

LESSON 52

The Fruit of the Spirit

GALATIANS 5:22-26



— BIBLE TRUTH —

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT MARKS THE LIVES OF CHRISTIANS

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 130)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES: coloring page for NT Lesson 52—one for each child; markers or crayons

A Patient Example

SUPPLIES: color-coated chocolate candies; tablecloth

Remembering the Fruit

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today's lesson the children will learn that Christians should demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit.

Lead the children in a game that helps them remember the fruit of the Spirit. Teach them the following motions for each of the fruits:

LOVE—Outline a heart on your chest.

JOY—Smile real big.

PEACE—Take a deep breath and let it out in a happy sigh.

PATIENCE—Sit down quietly.

KINDNESS—Pretend to take something out of a pocket and give it to another.

GOODNESS—Pat another on the back.

FAITHFULNESS—Walk in place.

GENTLENESS—Softly touch your neighbor on the shoulder

SELF-CONTROL—Sit down and fold hands on lap.

After reviewing these actions several times, call out a fruit and see if they can get the action correct. Interview the children to see if they understand what each fruit means. Help them with simple definitions. Older classes might enjoy an elimination game to see who remembers the actions the best. Then play the game in reverse, performing an action and having the class guess the fruit.

Take time to pray and thank God for giving us his Holy Spirit. Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 130, "The Fruit of the Spirit," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- **What is the fruit of the Spirit?**
(The fruit of the Spirit is godly attitudes and behaviors the Holy Spirit works in us as believers.)
- **Who can name the fruit of the Spirit?**
(love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control)
- **Is it possible to be perfect once we have the fruit of the Spirit in our lives?**
(No, we will make mistakes and sin until we go to heaven.)

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Notice that Paul doesn't call the fruit of the Spirit the fruit of the good man. The truth is that apart from Christ, none of us is good, and the only way we can demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit is if we have been given a new nature by God through the gospel of Christ. That is why Paul says in Galatians 5:24, "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

The gospel is the doorway to Christ, and he is our only help. Apart from the sacrificial death of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit, all our efforts fall short, and we would at best be doing good works with mixed, self-honoring motives. The Spirit of God is the one who changes our desires from sinful to truly righteous.

A parallel text to Galatians 5 is 2 Peter 1:2-7. Peter first acknowledges that it is only by grace, through our knowledge of Christ that we can achieve godliness by his power. Yet, once we have that salvation we are called to "make every effort" to live godly lives. Then Peter gives a list that includes fruit of the Spirit. Basically Peter is saying the same thing Paul is saying. Use your freedom and power in Christ to strive to keep in step with the Spirit of God and live a godly life of love.

SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

While the children are eating the snack (maybe a fruit snack), engage them by asking the following questions:

- **What fruit of the Spirit do you find the hardest to show?**
(Accept any answer.)

- **What does Paul mean in verse 24: “those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires”?**
(The fruit of the Spirit is demonstrated in our lives as the result of telling our passions “no” and doing what God desires instead of what our sin desires.)

- **What does it mean to belong to Christ?**
(The Bible says that God draws those that he loves and makes them sons and daughters in his family. We can know that we are a part of his family because we believe in Jesus and want to live for him.)

- **Paul said we should not envy one another. That means we should not want what someone else has; rather, we should think about our own walk before God and concern ourselves with our own faith and behavior. Why do you think God wants us to look at our own lives?**
(We are the only ones who can believe in Christ for ourselves. Our faith is our faith. No one can give their faith to us. Believing is up to each one of us.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS. 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 52—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- What do you think is written on the fruit in your picture?
(the fruit of the Spirit)
- Do the fruit of the Spirit grow on a tree?
(No, they do not.)
- Where do the fruit of the Spirit grow?
(The fruit of the Spirit grow in the hearts of Christians as they live for God.)
- What special book did God give us to help us follow God's Spirit and live for him?
(the Bible)

A Patient Example

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ color-coated chocolate candies (take allergies into account when choosing treats)
- ✓ tablecloth

Paul tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is demonstrated in our lives as the result of telling our passions “no” and doing what God desires instead of what our sin desires (Galatians 5:24). This little exercise illustrates what that might look like. Spread the tablecloth out on the floor.

First, go through the list of the fruit of the Spirit. Explain to the children what each means and ask the children to repeat the meanings to you. Then take a handful of candies. Tell the class that, on the count of three, you are going to toss the candies onto the tablecloth and they can get them. Tell them to wait to eat them until they are all picked up.

While the children scramble for the candy, take notice of the absence or presence of the fruit of the Spirit. Perhaps someone will jump before you say go, or eat before you say eat, or perhaps someone will muscle out another person in an unkind way. On the other hand perhaps you will see the opposite. Look particularly for the more reserved students in the class and take an opportunity like this to encourage their character and behavior.

When the exercise is done, help the children to see how desires can conflict with the fruit of the Spirit. Explain to them that it is only by God's Spirit that we can demonstrate his fruit.

Remembering the Fruit

Sit the children in a circle. Go around and assign the Spirit's fruit to the children. If you have fewer than nine children go around more than once. If you have more than nine children, assign the fruit to however many children as needed to give everyone a fruit. Read Galatians 5:22–23 and tell the class that when you get to the fruit of the Spirit they should call out their assigned fruit in order. Use this exercise to help the children remember all the fruit of the Spirit. See if anyone in the class can recite all nine.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today's lesson.

LESSON 52 - THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

