

Not for Our Picking or Choosing

Scripture Reading — Galatians 5:22-25

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace ...
Galatians 5:22 —*

Bible scholars often note that Paul's description of "the fruit of the Spirit" in this passage can be misunderstood. Paul mentions nine virtues here, yet the word for "fruit" is singular. In other words, there is one fruit of the Spirit, not "fruits," and it shows itself in many ways (even more ways than the nine listed here—see, for example, Colossians 3:12-17).

This confirms the interconnectedness of all virtues that develop in our lives through the Spirit's work in us. None of them stands alone. In fact, each one requires the others in order to exist at all. When the Holy Spirit produces fruit within us, the full range of his ministry is brought to bear through us.

So we should never focus on just some of the virtues at the expense of any others. Because of our unique personalities, we might find it easier to practice some virtues than others. But that doesn't mean we can choose a few as our favorites. Nor can we avoid a difficult virtue, such as patience, and try to excuse ourselves by saying, "I'm not a very patient person by nature." If we are impatient by nature, that is precisely what the fruit of the Spirit is designed to conquer!

Spiritual regeneration is a "package deal." Because "we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." Praise God that his one fruit has so many deliciously good qualities!

Prayer

Lord, I desire the fullness of the Holy Spirit's ministry in my heart! Help me to grow to be more like Jesus in every way, so that the world will know I belong to you. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#), [Love](#)

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Printed on July 9, 2020

