The Fruit of the Spirit (Part 1)

Introduction: Let us not ignore the wisdom of God.

A. Over the years my views of the dangers that Christians face has changed.
   1. I had greatly underestimated the works of the flesh.
   2. I had failed to see the power of the outward actions we take combined with the thoughts and emotions that go along with it.
   3. As I further studied my Bible I learned how pride, jealousy and anger destroyed men in the bible like king Saul. (1 Sam 18:7-8; 22:8)
   4. As time passed I saw how the heart once contaminated with these thoughts would close the mind to reason! (Eph 4:26-27)

B. How do we overcome the works of the flesh? How do we find a sound mind that can survive the assaults of Satan?
   1. Once again, God’s word tells us what to put in our hearts! (Gal 5:22-23)
   2. This passage says “fruit” and not “fruits!”
   3. These nine attributes are the fruit and without these nine you do not have the completed fruit of the Spirit

I. The fruit of the Spirit – Love
   A. This is not just any love. This is the committed love of God. (Matt 22:37-40)
      1. What makes men change? How do we find motivation to live the Christian life?
      2. When men fail to have the love of God in their lives they can develop a religion like the Pharisees. (Lk 11:42; Jn 5:42)
      3. When our love grows cold we will be cold! (Mt 24:12; Rev 2:4; 3:15-16)
      4. When you know what God has done for you it will be seen in your life! (1 Pt 2:1-3)

   B. Why does the love of God have the power to changes men's hearts?
      1. Consider the components of His love. (1 Cor 13:4-7)
      2. The worldly person will find this love "unreasonable".

   C. God's love gives us that which we need but do not deserve. (Rom 12:17-21)

   D. God's love expresses confidence in us that we will change. (Rom 5:6-8, Jn 3:16)
      1. His love tells us we are valuable even when we think we are worthless!
      2. When I think of quitting, I need to see that God has not quit on me.

   E. What do men substitute for love?
      1. Some view love as conditional, that is a "balanced transaction." (Mt 5:46-48)
      2. We play games with words and say: "I will love you but I do not have to like you!" Often this is a veil for hatred.
      3. What many people call love is in fact slavery. You must submit to the control of a man or it is claimed that you do not "love them." (2 Pt 2:18-19)
      4. They demand that you hate who they hate, that you agree with them on strongly held opinions, and that you praise those who join their clique. (2 Cor 11:20)
      5. Some view love as an outward set of external rules. (Mt 23:27-28)

II. The fruit of the Spirit – Joy
   A. This joy is based upon our relationship to God. (Jn 15:9-14)
1. Joy is a natural by-product of God’s love for you! Did He die for you too?
2. Joyful people are obedient people.

B. God’s joy comes through pain and will never be taken away. *(Jn 16:19-24)*
1. The apostles went through pain like childbirth until they finally understood the nature of their relationship with God. *Do you really understand it?*
2. When they knew they served a living Lord that would never leave them they had a joy that men could never take away!
3. “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” *(Rom 8:35-39)*
4. We have joy because we are not the victims of circumstance but always will have the victory over circumstances. *(Rom 8:28)*

C. God’s joy will give me great strength to serve God in all circumstances.
1. How was Jesus able to overcome the cross? *(Heb 12:2)*
2. God through Nehemiah wanted the people to understand this very important principle. *(Neh 8:10-11)*
   a. Notice how this joy came from an understanding of God’s word. *Is your Bible study this way?*
   b. This joy is not produced by artificial circumstances that are manipulated by men. Many use carnal productions to create a temporary emotion.

D. It will help my health like medicine. *(Prov 17:22)*
E. It will allow me to glorify God.
1. God will bring us to sorrow that leads to repentance and a restoration of our relationship with Him. *(Psa 30:5-8)*
2. We always will have a heart overflowing with praise and a life that will glorify Him. *(Psa 30:11-12)*
3. Jesus fulfilled this great prophecy about Him and His people. *(Isa 61:1-3)*
4. *Did you worship Him today will a heart overflowing with joy?*

III. How God’s love in my life will produce joy
A. My present salvation. *(Lk 10:17, 20)*
1. This is a joy shared by heavenly beings,
2. This salvation should always be new within our hearts. What will happen if we forget? *(2 Pt 1:9)*
3. Do you remember the joy that followed your baptism? *(Acts 8:39; Mk 16:16)*

B. The daily work of God in my life. *(Psa 5:11-12; Heb 13:5-6)*
1. When I start my day with prayer it bring me an awareness of the presence and love of God. *Have you been in the presence of God today?*
2. We must learn how to see the unseen God. *(Heb 11:27)*

C. Great sacrifice and pain in serving Him. *(Jas 1:2-4)*
1. *Do you have a “religion” that cost you nothing? Then you have no joy.* *(2 Sam 24:24)*
2. In worldly things we can understand this. Who was your favorite teacher in school? (Ex. What does a championship team experience to win?)
3. *Do you rejoice in persecution?*(Lk 6:22-23; Heb 10:34)*
4. Joy in your life will be a major reason others will open their hearts to you!

**Conclusion:** How is your fruit inspection going? Learn more of God’s love!  *(1 Jn 4:6-12)*