

# Rooted in Christ: The Seed, the Blood, and the Fruit

## A Lesson from Galatians on Faith, Transformation, and the Fruit of the Spirit

By Shane Gunn

**Key Texts:** Galatians 2:20 • Galatians 5:22–23 • John 15:1–8 • Romans 8:4

The Gospel is not merely a message to be believed — it is a living seed to be received. When Christ enters a human life, something organic begins. A root takes hold. A vine stretches upward. Fruit appears — not because we manufactured it, but because the life of Christ flows through us the way sap flows through a branch. This study traces that journey: from the planting of the Gospel seed, through the faithful blood-life of the vine, to the beautiful, singular fruit of the Spirit that marks every believer who abides in Jesus. This is not a lesson about trying harder. It is a lesson about staying connected to the One who is already enough.

### PART ONE — THE SEED OF THE GOSPEL

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#### **1 Peter 1:23 (ESV)**

“Since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.”

Every plant begins with a seed. Every tree, every vineyard, every harvest — it all starts buried in the dark, hidden beneath the surface, waiting to break open. The Gospel works the same way. When the Word of God enters a human heart, it does not arrive as mere information. It arrives as *life*.

**The Gospel is not information about God — it is the impartation of God.**

The seed carries within it the full DNA of the tree it will become. The Gospel carries within it the full life of the Christ who spoke it.

**John 12:24 (ESV)**

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”

Jesus spoke these words about Himself. He is the seed. His death was the planting. His burial was the darkness. His resurrection was the breaking open of life that could never be contained. And now, through the Holy Spirit, that same seed — the very life of Christ — is planted in everyone who believes.

The seed must fall. It must be buried. It must die. This is the pattern of the Kingdom: death before resurrection, surrender before victory, emptiness before fullness. We cannot skip the burial and arrive at the bloom. The old self goes into the ground with Christ in baptism. And from that death, new life rises — not our old life improved, but an entirely new creation animated by the Spirit of the living God.

**PART TWO — THE FAITH OF CHRIST: PISTIS CHRISTOU**

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**Galatians 2:20 (ESV)**

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

This verse stands at the center of everything Paul taught. It is his testimony, his theology, and his daily experience compressed into a single breath. But hidden within the Greek text is a phrase that has shaped centuries of theological conversation — and it deserves our careful attention.

### πίστις Χριστοῦ — *pistis Christou*

#### Two readings, one truth:

- **“Faith in Christ”** (objective genitive) — our faith directed toward Him. We believe in Jesus, trust in His finished work, and rest in His promises.
- **“The faithfulness of Christ”** (subjective genitive) — His own faithful obedience. Christ Himself was the faithful One who obeyed where Adam failed, who endured where Israel broke, who persevered where every human being has fallen short.

Both readings are grammatically valid. Both are theologically true. But the emphasis on Christ’s own faithfulness is transformative — because it moves the weight of salvation off our shoulders and onto His.

We are not saved by the quality of our own believing. Our faith wavers. Our trust stumbles. Our confidence cracks under pressure. But Christ’s faithfulness never failed. He was faithful in the wilderness. He was faithful in Gethsemane. He was faithful on the cross. We are saved because *Christ was faithful*, even to death on a cross — and our faith, however small, connects us to His finished, faithful work.

This is the root system beneath the fruit. Before we can bear anything good, we must understand that the life producing fruit in us is not our own — it is His. The seed that was planted was *His* faithfulness. The life that grows is *His* life. The fruit that appears is *His* character, formed in us by the Spirit.

**John 15:4-5 (ESV)**

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

The blood of Christ is the life-flow of the vine. In the ancient world, every farmer understood that a vine’s life was in its sap. Cut a branch from the vine and it withers. Keep it connected and the sap — the life-blood of the plant — runs through every fiber, producing leaves, then blossoms, then fruit. Jesus chose this image deliberately. His blood, shed on the cross, is not only the price of our forgiveness — it is the ongoing life that sustains us. Just as sap runs through a grapevine to every branch, Christ’s life flows through every believer who remains connected to Him.

**Romans 8:4 (ESV)**

“In order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

The righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled *in us* — not *by us*. The Spirit does the fulfilling. We do the abiding. This is the great mystery of sanctification: the fruit is not produced by effort — it is produced by connection. The branch does not strain to make grapes. It does not grit its bark and try harder. It simply stays attached to the vine, and the life within the vine does what only life can do — it produces fruit.

**μένω (menō)**

Greek: to abide, remain, dwell, stay, continue

This is the word Jesus uses again and again in John 15. *Menō* is not passive — it is a deliberate choosing to remain. It means to hold your ground, to keep your position, to refuse to leave. Abiding is not floating; it is anchoring. It is the daily, hourly decision to stay connected to Christ through prayer, through the Word, through worship, through community — through every means of grace the Spirit provides.

## PART FOUR — THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

### Galatians 5:22–23 (ESV)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

Notice carefully: Paul says **fruit** — singular — not *fruits*. This is not a list of nine separate virtues to cultivate independently. It is one organic life producing nine expressions. As a single tree produces leaves, bark, roots, blossoms, and fruit from the same sap, so the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control from the same indwelling life of Christ.

### καρπός (karpos)

Greek: fruit — singular. One life, nine manifestations.

Fruit	Greek	Rooted in Christ’s Life	Key Scriptures
Love	ἀγάπη ( <i>agapē</i> )	Self-giving, unconditional love — the root from which all	1 Cor 13:4–7; 1 John 4:19

Fruit	Greek	Rooted in Christ's Life	Key Scriptures
		other fruit grows. God's own nature expressed through us.	
<b>Joy</b>	<i>χαρά (chara)</i>	Deep-rooted gladness independent of circumstances — anchored in the reality of salvation, not in comfort.	John 15:11; Phil 4:4
<b>Peace</b>	<i>εἰρήνη (eirēnē)</i>	Wholeness, completeness, the Hebrew shalom — reconciliation with God producing inner stillness.	John 14:27; Phil 4:7
<b>Patience</b>	<i>μακροθυμία (makrothymia)</i>	Literally “long-tempered” — the refusal to give up on God or people. Grown in the furnace of waiting.	James 1:2–4; Rom 2:4
<b>Kindness</b>	<i>χρηστότης (chrēstotēs)</i>	Gracious, useful goodness that goes out of its way for others — the same tender disposition God showed us while we were still sinners.	Eph 4:32; Luke 6:35
<b>Goodness</b>	<i>ἀγαθωσύνη (agathōsynē)</i>	Moral excellence in action — not passive niceness but active righteousness. The goodness of God working through redeemed humanity.	Mark 10:18; Rom 15:14
<b>Faithfulness</b>	<i>πίστις (pistis)</i>	The same word as “faith” — trustworthiness, reliability, covenant-keeping. As Christ was faithful, His faithfulness grows in us.	Luke 19:17; Rev 2:10

Fruit	Greek	Rooted in Christ's Life	Key Scriptures
<b>Gentleness</b>	<i>πραύτης</i> ( <i>prautēs</i> )	Strength under control — not weakness. Moses was meek, yet parted the sea. Jesus cleared the temple. Power surrendered to love.	Matt 5:5; Num 12:3
<b>Self-Control</b>	<i>ἐγκράτεια</i> ( <i>egkrateia</i> )	Mastery over appetite and impulse — not through willpower alone, but through the indwelling Spirit greater than the flesh.	1 Cor 9:25; Tit 2:6

No law can produce this fruit. No commandment, no regulation, no moral code — however good — can make love grow in a human heart. Only life can produce life. Only the Spirit of God, flowing through the vine of Christ into the branches of His people, can bring forth what the law always demanded but could never supply. This is the glory of the new covenant: what the law could not do, weakened as it was by the flesh, God has done through His Son and by His Spirit.

## PART FIVE — COMPLETELY MADE NEW

### **2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)**

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

### **Romans 12:2 (ESV)**

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your

mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

### μεταμόρφωσις (metamorphōsis)

Greek: transformation, transfiguration — a complete change of form from the inside out.

This is the same word used for the Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain (Matt 17:2). When Christ stood before Peter, James, and John, His inner glory broke through His outer form — His face shone like the sun, His garments became white as light. What happened visibly to Christ on that mountain is happening *invisibly* in you by the Spirit. The same glory. The same transformation. The same power — working from the inside out, changing you into the image of Christ, from one degree of glory to another.

## The Three Stages of the Seed

1

### Planting

The Gospel seed enters through hearing and faith. Born again. The old life is buried with Christ in baptism. New life begins — small, hidden, barely visible, but fully alive. Like a seed beneath the soil, everything that the tree will one day become is already contained within this tiny beginning. You may not look different yet. But the DNA of eternity has been planted in you.

2

### Growth

The Spirit waters. The Word nourishes. Community tends. Suffering prunes. The root system of faith goes deep — down into the dark soil of trust, through the rocky layers of doubt, past the clay of old habits. Growth is not always visible. Some seasons are all root and no bloom. But the root work is the real work. And slowly, unmistakably, the fruit of the Spirit begins to appear: a patience you did not have before, a kindness that surprises even you, a peace that holds when everything else shakes.

3

### Harvest

A lifetime of abiding. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control — not as performances, but as natural expressions of who you have become in Christ. The seed has become a tree. The tree has filled with fruit. The fruit feeds others. Your life, surrendered and connected to the vine, becomes a source of nourishment for everyone around you. This is the harvest that God intended from the very first planting — a life so full of Christ that it overflows into the lives of others.

## **PART SIX — PERSONAL REFLECTION & APPLICATION**

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### **Discussion Questions**

1. Where did the seed of the Gospel first land in your life? What did that “planting” moment look like?
2. What does it mean practically to “abide in the vine” (John 15:4)? What habits, practices, or postures help you stay connected to Christ?
3. Which of the nine fruits of the Spirit is most actively growing in you right now? Which feels most underdeveloped?
4. Have you ever tried to produce spiritual fruit through striving rather than abiding? What was the result?
5. Galatians 2:20 says “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.” How much of your daily life is actually lived from that reality?

### **THIS WEEK'S PRACTICE**

Choose **one fruit** from the list above. Each morning, read its corresponding scripture. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you one situation that day where you can yield to that fruit rather than react from your flesh. At the end of each day, journal what you observed. What changed? Where did you see Christ's life at work in you? Where did you struggle? Bring your observations to the group next week.

## Word Study Cards

**πίστις Χριστοῦ**

pistis Christou

The faith / faithfulness of Christ

**καρπός**

karpos

Fruit (singular) — one life, nine expressions

**μένω**

menō

To abide, remain, dwell

**ἀγάπη**

agapē

Unconditional, self-giving love

**μεταμόρφωσις**

metamorphōsis

Transformation, transfiguration

**ἐγκράτεια**

egkrateia

Self-control, mastery through the Spirit

## CLOSING PRAYER

Father, I was dry and empty ground — but You planted Your Word in me. I confess that I have sometimes tried to grow on my own, to force fruit through striving. Forgive me. Let me return to the vine. Let the blood of Your Son run

through the channels of my soul. Let the seed of Your Gospel grow deep roots in me. By Your Spirit, produce in me what I cannot produce in myself — until every part of me reflects the life of the One who died so that I might live. Make me new. Completely new. In Jesus' name, Amen.

*"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us..."*

Ephesians 3:20 (ESV)

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