in our lives. [Teacher, as you remove a piece of fruit from the child, have the children discuss ways they show these qualities to others. For example, "Joy" is being happy for someone that gets a new bike. Place the fruit on a tree shape on the bulletin board.]

One way the fruit of the Spirit grows in our lives is when we see it growing in the lives of others—then we know what it's supposed to look like and how we should behave. And when other people see those gifts growing in your life, you're showing them how God wants them to behave. God gives us the fruit of the Spirit to help us show others what His love looks like.

We can learn about the fruit of the Spirit by looking at Jesus! He came to earth to teach us how to live and to show us how to please God. So, the more we learn to love Him and try to be like Him, the more the fruit of the Spirit will grow in us.

***The fruit of the Spirit is contrasted to the works of the flesh.***

Please turn with me to Galatians 5:19-21.

This describes a person who has not accepted Jesus as Lord of his life. Without the Holy Spirit living in your heart, you are going to be led by your own human nature. But even after we accept Jesus as our Lord, we can fall into these various sins if we are not purposely walking in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit lives in each believer and will give you the desire to live your life in a way that is pleasing to God. The Holy Spirit will give you the power to say, "No!" to sin and, "Yes!" to God's way.

John 15:4-5

*Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. (5) Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.*

[Teacher, discuss this verse:]

- What do you think Jesus means when he says to “*remain in me*”? (Hang out with Jesus. Pray to Him, read His word, and do what He wants you do to. As you stay plugged into Him, He will make the fruit in your life grow.)
- What kind of fruit do you think Jesus is talking about? (The fruit of the Spirit.)
- Have you seen those kinds of fruit in your life? When?
- Why can’t we grow the fruit by ourselves? (God is the life source. We are only to “bear” the fruit, that is, show it to others so others will know God better. God is the one that makes it grow.)
- Why do we want the fruit Jesus talks about? (We want to live our lives in a way that pleases God and shows other people How wonderful He is.)

Our purpose here on earth is to love God and to show God’s love to others. God gives us the fruit of the Spirit to help us show others what his love looks like. Just as fruit is produced on the branches of a healthy tree or vine, so spiritual fruit grows in our lives as we live in close fellowship with Jesus in daily Bible reading, prayer and friendships with other believers.

In the weeks to come, we will be learning more about each of these God-given gifts.

## Closing Prayer

Father, we love You and thank You for the gifts of the fruit of the Spirit. Thank You for giving us what we need to show others Your love. We know that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches and that without Jesus, we can’t show anyone Your love. We thank You for Jesus, may Your fruit grow within us so that it shines to all those around us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

#### *Recipe for Success*

Make a fruit salad to prepare with the children and eat as a snack:

- |                |          |            |              |
|----------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| • Strawberries | Love     | • Pear     | Kindness     |
| • Oranges      | Joy      | • Apple    | Goodness     |
| • Grapes       | Peace    | • Peach    | Faithfulness |
| • Banana       | Patience | • Cherries | Self-Control |

[Teacher, as you prepare the fruit salad talk about why each of these kinds of fruit reminds you of the attribute of God, as follows:]

- **Strawberries**—Strawberries remind me of **love** because they are red like a heart or a big fat kiss!
- **Oranges**—Oranges remind me of **Joy** because joy is all about smiles. [Place an orange slice in your mouth to look like a smile]
- **Grapes**—Have you heard of “world peace”? I chose grapes to represent **peace** because the grape is round like the world. God’s

peace helps us stop fighting with our brothers and sisters. And, He gives us peace in our hearts when we are afraid.

- **Bananas**—Bananas remind me of **patience**. Many times the only bananas you can buy in the store are green. How many of you have tried to eat a green banana? Green bananas are not very tasty. You have to wait patiently for them to ripen, don't you? God gives us patience to help us know that He always has what is best planned for us—it just might take a little bit of time before we get it. God is patient with us, isn't He? Even when we goof up and disobey God, He waits for us to make the right choices and follow Him again. He loves us even when we're not showing love to Him.
- **Pear**—The pear reminds me of God's **kindness**. Without fail every year, the pear tree gives many delicious pears, just like God, Who gives and helps and always wants the very best for me every single day.
- **Apple**—I chose the apple to represent **goodness** because an apple is just so good! And that is what God wants our lives to be filled with goodness.
- **Peach**—The peach is fuzzy on the outside, just like a faithful puppy. That's why I chose the peach to remind us of God's **faithfulness**.
- **Lemon**—I chose the lemon to represent **gentleness** because a little bit goes a long way, doesn't it? A few drops of lemon juice keeps the other fruit fresh; it keeps it from turning brown. But, you have to be gentle with the lemon. You don't want to get too carried away with squirting the juice or it will make the salad too sour. You just want a few drops, so squeeze it nice and gently.
- **Cherries**—And finally, we saved the best for last! **Self-control!** We must have self-control with this last fruit, don't we? God wants us to have self-control so that we behave as Jesus and make good choices about our words and actions that are pleasing to Him. What would happen if we did not have self-control? What

would our world look like? Wow! How crazy that would be to have people running around everywhere, only worrying about themselves instead of others.

[Dish up the fruit salad, squirt with whipping cream and place a red cherry on top.]

Remember to have self-control as you enjoy the fruit of the Spirit salad.

### Game Center

Use the following questions in a game of your choice:

1. Name 3 fruits of the Spirit. (Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.)
2. Why does God give Christians the fruit of the Spirit? (To help us live lives that please Him and to show His love to those who don't know Him. God gives us the fruit of the Spirit to help us show others what His love looks like.)
3. Why do you think that we call these God-given gifts, the "*fruit of the Spirit*"? How are they like fruit? (They are sweet and good.)
4. Why did Jesus come to earth? What did he want to show us? (Jesus came to earth to show us what it looks like to show love, to have joy, to be patient, and so on. Jesus came to show us what our fruit should look like when it's fully grown.)
5. What's a way you can show **love** to your mother (or father)? (You can surprise her by doing something to help her.)
6. What's a way you can show **kindness** to an older neighbor? (Rake leaves, shovel snow, weed flower garden.)
7. How do you get the fruit of the Spirit to grow in your life? (By hanging out with Jesus! He came to teach us how to live and to

show us how to please God. The more we learn to love Him and try to be like Him, the more the fruit of the Spirit will grow in us.)

8. What gives you the power to say “No!” to sin and “Yes!” to God’s way? (The Holy Spirit.)
9. Why is it important to remain plugged into Jesus? (As you stay plugged into Him, He will make the fruit of the Spirit grow in your life.)
10. How do you stay plugged into Jesus? (By reading the Word, praying, and hanging out with other Christians.)
11. Why can’t we grow the fruit by ourselves? (God is the life source. We are only to “bear” the fruit, that is, show it to others so others will know God better. God is the one that makes it grow.)
12. Why do you want the fruit Jesus talks about? (To love God and to show God’s love to others.)

# Fruit of the Spirit Acrostic

Fit the Fruit of the Spirit into the acrostic. If you need help, read Galatians 5:22-23 and Colossians 3:12. Some are used twice as shown in the list below. (You'll notice that two additional goodly characteristics are in the list.)

- Gentleness (2)      Self-control (2)      Faithfulness (2)      Patience (2)  
 Humility (2)      Compassion      Goodness      Love      Joy      Peace      Kindness

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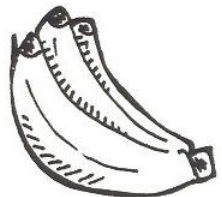
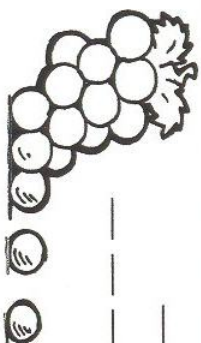
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# Activity Coupons

To teach the Fruit of the Spirit, have children practice what they learn by using these coupons. Next week ask each child to report on which coupons he used and how.

## LOVE

Surprise your mother by doing something to help her.

## COMPASSION

Visit a rest home and talk with an older person (and listen a lot).

## INDUENESS

Rake leaves (shovel snow or weed flowers) for an older neighbor.

## GENTLENESS

Rub your mom or dad's back for ten minutes.

## JOY

Write a funny, happy poem about your family.

## PATIENCE

Read to a little sister or brother or neighbor.

## PEACE

Don't argue with anyone for a week!

## SELF-CONTROL

Don't call anybody names (not even your brother or sister) for a week.

## GOODNESS

Tell someone about God's love.

## HUMILITY

Give up your turn or your place in line to someone else.

## FAITHFULNESS

Feed the family pets without being asked.

