

The Fruit of the Spirit

The Believer's Life and Walk: Free and Spiritual

Galatians 5:13-6:18

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A Walk Bearing God's Nature: The Fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22-26

(Galatians 5:22-26) **Introduction:** a genuine believer stands before God approved and acceptable. He is embraced and loved by God, looked after and cared for by God. And he is the recipient of eternal life and of the absolute assurance of eternal life.

But note: the believer has not been accepted by God because he deserves it, not because he kept enough laws to win the approval of God. The believer has been accepted by God because of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for man's transgressions of the law. He died to free men from the law, from its judgment and condemnation. Therefore, standing before God, the believer is not there because he has kept laws and has earned the right to stand there. He is there because of his faith in Jesus Christ. His faith honors God's Son, and God loves His Son so much that He honors anyone who believes in His Son. He honors the person by doing exactly what the person believes. Therefore, the man who believes that Jesus Christ makes him acceptable to God becomes acceptable to God.

The point is this: since the believer has to approach God through Jesus Christ and not through the law, he is freed from the law. He is under Jesus Christ, not the law. Does this mean then that the believer has no restraint upon his life and behavior—that he is free to live like he wants? Is he free to follow the desires and lusts of his flesh—to seek the things of the world and give in to the urges to look, think, touch, taste, and do?

The answer is no! A thousand times no! For the believer has been given God's nature; he walks through life bearing God's nature (2 Peter 1:4; Ephes. 4:24; Col. 3:10; 1 Cor. 6:19-20).

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

2 Peter 1:4

“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Ephesians 4:24

“And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him” Colossians 3:10

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

God has absolutely nothing to do with sin, not within His nature. Therefore, the believer is not to cave in to the lusts of the flesh; he is to walk bearing the fruit of God's nature, that is, the fruit of God's Spirit.

1. The believer is to walk bearing God's nature (v.22-23).
2. The believer is to walk bearing a crucified flesh (v.24).
3. The believer is to walk consistently with his position in Christ (v.25).
4. The believer is to walk free from selfishness, super-spirituality and envy (v.26).

1. (Galatians 5:22-23) Holy Spirit— Believer, Walk: the believer is to walk bearing God's nature, that is, the fruit of God's Spirit.

Note that the word "fruit" is singular, not plural. The Holy Spirit has only *one fruit*. It is broken down into a list of traits in order to help us understand His nature. However, the Spirit has only one nature, one fruit. Therefore, when He lives within a person, all these traits are present. The genuine believer does not experience and bear just some of them: the Spirit of God produces them all in the life of the believer.

1. There is the fruit of love (*agapē*^{PWS: 2428}). *Agapē*^{PWS: 2428} love is the love of the mind, of the reason, of the will. It is the love that goes so far...

- that it loves regardless of feelings—whether a person feels like loving or not.
- that it loves a person even if the person does not deserve to be loved.
- that it actually loves the person who is utterly unworthy of being loved.

Note four significant points about *agapē* love.

a. Selfless or *agapē*^{PWS: 2428} love is the love of God, the very love possessed by God Himself. It is the love demonstrated in the cross of Christ.

⇒ It is the love of God for the *ungodly*.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6).

⇒ It is the love of God for *unworthy sinners*.

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

⇒ It is the love of God for *undeserving enemies*.

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10).

b. Selfless or *agapē*^{PWS: 2428} love is a gift of God. It can be experienced only if a person knows God *personally*—only if a person has received the love of God, that is, Christ Jesus, into his heart and life. *Agapē* love has to be shed abroad

(poured out, flooded, spread about) by the Spirit of God within the heart of a person.

"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" ([Romans 5:5](#)).

- c. **Selfless or *agapē***^{PWS: 2428} love is the greatest thing in all of life according to the Lord Jesus Christ.

"And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these" ([Mark 12:29-31](#)).

- d. **Selfless or *agapē***^{PWS: 2428} love is the greatest possession and gift in human life according to the Scripture ([1 Cor. 13:1-13](#)).

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity" ([1 Cor. 13:13](#)).

2. There is the fruit of joy (*chara*): an inner gladness; a deep seated pleasure. It is a depth of assurance and confidence that ignites a cheerful heart. It is a cheerful heart that leads to cheerful behavior. (**See note, Joy—[Phil. 1:4](#) for full discussion.**)

([Phil. 1:4](#)) **Joy Note:** there is the mark of joy. Remember that Paul is in prison, yet his heart is filled with joy. Joy (*chara*^{PWS: 2207}) means an inner gladness; a deep seated pleasure. It is a depth of assurance and confidence that ignites a cheerful and rejoicing heart. It is a cheerful heart that leads to cheerful and rejoicing behavior.

The joy of the Lord is not the same as the joy of the world. The joy of the world is more of a temporary pleasure than joy. The world's joy is always nagged by some incompleteness, some lack, some unfulfilling thing, some missing ingredient, some need still existing. There is not a completeness—not a complete sense of assurance, confidence, and satisfaction. There is the knowledge, *the haunting awareness*, that something can go wrong: circumstances can change or some situation can arise to disturb the joy (sickness, death, financial loss, war). The haunting awareness always keeps the world's joy from being full and complete, assuring and satisfying.

Several things need to be said about the believer's joy.

1. Joy is divine. It is possessed and given only by God. Its roots are not in earthly or material things or cheap triumphs. It is the joy of the Holy Spirit, a joy based in the Lord.

It is His very own joy ([John 15:11](#); [Acts 13:52](#); [Romans 14:17](#); [Galatians 5:22](#); [1 Thes. 1:6](#)).

2. Joy does not depend on circumstances or happiness. Happiness depends upon happenings, but the joy that God implants in the believer's heart overrides all, even the matters of life and death ([Psalm 5:11](#); [2 Cor. 6:10](#); [2 Cor. 7:4](#)).

3. Joy springs from faith ([Romans 15:13](#); [Phil. 1:25](#); [2 Tim. 1:4](#); [Matthew 2:10](#)).

4. Joy of future reward makes and keeps the believer faithful ([Matthew 25:21, 23](#); [Acts 20:24](#); [Hebrews 12:2](#)).

The source of the believer's joy is several-fold.

1. The fellowship of the Father and His Son brings joy ([1 John 1:3-4](#)).

2. Victory over sin, death, and hell brings joy ([John 14:28](#); [John 16:20-22](#)).

3. Repentance brings joy ([Luke 15:7, 10](#)).

4. The hope of glory brings joy ([Romans 14:17](#); [Hebrews 12:2](#); [1 Peter 4:13](#)).

5. The Lord's Word—the revelations, commandments, and promises which He made—brings joy ([John 15:11](#)).

6. The commandments of Christ and the will of God bring joy. Obeying and doing a good job stirs joy within the believer's heart ([John 15:11](#); [John 17:13](#); [Acts 13:52](#)).

7. Prayer brings joy ([John 16:24](#)).

8. The presence and fellowship of believers brings joy ([1 John 1:3-4](#)).

9. Converts bring joy ([Luke 15:5](#); [Phil. 4:1](#); [1 Thes. 2:19-20](#)).

10. Hearing that others walk in the truth brings joy ([3 John 1:4](#)).

11. Giving brings joy ([2 Cor. 8:2](#); [Hebrews 10:34](#)).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" ([Romans 14:17](#)).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" ([1 Peter 1:8](#)).

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" ([Psalm 16:11](#)).

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" ([Isaiah 12:3](#)).

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" ([Isaiah 61:10](#)).

3. There is the fruit of *peace* (*eirēnē*): it means to bind together, to join, to weave together. It means that a person is bound, woven and joined together with himself and with God and others.

The Hebrew word is *shalom*. It means freedom from trouble and much more. It means experiencing the highest good, enjoying the very best possible, possessing all the inner good possible. It means wholeness and soundness. It means prosperity in the widest

sense, especially prosperity in the spiritual sense of having a soul that blossoms and flourishes. (See note, [Peace](#)—[Ephes. 2:14-15](#) for more discussion.)

a. There is the peace of the world. This is a peace of escapism, of avoiding trouble, of refusing to face things, of unreality. It is a peace that is sought through pleasure, satisfaction, contentment, the absence of trouble, positive thinking, or the denial of problems.

b. There is the peace of Christ and of God.

⇒ The peace of God is, first, a *bosom peace*, a peace deep within. It is a tranquility of mind, a composure, and a restfulness that is undisturbed by circumstances and situations. It is more than feelings—even more than attitude and thought.

⇒ The peace of God is, second, the *peace of conquest* ([John 16:33](#)). It is the peace that is independent of conditions and environment; the peace which no sorrow, danger, suffering, or experience can take away.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" ([John 16:33](#)).

⇒ The peace of God is, third, the *peace of assurance* ([Romans 8:28](#)). It is the peace of unquestionable confidence; the peace with a sure knowledge that one's life is in the hands of God and that all things will work out for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" ([Romans 8:28](#)).

⇒ The peace of God is, fourth, the *peace of intimacy with God* ([Phil. 4:6-7](#)). It is the peace of the highest good. It is the peace that settles the mind, strengthens the will, and establishes the heart.

c. There is the source of peace. Peace is always born out of reconciliation. Its source is found only in the reconciliation wrought by Jesus Christ. Peace always has to do with personal relationships: a man's relationship to himself, to God, and to his fellow men.

⇒ A man must be bound, woven, and joined together with himself in order to have peace.

⇒ A man must be bound, woven, and joined together with God in order to have peace.

⇒ A man must be bound, woven, and joined together with his fellow man to have peace.

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one [both Jew and Gentile, all men], and hath

broken down the middle wall of partition between us" ([Ephes. 2:13-14](#)).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled" ([Col. 1:20-21](#)).

(See note, [Peace](#)—[Ephes. 2:14-15](#) for more discussion.)

[\(Ephes. 2:14-15\) Peace Note—Reconciliation—Law—Brotherhood—Unity—Division—New Man](#): Christ brings us peace. Note that Jesus Christ Himself is our peace.

- ⇒ Christ brings us peace when we realize that He died for us and offers us deliverance from the bondage of sin and death and a life of eternity with God.
- ⇒ Christ brings a deeper sense of peace when we realize that He gives the daily power to overcome the aggravating and terrible weight of anguish and guilt and loneliness and emptiness and fear.
- ⇒ Christ brings a still deeper sense of peace when we realize that He has brought perfect love and unity to the world—that He has eliminated all divisions and barriers and differences between God and man and between men.

Christ is man's peace because He does four things for man.

A. Christ brings peace by bringing men together as "one" ([Ephes. 2:14](#)). Note that He has made "both one," that is, Jew and Gentile. There are two ways that Christ makes men as one.

- a. All men now approach God on the same basis, on an equal footing: by the blood of Jesus Christ.** There is no other way. Therefore, when a man comes to the cross, he comes with everyone else who is standing at the feet of Jesus. He stands as one with them—all on an equal basis: sinners who need a Savior. Standing there he is not accepted by God because he is better, healthier, wealthier, more intelligent, more capable, and more religious than anyone else. He is acceptable to God because He acknowledges his unworthiness and nothingness—his desperate need—to be saved by the blood of Christ. He is acceptable to God because he acknowledges that he is as all other men—lost and needful—and he comes as one with all other men to confess Christ as his Savior.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" ([John 14:27](#)).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" ([Romans 5:1](#)).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" ([Romans 14:17](#)).

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" ([Ephes. 2:14](#)).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" ([Col. 1:20](#)).

b. All men who come to Christ for salvation receive a common love and purpose and work.

⇒ **First**, there is the common love. Every believer who comes to Jesus Christ loves Him, and that common love *among* believers stirs a common love between believers. Love for Jesus Christ stirs love for all those whom Christ loves—which is everyone. Christ leads men to love one another.

⇒ **Second**, there is the common purpose and work: that of living righteously and bearing testimony to the glorious message of salvation and to life eternal.

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" ([Romans 12:5](#)).

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" ([Galatians 3:28](#)).

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" ([Ephes. 4:12-13](#)).

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1 John 1:7](#)).

B. Christ brings peace by breaking down all barriers ([Ephes. 2:14](#)). This is a picture taken from the temple. The temple was surrounded by a series of courts. Each court had a high wall separating it from the preceding court. As one approached the temple, he entered first of all the outer Court of the Gentiles. This is where the buying and selling of animals and the exchanging of money for foreign worshippers took place (see [Mark 11:15](#)).

Then there was the Court of the Women. A Jewish woman was limited to this court unless she had come to make a sacrifice.

The next court was the Court of the Israelites. This is where the whole congregation gathered on the great feast days and where sacrifices were handed over to the priests.

The Court of the Priests was next. This court was in the temple proper where the temple itself stood. This area was considered sacred and was accessible only to the services of the priests.

Finally, within the very heart of the temple stood the Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place where the very presence of God was to dwell. Only the High Priest could enter the Holy Place and he could enter only once a year—at the great Passover Feast.

Partition after partition separated people from the presence of God. Tablets hung around the wall of the Gentile Court announcing that if any Gentile walked into any other court, he was to be put to death.

The picture is that of Jesus Christ breaking down all barriers and walls that separate man from God. All men can now approach God equally through the death of Jesus Christ. Men build all kinds of barriers and prejudices against other men.

Society is plagued with barriers and prejudices built around such things as...

- race
- color
- religion
- organizations
- appearance
- health
- wealth
- position
- morality
- dress
- commitment
- ability

But Christ has now done away with all barriers and prejudices. He has broken them all down by the blood of His cross. All men now approach God and become worthy on the same basis: by bowing before the cross and surrendering their lives to God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ and all ye are brethren" ([Matthew 23:8](#)).

"But God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean" ([Acts 10:28](#)).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" ([Romans 10:12](#)).

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" ([Galatians 3:28](#)).

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" ([James 2:5](#)).

"The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all" ([Proverbs 22:2](#)).

C. Christ brings peace by wiping out the enmity of the law against us. Before Christ, man had to approach God through law. However, man discovered something: the law did not make him acceptable to God: it condemned him and showed him how far away from God he really was—totally depraved. Every time he broke the law, the law cried out "guilty" and pronounced the penalty of being imperfect and unworthy and unacceptable to God. Man discovered that the law was against him—at enmity with him.

But now, Christ has done away with the enmity and condemnation of the law.

⇒ He has lived a sinless life, fulfilling the law perfectly; and thereby He has secured the Perfect and Ideal Righteousness.

⇒ He has also paid the penalty for man's having broken the law. As the Ideal and Perfect Man He could do this. When He died on the cross, He bore our condemnation and punishment for us.

The point is this: when Christ fulfilled the law, He became the embodiment of the law. He is now the Way. A man is to approach God through Him, not the law. Therefore, there are no laws, no rules, and no decrees to keep men from God. There is only one thing that keeps a man away from God: refusing to come to God through His Son Jesus Christ.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" ([Matthew 5:17](#)).

"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, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" ([Romans 8:3](#)).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" ([Galatians 3:13](#)).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" ([Galatians 4:4-5](#)).

D. Christ brings peace by creating a "new man." God planned and promised a "new creation"—the creation of a *new man* individually and corporately, a new man in whom Jesus Christ dwells ([Col. 1:27](#)).

Individually when a man turns to Christ, Christ causes the man to be *born again*. He recreates the man—creates the man *all over again*. The man has a new life; he begins life all over again. He has a new beginning, and this new beginning brings peace—peace of heart and mind.

Corporately in Jesus Christ all men who believe, both Jew and Gentile, make up *one new body* ([Ephes. 2:16](#)), *one new family* ([Ephes. 2:19](#)), *one new building* ([Ephes. 2:20-22](#)), *one new temple* ([Ephes. 2:21](#)), *one new fellowship* ([Ephes. 1:22](#)).

4. There is the fruit of longsuffering (*makrothumia* ^{PWS: 2382}): patience, bearing and suffering a long time, perseverance, being constant, steadfast, and enduring. Long-suffering never gives in; it is never broken no matter what attacks it.

- ⇒ Pressure and hard work may fall upon us, but the Spirit of God helps us suffer long under it all.
- ⇒ Disease or accident or old age may afflict us, but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it.
- ⇒ Discouragement and disappointment may attack us, but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it.
- ⇒ Men may do us wrong, abuse, slander, and injure us; but the Spirit of God helps us to suffer long under it all.

Two significant things need to be noted about longsuffering.

- a. Longsuffering never strikes back.** Common sense tells us that a person who is attacked by others could strike back and retaliate. *But* the Christian believer is given the power of longsuffering—the power to suffer the situation or person for a long, long time.

b. Longsuffering is one of the great traits of God. As pointed out in this verse, it is a fruit of God's very own Spirit, a fruit that is to be in the life of the believer.

⇒ God and Christ are long-suffering toward sinners.

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" ([Romans 2:4](#)).

⇒ God saves believers so that they may be examples of longsuffering.

"Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting" ([1 Tim. 1:16](#)).

⇒ God withholds His judgment from the world because He is longsuffering, waiting for more and more to be saved.

"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you" ([2 Peter 3:9](#); cp. [1 Peter 3:20](#)).

"For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off" ([Isaiah 48:9](#)).

William Barclay says that if God had been a man, He would have long ago wiped man off the face of the earth because of his terrible **disobedience** (*The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p.56). But God loves and cares for man; therefore, God is longsuffering toward man. God is suffering a long, long time with man, allowing more and more men to be saved.

"Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness" ([Col. 1:11](#)).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine" ([2 Tim. 4:2](#)).

5. There is the fruit of gentleness (*chrēstotēs* ^{[PWS: 1662](#)}): it is being kind and good, useful and helpful, gentle and sweet, considerate and gracious through all situations no matter the circumstances.

A person who is gentle does not act...

- hard
- indifferent
- harsh
- unconcerned
- too busy
- bitter

Gentleness cares for the feelings of others and feels with them. It experiences the full depth of sympathy and empathy. It shows care and gets right into the situation with a person. Gentleness suffers with those who suffer, and struggles with those who struggle, and works with those who work.

⇒ God is kind.

"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" ([Luke 6:35](#)).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" ([Ephes. 2:4-7](#)).

⇒ Believers are to be kind to one another.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" ([Romans 12:10](#)).

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" ([Ephes. 4:32](#)).

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" ([Col. 3:12](#)).

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity " ([2 Peter 1:5-7](#)).

6. There is the fruit of *goodness* (*agathōsunē* ^{PWS: 1763}): it is being full of virtue and excellence, kindness and helpfulness, peace and consideration. It means that a person is full of all good and he does all good. It means...

- that he has a good heart and good behavior.
- that he is good and does good.
- that he is a quality person.

Note that a good person lives and treats everyone just as they should be treated. He does not take advantage of any person nor does he stand by and let others take advantage. He stands up and lives for what is right and good and just. This means that goodness involves discipline and rebuke, correction and instruction as well as love and care, peace and conciliation. A good person will not give license to evil, will not let evil run rampant.

He will not allow evil to indulge itself and treat others unjustly. He will not allow others to suffer evil. Goodness steps forward and does what it can to stop and control evil.

"And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" ([Romans 15:14](#)).

⇒ God is full of goodness.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" ([Ephes. 5:9](#)).

"Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power" ([2 Thes. 1:11](#)).

"He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD" ([Psalm 33:5](#)).

"O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him" ([Psalm 34:8](#)).

"And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me" ([Isaiah 63:5](#)).

⇒ Believers are to be full of all goodness.

"And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" ([Romans 15:14](#)).

"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" ([Ephes. 3:19](#)).

7. There is the fruit of *faith* or *faithfulness* (*pistis* ^{PWS: 1426}): it means to be faithful and trustworthy; to be loyal and steadfast in devotion and allegiance. It means to be constant, staunch, and enduring. A faithful person denies and sacrifices himself—all he is and has—and trusts God. He believes God and knows that God will work all things out for good. Therefore, he casts himself totally upon God and becomes faithful to God.

⇒ Faithfulness does not doubt God—not His salvation, provision, or strength to help.

⇒ Faithfulness does not begin with God then back off and give up.

⇒ Faithfulness does not walk with God then give in to the lusts of the flesh.

Faithfulness begins with God and continues with God. Faithfulness continues on and on; it never slackens or surrenders.

⇒ God is faithful.

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" ([1 Cor. 1:9](#)).

"Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" ([1 Peter 4:19](#)).

"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations" ([Deut. 7:9](#)).

"Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant" ([1 Kings 8:56](#)).

"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations" ([Psalm 89:1](#)).

⇒ Believers are to be faithful.

"And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities" ([Luke 19:17](#)).

"Moreover it is required in stewards [believers], that a man be found faithful" ([1 Cor. 4:2](#)).

"And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after" ([Hebrews 3:5](#)).

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine" ([Exodus 19:5](#)).

8. There is the fruit of meekness (*prautēs* ^{PWS: 2556}): it means to be gentle, tender, humble, mild, considerate, but strongly so. Meekness has the strength to control and discipline, and it does so at the right time.

a. Meekness has a humble state of mind. But this does not mean the person is weak, cowardly, and bowing. The meek person simply loves people and loves peace; therefore, he walks humbly among men regardless of their status and circumstance in life. Associating with the poor and lowly of this earth does not bother the meek person. He desires to be a friend to all and to help all as much as possible.

b. Meekness has a strong state of mind. It looks at situations and wants justice and right to be done. It is not a weak mind that ignores and neglects evil and wrong-doing, abuse and suffering.

⇒ If someone is suffering, meekness steps in and does what it can to help.

⇒ If evil is being done, meekness does what it can to stop and correct it.

⇒ If evil is running rampant and indulging itself, meekness actually strikes out in anger. However, note a crucial point: the anger is always at the right time and against the right thing.

- c. **Meekness has *strong self-control*.** The meek person controls his spirit and mind. He controls the lusts of his flesh. He does not give way to ill-temper, retaliation, passion, indulgence, or license. The meek person dies to himself, to what his flesh would like to do, and he does the right thing—exactly what God wants done.

In summary, the meek man walks in a humble, tender, but strong state of mind; he denies himself, giving utmost consideration to others. He shows a control and righteous anger against injustice and evil. A meek man forgets and lives for others because of what Christ has done for him.

⇒ God is meek.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

⇒ Jesus Christ was meek.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" ([Matthew 11:29](#)).

⇒ Believers are to be meek.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" ([Galatians 6:1](#)).

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" ([Ephes. 4:1-3](#)).

"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" ([2 Tim. 2:25](#)).

"To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men" ([Titus 3:2](#)).

"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" ([James 1:21](#)).

"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation [behavior] his works with meekness of wisdom" ([James 3:13](#)).

"But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" ([1 Peter 3:4](#)).

9. There is the fruit of *temperance* (*egkrateia* [PWS: 3921](#)): to master and control the body or the flesh with all of its lusts. It means self-control, the master of desire, appetite and passion, especially sensual urges and cravings. It means to be strong and controlled and restrained. It means to stand against the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life ([1 John 2:15-16](#)).

⇒ Self-control is of God, a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

⇒ The believer is to proclaim self-control to the lost.

"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" ([Acts 24:25](#)).

⇒ The believer is to control his sexual desires.

"But if they cannot contain [control], let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn" ([1 Cor. 7:9](#)).

⇒ The believer is to strenuously exercise self-control, just as an athlete controls himself.

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" ([1 Cor. 9:25](#)).

⇒ The believer is to grow in self-control.

"And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness" ([2 Peter 1:6](#)).

⇒ The aged believer is especially to be on guard to control himself.

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience" ([Titus 2:2](#)).

In concluding our discussion we should remember that the fruit of the Spirit is the very nature of God ([Galatians 2:20](#); [Ephes. 5:18](#)). The believer is to walk in the Spirit; that is, he is to walk in such a consciousness of God and in such open confession that he is kept constantly clean from sin. God keeps him clean and pure and acceptable as though he were perfect. As the believer so walks in such an awareness of God, he

assimilates the very nature of God and the Holy Spirit's fruit is produced. No law can stand against such things.

2. (Galatians 5:24) Believer, Position— Old Man— Flesh: the believer is to walk bearing a crucified flesh. This is a striking verse. Note several points.

1. Note the words, "they that are Christ's." A person becomes the *property and the possession* of Christ when he first trusts Christ as his Savior. When a person comes to Jesus Christ to save him, he is coming because he wants to be delivered from the enslavement and bondage of sin, death, and judgment. He wants to live forever with God. He does not want to continue being the slave of the flesh, subjected to its lusts, death and sure judgment. He wants to be saved from the flesh of a corruptible world. Therefore, when a person comes to Christ, he is turning away from the flesh to God; he is turning his back upon the mastery of the flesh and all that it stands for. He is turning to Jesus Christ as his new master.

Consequently...

- the believer no longer belongs to the flesh; he belongs to Jesus Christ.
- the flesh no longer possesses the believer; Jesus Christ possesses him.
- the believer no longer serves the flesh; he serves the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Note that the believer has crucified the flesh with the affections (passions) and lusts. How? By dying with Jesus Christ. How can a person die with Jesus Christ? By an act of God. Only God can count a person to have died with Jesus Christ and *it be true, an actual occurrence*. This is exactly what God does. When a person genuinely believes in Jesus Christ, God takes that person's belief and counts it as his death with Jesus Christ. God honors his faith by identifying him with Christ. God counts and considers the person...

- to have died in Christ's death.
- to be placed into Christ's death.
- to be identified with Christ's death.
- to be a partaker of Christ's death.
- to be in union with Christ's death.
- to be bound in Christ's death.

Now, note the point: if the believer is counted by God as having been crucified with Christ, then the believer...

- has died to the flesh.
- has died to the passions of the flesh.
- has died to the lusts of the flesh.
- is freed from the flesh.
- is freed from the passions of the flesh.
- is freed from the lusts of the flesh.

Once a person has died, he is dead. The rule and reign and the habits and desires of the flesh no longer have control over him. The flesh ceases to have a place or a position in his life. He is free from the flesh, free from...

- fleshly habits
- fleshly control
- fleshly bondage
- fleshly judgment
- fleshly enslavement
- fleshly condemnation
- fleshly death

To be crucified with Christ means that we no longer live *in the flesh*, in the place and position of the flesh. We cannot live *apart* from the flesh, for we are in this body upon this earth. But we are free from living after the flesh. We no longer follow the passions and lusts of the flesh. We desire and follow righteousness, seeking to please God in all that we do.

"God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" ([Romans 6:2](#)).

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" ([Romans 6:11](#)).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" ([Galatians 2:20](#)).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" ([Galatians 5:24](#)).

"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" ([Col. 3:3](#)).

"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him" ([2 Tim. 2:11](#)).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" ([1 Peter 2:24](#)).

3. ([Galatians 5:25](#)) Believer— Holy Spirit: the believer is to walk

consistently with his position in Christ. To be in Christ is to be in God's Spirit. When the believer trusts Jesus Christ as his Savior, God places His Spirit in the heart of the believer. The Spirit is placed there to guide and direct the believer day by day. Therefore, the believer is to walk in the Spirit; he is to live just as the Spirit of God directs. This is the point of this verse. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. The Spirit gives us life, the life of God; therefore, let us *walk and live out* the life He gives us.

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" ([Romans 6:4](#)).

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" ([Romans 8:1](#)).

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" ([Romans 8:5-6](#)).

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" ([Romans 8:9](#)).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" ([Romans 8:13-14](#)).

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" ([Galatians 5:6](#)).

4. ([Galatians 5:26](#)) Believer, Walk: the believer is to walk free from super-spirituality and envy. When believer's are challenged to live spiritual lives, there is always the danger that some will become super-spiritual and others will begin to envy the spiritual gifts of those who are genuinely spiritual and greatly blessed by God.

1. There is the danger of super-spirituality. There is the temptation of pride and of showing superiority. It is the attitude that says, "I have it, and you don't." This attitude, of course, irritates and provokes people. It causes division within the church.

"Woe unto you that are full [who say they are full]! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep" ([Luke 6:25](#)).

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" ([Rev. 3:17](#)).

"They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly" ([Psalm 17:10](#)).

2. There is the danger of envy (see note, [Flesh](#), pt.14—'[Galatians 5:19-21](#) for discussion).

([Galatians 5:19-21](#)) **Flesh Note:** the works or acts of the flesh show just how strong the flesh is. Note a fact of extreme importance: the flesh in itself is not sinful. The flesh or human body is given by God; it is for God's use. In fact, when a person is converted to Christ, his body becomes a temple for God to dwell in through the Holy Spirit.

The Christian is not told to cleanse himself from the flesh but **from "the lust of the flesh" ([Galatians 5:16](#)), "the filthiness of the flesh" ([2 Cor. 7:1](#)), and from "the works of the flesh" ([Romans 13:12](#); [Galatians 5:19](#))**. The works of the flesh are the fruit of indwelling sin, and sin originates in the heart not in the flesh. The sins of the flesh listed in this passage are clearly seen all throughout society; and tragically they are not only seen on the daily newscasts of every city, but within every community, home, and life on planet earth. The very presence of such fleshly sins shows just how strong the flesh is and how helpless man is to control his flesh.

1. Adultery (*moicheia* ^{PWS: 63}): sexual unfaithfulness to husband or wife. It is also looking on a woman or a man to lust after her or him. Looking at and lusting after the opposite sex whether in person, magazines, books, on beaches or anywhere else is adultery. Imagining and lusting within the heart is the very same as committing the act.

"But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" ([Matthew 5:28](#)).

"Thou shalt not commit adultery" ([Exodus 20:14](#); cp. [Leviticus 20:10](#)).

"The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me: and disguiseth his face. In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the daytime: they know not the light. For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death: if one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death. He is swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards. Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned" ([Job 24:15-19](#)).

2. Fornication (*porneia* ^{PWS: 1591}): a broad word including all forms of immoral and sexual acts. It is pre-marital sex and adultery; it is abnormal sex, all kinds of sexual vice.

"Flee fornication. Every sin that man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" ([1 Cor. 6:18](#)).

"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints" ([Ephes. 5:3](#)).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" ([Col. 3:5](#)).

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" ([1 Thes. 4:3](#)).

3. Uncleanness (*akatharsia* ^{PWS: 4120}): moral impurity; doing things that dirty, pollute, and soil life.

"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" ([Matthew 5:28](#)).

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves" ([Romans 1:24](#)).

"I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness" ([Romans 6:19](#)).

"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints" ([Ephes. 5:3](#)).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" ([Col. 3:5](#)).

4. Lasciviousness (*aselgeia*): filthiness, indecency, shamelessness. A chief characteristic of the behavior is open and shameless indecency. It means unrestrained evil thoughts and behavior. It is giving in to brutish and lustful desires, a readiness for any pleasure. It is a man who knows no restraint, a man who has sinned so much that he no longer cares what people say or think. It is something far more distasteful than just doing wrong. The man who misbehaves usually tries to hide his wrong, but a lascivious man does not care who knows about his exploits or shame. He wants; therefore, he seeks to take and gratify. Decency and opinion do not matter. Initially when he began to sin, he did as all men do: he misbehaved in secret. But eventually, the sin got the best of him—to the point that he no longer cared who saw or knew. He became the subject of a master—the master of habit, of the thing itself.

Men become the slaves of such things as unbridled lust, wantonness, licentiousness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence ([Mark 7:22](#)), wanton manners, filthy words, indecent body movements, immoral handling of males and females ([Romans 13:13](#)), public display of affection, carnality, gluttony, and sexual immorality ([1 Peter 4:3](#); [2 Peter 2:2, 18](#)). ([2 Cor. 12:21](#); [Galatians 5:19](#); [Ephes. 4:19](#); [2 Peter 2:7](#).)

"And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet" ([Romans 1:27](#)).

"Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" ([Ephes. 4:19](#)).

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ....Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" ([Jude 4, 7](#)).

"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries" ([1 Peter 4:3](#)).

5. Idolatry (*eidōlatrias*): the worship of idols, whether mental or made by man's hands; the worship of some idea of what God is like, of an image of God within a person's mind; the giving of one's primary devotion (time and energy) to something other than God.

"Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry" ([1 Cor. 10:14](#)).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry....they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" ([Galatians 5:19-21](#)).

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" ([Ephes. 5:5](#)).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience" ([Col. 3:5-6](#)).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" ([Rev. 21:8](#)).

"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" ([Rev. 22:15](#)).

6. Witchcraft (*pharmakeia* ^{PWS: 4364}): sorcery; the use of drugs or of evil spirits to gain control over the lives of others or over one's own life. In the present context it would include all forms of seeking the control of one's fate including astrology, palm reading, seances, fortune telling, crystals, and other forms of witchcraft.

"So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it" ([1 Chron. 10:13](#)).

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" ([Isaiah 8:19-20](#)).

"And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers" ([Micah 5:12](#)).

"Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" ([Galatians 5:20-21](#)).

7. Hatred (*echthrai* ^{PWS: 1884}): enmity, hostility, animosity. It is the hatred that lingers and is held for a long, long time; a hatred that is deep within.

"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now" ([1 John 2:9](#)).

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" ([1 John 3:15](#)).

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" ([1 John 4:20](#)).

"Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him" ([Leviticus 19:17](#)).

"Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins" ([Proverbs 10:12](#)).

8. Variance (*eris* ^{PWS: 4211}): strife, discord, contention, fighting, struggling, quarreling, dissension, wrangling. It means that a man fights against another person in order to get something: position, promotion, property, honor, recognition. He deceives, doing whatever has to be done to get what he is after.

"He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings" ([1 Tim. 6:4](#)).

"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers" ([2 Tim. 2:14](#)).

"The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with" ([Proverbs 17:14](#)).

"As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife" ([Proverbs 26:21](#)).

9. Emulations (*zēlos* ^{PWS: 1253}): jealousy, wanting and desiring to have what someone else has. It may be material things, recognition, honor, or position.

"And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him" ([Genesis 37:4](#)).

"For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance" ([Proverbs 6:34](#)).

"And he [the elder son] answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends; but as soon as thy son [the prodigal son] was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf" ([Luke 15:29-30](#)).

10. Wrath (*thumoi* ^{PWS: 4460}): bursts of anger; indignation; a violent, explosive temper; quick-tempered explosive reactions that arise from stirred and boiling emotions. But it is anger which fades away just as quickly as it arose. It is not anger that lasts.

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" ([James 1:19-20](#)).

"An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression" ([Proverbs 29:22](#)).

11. Strife (*eritheiai*): conflict, struggle, fight, contention, faction, dissension; a party spirit, a cliquish spirit.

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" ([Phil. 2:3](#)).

"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers" ([2 Tim. 2:14](#)).

"It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling" ([Proverbs 20:3](#)).

12. Seditions (*dichostasiai*^{PWS: 3402}): division, rebellion, standing against others, splitting off from others.

"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king" ([1 Samuel 15:23](#)).

"Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin" ([Isaiah 30:1](#)).

"I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts" ([Isaiah 65:2](#)).

"But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. presumptuous are they, selfwilled, and they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities" ([2 Peter 2:10](#)).

13. Heresies (*haireseis*^{PWS: 1939}): rejecting the fundamental beliefs of God, Christ, the Scriptures, and the church; believing and holding to some teaching other than the truth.

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" ([Matthew 15:9](#)).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" ([1 Tim. 4:1](#)).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [quietly, secretly] shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" ([2 Peter 2:1](#)).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" ([2 Peter 3:17](#)).

14. Envyings (*phthonoi*): this word goes beyond jealousy. It is the spirit...

- that wants not only the things that another person has, but begrudges the fact that the person has them.
- that wants not only the things to be taken away from the person, but wants him to suffer through the loss of them.

"A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones" ([Proverbs 14:30](#)).

"Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long" ([Proverbs 23:17](#)).

"Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them" ([Proverbs 24:1](#)).

"Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying" ([Romans 13:13](#)).

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up" ([1 Cor. 13:4](#)).

"Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" ([Galatians 5:26](#)).

15. Murders (*phanoi*^{PWS: 2633}): to kill, to take the life of another person. Murder is sin against the sixth commandment.

"He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness" ([Matthew 19:18](#)).

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" ([Romans 13:8-9](#)).

"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters" ([1 Peter 4:15](#)).

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" ([1 John 3:15](#)).

16. Drunkenness (*methai*): taking drink or drugs to affect one's senses for lust or pleasure; becoming tipsy or intoxicated; partaking of drugs; seeking to loosen moral restraint for bodily pleasure.

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" ([Luke 21:34](#)).

"Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying" ([Romans 13:13](#)).

"Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" ([1 Cor. 6:10](#)).

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess" ([Ephes. 5:18](#)).

"For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night" ([1 Thes. 5:7](#)).

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" ([Proverbs 20:1](#)).

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine" ([Proverbs 23:29-30](#)).

"Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!" ([Isaiah 5:11](#)).

"For while they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry" ([Nahum 1:10](#)).

17. Revellings (*kōmoi* ^{PWS: 3299}): carousing; uncontrolled license, indulgence, and pleasure; taking part in wild parties or in drinking parties; lying around indulging in feeding the lusts of the flesh; orgies.

"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries" ([1 Peter 4:3](#)).

"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children" ([2 Peter 2:13-14](#)).

"Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" ([Galatians 5:21](#)).

"And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play" ([Exodus 32:6](#); cp. [Judges 9:27](#); [1 Samuel 30:16](#)).

(Galatians 5:21) Flesh Note— Judgment: the judgment of those who live by the flesh. Very simply, they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. This can be clearly seen: if God is righteous, then people must live righteous lives in order to be accepted by Him. However, people ignore the fact of God's righteousness and His demand for righteousness.

People divorce their behavior from religion. People...

- profess religion.
- practice religion.
- talk religion.
- defend their beliefs about religion.

However, they go ahead and live like they want regardless of their religion. If they want to do something, they do it feeling that God will forgive them. There are few people who really think that God will reject them.

They feel that they will have done enough good to be acceptable to God...

- enough kindness
- enough religion

- enough works
- enough service

In the final analysis, most people just think that God will accept them. This attitude comes from a false concept of God, a concept that looks upon God as a father who is indulgent and who gives his children the license to do *some wrong*.

This is a fatal mistake. It was the mistake that some of the Galatian church members were making, and it is the same mistake that teeming multitudes of religious people have made down through the centuries.

"Know ye not that the unrighteous *shall not inherit* the kingdom of God?" ([1 Cor. 6:9](#)).

Believers are to inherit a kingdom, a new heavens and earth where God will rule and reign. They are to be given eternal life and given the glorious privilege of being citizens in God's kingdom and world. They are to live with Him and serve Him in *perfection* for all eternity. But this glorious privilege is to be given only to genuine believers, those men and women who have truly given their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ—given their lives to live as Jesus Christ says to live. No matter how religious a person is—no matter how much zeal a person may have in keeping religious rituals and in attending services and in giving to charity—if he does not live a pure and righteous life, he "shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" ([1 Cor. 6:9](#)).

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" ([Matthew 5:20](#)).

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit corruption" ([1 Cor. 15:50](#)).

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" ([Ephes. 5:5](#)).

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" ([Rev. 21:27](#)).

"For without [the Kingdom of God] are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" ([Rev. 22:15](#)).

Galatians Chapter 5

Living in the freedom of Christ

Notes for 5:1

Christ died to set us free from sin and from a long list of laws and regulations. Christ came to set us free — not free to do whatever we want because that would lead us back into slavery to our selfish desires. Rather, thanks to Christ, we are now free and able to do what was impossible before — to live unselfishly. Those who appeal to their freedom so that they can have their own way or indulge their own desires are falling back into sin. But it is also wrong to put a burden of lawkeeping on Christians. We must stand against those who would enslave us with rules, methods, or special conditions for being saved or growing in Christ.

Vices and Virtues

VICES	VIRTUES
(Neglecting God and others)	(The by-products of living for God)
Sexual Immorality (Gal 5:19)	Love (Gal 5:22)
Impurity (Gal 5:19)	Joy (Gal 5:22)
Lust (Col 3:5)	Peace (Gal 5:22)
Hatred (Gal 5:20)	Patience (Gal 5:22)
Discord (Gal 5:20)	Kindness (Gal 5:22)
Jealousy (Gal 5:20)	Goodness (Gal 5:22)
Anger (Gal 5:20)	Faithfulness (Gal 5:22)
Selfish ambition (Gal 5:20)	Gentleness (Gal 5:23)
Dissension (Gal 5:20)	Self-control (Gal 5:23)
Arrogance (2 Cor 12:20 ; Gal 5:20)	
Envy (Gal 5:21)	
Murder (Rev 22:12-16)	
Idolatry (Gal 5:20 ; Eph 5:5)	
Witchcraft (Gal 5:20)	
Drunkenness (Gal 5:21)	

Wild living ([Luke 15:13](#); [Gal 5:21](#))

Cheating ([1 Cor 6:8](#))

Adultery ([1 Cor 6:9, 10](#))

Homosexuality ([1 Cor 6:9, 10](#))

Greed ([1 Cor 6:9, 10](#); [Eph 5:5](#))

Stealing ([1 Cor 6:9, 10](#))

Lying ([Rev 22:12-16](#))

The Bible mentions many specific actions and attitudes that are either right or wrong. Look at the list included here. Are there a number of characteristics from the wrong column that are influencing you?

[Notes for 5:2-4](#)

Trying to be saved by keeping the law and being saved by grace are two entirely different approaches. "Christ will be of no value to you at all" means that Christ's provision for our salvation will not help us if we are trying to save ourselves. Obeying the law does not make it any easier for God to save us. All we can do is accept his gracious gift through faith. Our deeds of service must never be used to try to earn God's love or favor.

[Notes for 5:3-4](#)

Circumcision was a symbol of having the right background and doing everything required by religion. No amount of work, discipline, or moral behavior can save us. If a person were counting on finding favor with God by being circumcised, he would also have to obey the rest of God's law completely. Trying to save ourselves by keeping all God's laws only separates us from God.

[Notes for 5:6](#)

We are saved by faith, not by deeds. But love for others and for God is the response of those whom God has forgiven. God's forgiveness is complete, and Jesus said that those who are forgiven much love much ([Luke 7:47](#)). Because faith expresses itself through love, you can check your love for others as a way to monitor your faith.

[Notes for 5:9](#)

A little yeast causes a whole lump of dough to rise. It only takes one wrong person to infect all the others.

[Notes for 5:11](#)

Persecution proved that Paul was preaching the true gospel. If he had taught what the false teachers were teaching, no one would be offended. But because he was teaching the truth, he was persecuted by both Jews and Judaizers. Have friends or loved ones rejected

you because you have taken a stand for Christ? Jesus said not to be surprised if the world hates you, because it hated him ([John 15:18,19](#)). Just as Paul continued to faithfully proclaim the message about Christ, you should continue doing the ministry God has given you — in spite of the obstacles others may put in your way.

[Notes for 5:13](#)

Paul distinguishes between freedom to sin and freedom to serve. Freedom or license to sin is no freedom at all, because it enslaves you to Satan, others, or your own sinful nature. Christians, by contrast, should not be slaves to sin, because they are free to do right and to glorify God through loving service to others.

[Notes for 5:14-15](#)

When we are not motivated by love, we become critical of others. We stop looking for good in them and see only their faults. Soon the unity of believers is broken. Have you talked behind someone's back? Have you focused on others' shortcomings instead of their strengths? Remind yourself of Jesus' command to love others as you love yourself ([Matthew 22:39](#)). When you begin to feel critical of someone, make a list of that person's positive qualities. If there are problems that need to be addressed, it is better to confront in love than to gossip.

Living by the Holy Spirit's power

[Notes for 5:16-18](#)

If your desire is to have the qualities listed in [Gal 5:22,23](#), then you know that the Holy Spirit is leading you. At the same time, be careful not to confuse your subjective feelings with the Spirit's leading. Being led by the Holy Spirit involves the desire to hear, the readiness to obey God's Word, and the sensitivity to discern between your feelings and his promptings. Live each day controlled and guided by the Holy Spirit. Then the words of Christ will be in your mind, the love of Christ will be behind your actions, and the power of Christ will help you control your selfish desires.

[Notes for 5:17](#)

Paul describes the two forces conflicting within us — the Holy Spirit and the sinful nature (our evil desires or inclinations that stem from our bodies; see also [Gal 5:16,19,24](#)). Paul is not saying that these forces are equal — the Holy Spirit is infinitely stronger. But if we rely on our own wisdom, we will make wrong choices. If we try to follow the Spirit by our own human effort, we will fail. Our only way to freedom from our evil desires is through the empowering of the Holy Spirit (see [Romans 8:9](#); [Ephesians 4:23,24](#); [Colossians 3:3-8](#)).

[Notes for 5:19-21](#)

We all have evil desires, and we can't ignore them. In order for us to follow the Holy Spirit's guidance, we must deal with them decisively (crucify them — [Gal 5:24](#)). These desires include obvious sins such as sexual immorality and witchcraft. They also include less obvious sins such as selfish ambition, hatred, and jealousy. Those who ignore such

sins or refuse to deal with them reveal that they have not received the gift of the Spirit that leads to a transformed life.

[Notes for 5:22-23](#)

The fruit of the Spirit is the spontaneous work of the Holy Spirit in us. The Spirit produces these character traits that are found in the nature of Christ. They are the by-products of Christ's control — we can't obtain them by *trying* to get them without his help. If we want the fruit of the Spirit to grow in us, we must join our lives to his (see [John 15:4,5](#)). We must know him, love him, remember him, and imitate him. As a result, we will fulfill the intended purpose of the law — to love God and our neighbors. Which of these qualities do you want the Spirit to produce in you?

[Notes for 5:23](#)

Because the God who sent the law also sent the Spirit, the by-products of the Spirit-filled life are in perfect harmony with the intent of God's law. A person who exhibits the fruit of the Spirit fulfills the law far better than a person who observes the rituals but has little love in his or her heart.

[Notes for 5:24](#)

In order to accept Christ as Savior, we need to turn from our sins and willingly nail our sinful nature to the cross. This doesn't mean, however, that we will never see traces of its evil desires again. As Christians we still have the capacity to sin, but we have been set free from sin's power over us and no longer have to give in to it. We must daily commit our sinful tendencies to God's control, daily crucify them, and moment by moment draw on the Spirit's power to overcome them (see [Gal 2:20](#); [6:14](#)).

[Notes for 5:25](#)

God is interested in every part of our lives, not just the spiritual part. As we live by the Holy Spirit's power, we need to submit every aspect of our lives to God — emotional, physical, social, intellectual, vocational. Paul says that because we're saved, we should live like it! The Holy Spirit is the source of your new life, so keep in step with his leading. Don't let anything or anyone else determine your values and standards in any area of your life.

[Notes for 5:26](#)

Everyone needs a certain amount of approval from others. But those who go out of their way to secure honors or to win popularity with a lot of people become conceited and show they are not following the Holy Spirit's leading. Those who look to God for approval won't need to envy others. Because we are God's sons and daughters, we have his Holy Spirit as the loving guarantee of his approval.

Galatians Chapter 6

We will reap what we sow

Notes for 6:1-3

No Christian should ever think that he or she is totally independent and doesn't need help from others, and no one should feel excused from the task of helping others. The body of Christ — the church — functions only when the members work together for the common good. Do you know someone who needs help? Is there a Christian brother or sister who needs correction or encouragement? Humbly and gently reach out to that person ([John 13:34,35](#)).

Our Wrong Desires versus the Fruit of the Spirit

Our wrong desires are:	The fruit of the Spirit is:
Evil	Good
Destructive	Productive
Easy to ignite	Difficult to ignite
Difficult to stifle	Easy to stifle
Self-centered	Self-giving
Oppressive and possessive	Liberating and nurturing
Decadent	Uplifting
Sinful	Holy
Deadly	Abundant life

The will of the Holy Spirit is in constant opposition to our sinful desires. The two are on opposite sides of the spiritual battle.

Notes for 6:4

When you do your very best, you feel good about the results. There is no need to compare yourself with others. People make comparisons for many reasons. Some point out others' flaws in order to feel better about themselves. Others simply want reassurance that they are doing well. When you are tempted to compare, look at Jesus Christ. His example will inspire you to do your very best, and his loving acceptance will comfort you when you fall short of your expectations.

Notes for 6:6

Paul says that students should take care of the material needs of their teachers ([1Corinthians 9:7-12](#)). It is easy to receive the benefit of good Bible teaching and then to

take our spiritual leaders for granted, ignoring their financial and physical needs. We should care for our teachers, not grudgingly or reluctantly, but with a generous spirit, showing honor and appreciation for all they have done ([1 Timothy 5:17,18](#)).

[Notes for 6:7,8](#)

It would certainly be a surprise if you planted corn and pumpkins came up. It's a natural law to reap what we sow. It's true in other areas too. If you gossip about your friends, you will lose their friendship. Every action has results. If you plant to please your own desires, you'll reap a crop of sorrow and evil. If you plant to please God, you'll reap joy and everlasting life. What kind of seeds are you sowing?

[Notes for 6:9,10](#)

It is discouraging to continue to do right and receive no word of thanks or see no tangible results. But Paul challenged the Galatians and he challenges us to keep on doing good and to trust God for the results. In due time, we will reap a harvest of blessing.

Paul's final warning

[Notes for 6:11](#)

Up to this point, Paul had probably dictated the letter to a scribe. Here he takes the pen into his own hand to write his final, personal greetings. Paul did this in other letters as well, to add emphasis to his words and to validate that the letter was genuine.

[Notes for 6:13](#)

Some of the Judaizers were emphasizing circumcision as proof of holiness — but ignoring the other Jewish laws. People often choose a certain principle or prohibition and make it the measure of faith. Some may abhor drunkenness but ignore gluttony. Others may despise promiscuity but tolerate prejudice. The Bible in its entirety is our rule of faith and practice. We cannot pick and choose the mandates we will follow.

[Notes for 6:14](#)

The world is full of enticements. Daily we are confronted with subtle cultural pressures and overt propaganda. The only way to escape these destructive influences is to ask God to help crucify our interest in them, just as Paul did. How much do the interests of this world matter to you? (See [Gal 2:20](#) and [Gal.5:24](#) for more on this concept.)

[Notes for 6:15](#)

It is easy to get caught up with the externals. Beware of those who emphasize actions that we should or shouldn't do, with no concern for the inward condition of the heart. Living a good life without an inward change leads to a shallow or empty spiritual walk. What matters to God is that we be completely changed from the inside out ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)).

Notes for 6:18

Paul's letter to the Galatians boldly declares the freedom of the Christian. Doubtless these early Christians in Galatia wanted to grow in the Christian life, but they were being misled by those who said this could be done only by keeping certain Jewish laws.

How strange it would be for a prisoner who had been set free to walk back into his or her cell and refuse to leave! How strange for an animal, released from a trap, to go back inside it! How sad for a believer to be freed from the bondage of sin, only to return to rigid conformity to a set of rules and regulations!

If you believe in Jesus Christ, you have been set free. Instead of going back into some form of slavery, whether to legalism or to sin, use your freedom to live for Christ and serve him as he desires.

Chapter John 15

Jesus teaches about the Vine and the branches

Notes for 15:1

The grapevine is a prolific plant; a single vine bears many grapes. In the Old Testament, grapes symbolized Israel's fruitfulness in doing God's work on the earth ([Psalm 80:8](#); [Isaiah 5:1-7](#); [Ezekiel 19:10-14](#)). In the Passover meal, the fruit of the vine symbolized God's goodness to his people.

Notes for 15:1 Christ is the vine, and God is the gardener who cares for the branches to make them fruitful. The branches are all those who claim to be followers of Christ. The fruitful branches are true believers who by their living union with Christ produce much fruit. But those who become unproductive — those who turn back from following Christ after making a superficial commitment — will be separated from the vine. Unproductive followers are as good as dead and will be cut off and tossed aside.

Notes for 15:2-3

Jesus makes a distinction between two kinds of pruning: **(1) separating** and **(2) cutting back branches**. Fruitful branches are cut back to promote growth. In other words, God must sometimes discipline us to strengthen our character and faith. But branches that don't bear fruit are cut off at the trunk because not only are they worthless, but they often infect the rest of the tree. People who won't bear fruit for God or who try to block the efforts of God's followers will be cut off from his life-giving power.

Notes for 15:5

Fruit is not limited to soulwinning. In this chapter, answered prayer, joy, and love are mentioned as fruit ([John 15:7,11,12](#)). [Galatians 5:22-24](#) and [2 Peter 1:5-8](#) describe additional fruit: qualities of Christian character.

Notes for 15:5,6 Remaining in Christ means (1) believing that he is God's Son ([1 John 4:15](#)), (2) receiving him as Savior and Lord ([John 1:12](#)), (3) doing what God says ([1 John 3:24](#)), (4) continuing to believe the gospel ([1 John 2:24](#)), and (5) relating in love to the community of believers, Christ's body ([John 15:12](#)).

Note for 15:5-8 Many people try to be good, honest people who do what is right. But Jesus says that the only way to live a truly good life is to stay close to him, like a branch attached to the vine. Apart from Christ our efforts are unfruitful. Are you receiving the nourishment and life offered by Christ, the vine? If not, you are missing a special gift he has for you.

Notes for 15:8

When a vine bears "much fruit," God is glorified, for daily he sent the sunshine and rain to make the crops grow, and constantly he nurtured each tiny plant and prepared it to blossom. What a moment of glory for the Lord of the harvest when the harvest is brought into the barns, mature and ready for use! He made it all happen! This farming analogy

shows how God is glorified when people come into a right relationship with him and begin to "bear much fruit" in their lives.

[Notes for 15:11](#)

When things are going well, we feel elated. When hardships come, we sink into depression. But true joy transcends the rolling waves of circumstance. Joy comes from a consistent relationship with Jesus Christ. When our lives are intertwined with his, he will help us walk through adversity without sinking into debilitating lows and manage prosperity without moving into deceptive highs. The joy of living with Jesus Christ daily will keep us level-headed, no matter how high or low our circumstances.

[Notes for 15:12-13](#)

We are to love each other as Jesus loved us, and he loved us enough to give his life for us. We may not have to die for someone, but there are other ways to practice sacrificial love: listening, helping, encouraging, giving. Think of someone in particular who needs this kind of love today. Give all the love you can, and then try to give a little more.

[Notes for 15:15](#)

Because Jesus Christ is Lord and Master, he should call us servants; instead he calls us friends. How comforting and reassuring to be chosen as Christ's friends. Because he is Lord and Master, we owe him our unqualified obedience, but most of all, Jesus asks us to obey him because we love him.

[Notes for 15:16](#)

Jesus made the first choice — to love and to die for us, to invite us to live with him forever. We make the next choice — to accept or reject his offer. Without *his* choice, we would have no choice to make.

Jesus warns about the world's hatred

[Notes for 15:17](#)

Christians will get plenty of hatred from the world; from each other we need love and support. Do you allow small problems to get in the way of loving other believers? Jesus commands that you love them, and he will give you the strength to do it.

[Notes for 15:26](#)

Once again Jesus offers hope. The Holy Spirit gives strength to endure the unreasonable hatred and evil in our world and the hostility many have toward Christ. This is especially comforting for those facing persecution.

[Notes for 15:26](#) Jesus uses two names for the Holy Spirit — *Counselor* and *Spirit of truth*. The word *Counselor* conveys the helping, encouraging, and strengthening work of the Spirit. *Spirit of truth* points to the teaching, illuminating, and reminding work of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit ministers to both the head and the heart, and both dimensions are important.