

GROWING EXPLORERS (AGES 9–12)

Rooted in Christ: Growing Real Fruit

A study through Galatians 5, John 15, and 1 Peter 1

Have you ever wondered why some people seem to be naturally kind, joyful, and patient—while other people struggle with anger, worry, or selfishness? The Bible teaches us that real goodness isn't something we can create on our own. It **grows** inside us when we stay connected to Jesus, like fruit grows on a healthy tree. In this lesson, we're going to explore how the Gospel works like a seed, how Jesus is like a vine, and how the Holy Spirit grows amazing fruit in our lives.

1 The Seed of the Gospel

Every fruit starts with a seed. An apple tree begins as a tiny seed buried in the dirt. You can't see anything happening at first, but underground, something incredible is going on—the seed is coming to life!

The Apostle Peter tells us that the Gospel—the good news about Jesus—is like a **living seed** that God plants inside us:

“For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God.”

1 Peter 1:23 (NLT)

This is not an ordinary seed. Regular seeds grow into plants that eventually die. But the seed of God’s Word is *eternal*—it produces a life that never ends! When you believe in Jesus, God plants this living seed in your heart, and a brand-new life begins to grow inside you.

2 Abiding in the Vine

Once the seed is planted, it needs something to keep it alive and growing. Jesus gave us a powerful picture to understand this:

“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.”

John 15:4-5 (NLT)

The word **“remain”** is translated from the Greek word **menō** (μένω). It means to *stay, abide, dwell, or make your home in*. Think of it this way: a branch doesn’t visit the vine once a week—it **lives** there. It’s permanently attached.

Jesus is saying: “Don’t just check in with Me on Sundays. Make your home in Me. Stay connected to Me every single day.” When we abide in Christ, His life flows into us like sap

flows through a vine into its branches. And that life produces something beautiful—**fruit**.

3 The Fruit of the Spirit

So what does this fruit look like? Paul tells us in his letter to the Galatians:

“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!”

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)

Notice that the word “fruit” is *singular*, not plural. In Greek, the word is **karpos** (καρπός). It’s one fruit with nine expressions—like one diamond with nine beautiful sides.

Fruit	Greek	What It Means
Love	<i>agapē</i> (ἀγάπη)	Choosing to care for someone no matter what—even when it’s hard
Joy	<i>chara</i> (χαρά)	Deep-down happiness that doesn’t depend on what’s happening around you
Peace	<i>eirēnē</i> (εἰρήνη)	A calm, quiet feeling inside because you trust God is in control
Patience	<i>makrothymia</i> (μακροθυμία)	Being able to wait without complaining or getting angry
Kindness	<i>chrēstotēs</i> (χρηστότης)	Going out of your way to help and be good to others

Fruit	Greek	What It Means
Goodness	<i>agathōsynē</i> (ἀγαθωσύνη)	A desire to do what is right and true in every situation
Faithfulness	<i>pistis</i> (πίστις)	Being reliable and keeping your promises—someone others can count on
Gentleness	<i>prautes</i> (πραΰτης)	Strength under control—being powerful but soft and humble
Self-Control	<i>egkrateia</i> (ἐγκράτεια)	The power to say “no” to wrong things and “yes” to right things

4 Fruit You Can't Fake

Have you ever seen fake fruit? It might look real from far away, but when you get close, you can tell it's made of plastic. You can't eat it. It has no flavor and no nutrition.

The same thing happens when we try to *perform* instead of *abide*. You can **pretend** to be patient by gritting your teeth and not yelling—but inside, you're still angry. That's fake fruit. But when you stay connected to Jesus and let His Spirit work in you, He grows **real** patience. You actually start to feel calm inside, not just act calm outside.

There's a big difference between:

- **Performing:** “I have to be kind or I'll get in trouble.”
- **Abiding:** “I want to be kind because Jesus' love is filling me up.”

Real fruit comes from the inside out. It's not a mask you put on—it's a life that grows from your connection to Christ.

5 Three Stages: Planting, Growing, Harvest

Fruit doesn't appear overnight. A farmer plants seeds and then waits for weeks or even months before seeing fruit. It's the same with us and God. Don't get discouraged if you don't see all the fruit right away!



Stage 1: Planting

You hear the Gospel and believe in Jesus.

The seed of God's Word is planted in your heart. You might not feel different yet—but the seed is alive!



Stage 2: Growing

You start reading the Bible, praying, going to church, and spending time with other Christians. Roots are going deep. Slowly, you start to change from the inside out.



Stage 3: Harvest

Others start to notice the fruit in your life! You're more patient, more joyful, more loving. This isn't you trying harder—it's God working in you!

Remember: a seed grows *slowly*. Be patient with yourself. God is not done with you yet! He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion (Philippians 1:6).



Greek Word Study Cards

καρπός

karpos

μένω

menō

πίστις

pistis

Meaning: Fruit, produce, result. Used in Galatians 5:22 to describe the singular fruit that the Holy Spirit grows in us—one fruit with nine expressions.

Meaning: To remain, stay, abide, dwell. Jesus uses this word in John 15 to tell us to make our home in Him and stay connected like a branch to a vine.

Meaning: Faith, trust, faithfulness. It means believing that God is real and trustworthy—and then living like you believe it!

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean that the Gospel is a “living seed”? How is it different from a regular seed?
2. In John 15, Jesus says He is the vine and we are the branches. What happens to a branch that gets disconnected from the vine?
3. Why is the Fruit of the Spirit called “fruit” (singular) instead of “fruits” (plural)?
4. What is the difference between “performing” and “abiding”? Can you think of an example from your own life?
5. Which of the nine fruits do you most want God to grow in you right now? Why?

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