



How to Have the Character of Jesus

Date: May 5, 2024

Text: Galatians 5:13-23

BIG IDEA

If you have been around church for any length of time you may have heard the phrase “become more like Christ” or “reflect Christ” or “live like Jesus.” These seemingly simple statements become increasingly complex as we study the character of Jesus—how on earth could we ever be perfect? How do we become more like Jesus when our flesh (and the world) often pull us in different directions?

The Bible makes it clear that the Holy Spirit is the catalyst for this change. It is only by the Spirit that we can begin to bear the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control. These fruits make us look and live more like Jesus.

Conversation Starter

- Which fruit do you bear most easily? Which one comes hardest?
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COMMENTARY #1

(Verses 13-15) The Christian life is one of liberty— not to benefit our own desires but to serve one another. The flesh wants others to conform to us, but true freedom is found in conquering the flesh

through serving others- this is the love that Jesus had for humanity and the love we too are called to show. When love becomes the motivating factor in our lives, the whole law is fulfilled.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is serving others so integral to the Christian faith?
 2. Why must love be our motivating force? What other forces can often motivate our actions (good or bad)?
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COMMENTARY #2

(Verses 16-18) Paul presents a controversial truth- it is not perfection or legalism that allow us to live holy lives, but “walking in the Spirit” that truly transforms us. First, the Spirit must live in us (realized at the moment of salvation), and then as we grow in love, the Spirit moves us to gratify the Lord over our flesh. However, walking in the Spirit is not easy as our flesh wars against it- like two opposing forces fighting within us. The one we feed is the one that will grow and produce fruit, either of death or of life.

Discussion Questions

1. Contrast “liberty” and “legalism.” How do the two correlate?
 2. Have you ever felt this “war” within you? Describe those times and how you overcame/grew.
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COMMENTARY #3

(Verses 19-23) The remaining verses illustrate the sharp contrast

between the fruit of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit, and where both lead. Living in the flesh produces such wickedness as deceit, fornication, idolatry, and death. Whereas the fruit of a Spirit-filled life makes us look more like Jesus- love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control. While we will never embody these characteristics perfectly, it is clear that apart from the work of the Spirit we cannot bear them at all.

Discussion Questions

1. How do we “grow” in the Spirit? How do we experience more of Him in our lives?
 2. How does it make you feel that you always bear fruit- good or bad?
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GOING DEEPER

1. What is the difference between living free and living how our flesh desires?
 2. Is it possible to bear both Spirit-filled and flesh-filled fruit?
 3. How do you “feed the Spirit? so that it will grow?”
 4. What ways do we often “feed our flesh?”
 5. Is growing in the Spirit a passive or active action?
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Bing Videos](#)- sermon
 - [A FRESH LOOK AT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT | Our Daily Bread Ministries](#)- Devotion
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