

# The Nine Fruit of the Spirit

A. The nine Fruit of the Spirit is difficult—even though classifying a list of anything is the way our logic works.

1. We assume the list is complete.
2. If it were incomplete, we would search for the reason Paul stopped short. It certainly wasn't that he ran out of papyri or script.
3. This requires a classification and the only one I can see here is "Christlikeness."
4. These nine as complete and most significant in the mind of God
5. Matthew 7:20 "By their fruit you shall know them."

B. A quick look:

a. Some are first found in Scripture [not having any root in the language before the Bible, like love and goodness]

(1) I John 4:8, 16 "God is love"

(2) Goodness is always linked to truth & righteousness. Ephesians 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

b. Their meaning is elevated in Scripture as one scholar noted, "...words often contain a witness for great moral truths—men are continually uttering deeper things than they know." [as meekness, and temperance]

(1) Meekness - a strong desire for following Jesus.

(2) Temperance - Led by the Spirit, Under His guidance. Temperance is only mentioned in these 3 verses in the New Testament:

(a) the Fruit of the Spirit;

(b) in Peter's list of virtues [2 Peter 1:6]; and, of all places,

(c) by Paul conversing with Felix, a Government official, and his wife, Drusilla in Acts 24:25. Luke wrote that Paul spoke of judgment, temperance, and righteousness which appears too similar to the Spirit's teaching in John 16:8 to call it coincidental.

c. bearing the witness of scripture elsewhere that they are gifts of God that surpass mere human expression [as joy and peace].

(1) Joy 1 Peter 1:8 "Joy unspeakable and full of glory"

(2) Peace Philippians 4:7 passes our understanding and garrisons our hearts. John 14:27 Jesus said, "My peace I give you, not the same as the world's"

d. Christian Community requires the Nine Fruit of the Spirit because they provide in three areas of healthy Christian fellowship:

(1) Christian Conduct are three: Love, Joy and Peace[making] which are characterized by a need to share. These three have no life outside of relationships. They have no meaning alone, because they are a trio of givers who wish to share what they are with others.

(2) Christian Comfort is a tripod: Longsuffering, Gentleness and Goodness. These represent the 3-fold work of the Spirit. The word "comfort" has been used in English, calling the Spirit the "Comforter." The word means to exhort, admonish and comfort. It represents the guidance and defense of the Spirit. He is a helper and a teacher. My mind went to

(a) 1 Thessalonians 5:14: "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly [Goodness does this],

(b) comfort [not pity but incentivize through consoling] the feeble-minded, the discouraged, or those who lose heart [Gentleness does this]

(c) support the weak - hold up "the arms of" those whose strength is spent. be longsuffering toward [in relating to] all."

(3) Christian Character are three: Fidelity [faithfulness], Meekness [which scholars place between humble and a sweetly reasonableness spirit. This is often the only way to get acquainted with a word; Learn more about the company it keeps through Scripture], and Temperance [self-control] all essential qualities for any relationship.

C. Putting this all together: John 10:16 "My Sheep hear my voice" said Jesus but without these fruit we wouldn't.

1. *Temperance*: The intemperate and undisciplined, who find their happiness in pleasure cannot hear Him; for, obedience is the first sign of listening.
2. *Meekness*: Those who have no desire to follow Him will not hear His voice; for, the heart is not listening.
3. *Fidelity*: The unfaithful, not trusting Him, are not hearing His voice because they are following another's.
4. *Goodness*: He who wanders to where the Shepherd has not led them, have not been listening to His voice.
5. *Gentleness*: He whose heart is filled with bitterness and rage are not listening to the Shepherd. His is that still small voice within that they hear only in the quietness of a heart at rest.
6. *Longsuffering*: And in the midst of infighting and dissension no one is listening for Him.
7. *Peace*: In disunity here are many voices and opinions. Many are not listening to Him. Our inner peace is supports what Jesus tells us.
8. *Joy*: Our joy is a shared and festive enthusiasm. It is not private. Where there is no peace, there is not joy.
9. *Love*: Agape Love is the heart of God. It, therefore, is the sum of all nine. If love is absent, somewhere along the way we lost our way, maybe our faith, maybe our peace, maybe our joy, maybe our gentle spirit, maybe our desire to follow the Savior, etc.