

Resources to Consider

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- Cruse, Jonathan Landry, *The Character of Christ: The Fruit of the Spirit in the life of our Savior*. Banner of Truth, 2023.
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- Sanderson, John W. *The Fruit of the Spirit*, Presbyterian & Reformed, 1972.
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GALATIANS 5



THE FRUITFUL LIFE

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
Galatians 5:22-23

What does real growth and change look like? The Bible describes an organic process in which the quality of Jesus' own life is cultivated, by his Spirit, in the lives of his followers. This quality of life is not a list of virtues that we accomplish but "fruit" produced in us by the Holy Spirit as we actively delight in and rest in Jesus. While this fruit has many dimensions, each dimension grows in relationship to the others to increasingly form us as a whole person.

This "fruit" is the type of life we were originally designed to live but is now produced against the backdrop of a world marred by sin. As this fruit develops, it blesses those around us and creates a community that is a glimpse of the world to come—a community filled with individuals who are both unique in themselves and being conformed to the image of Jesus.

Join us this Fall as we explore how this life of Jesus is cultivated in the life of his people and how this may lead you to a more Christlike version of yourself.

Cultivating Love

October 22, 2023 | Galatians 5:22-23 | Pastor Roger Williams

The love of Jesus is cultivated in his people by his Spirit.

1. What love is cultivated?

John 15 ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

Resilient love

Luke 9 ⁵¹ When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.

Sacrificial love (giving of self)

1 John 3 ¹⁶ By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷ But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?

Merciful love (giving what is needed, rather than what is earned)

Romans 5 ⁸ ... but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us... ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

The Holy Spirit cultivates love that lays down its life for the glory of God and the good of others.

2. Why is love cultivated?

Love shows the beauty of Jesus

John 13 ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Love holds us together

Colossians 3 ¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Love fulfills the law

Galatians 4 ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

3. How is love cultivated?

Laboring

1 John 4 ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Looking

2 Corinthians 3 ¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding (as in a mirror) the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

1 John 3 ² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³ And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Longing

Ephesians 3 ¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.