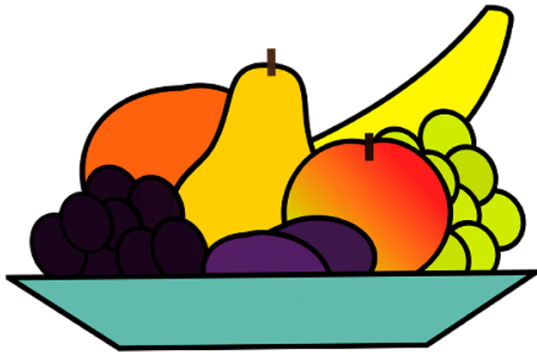


Fruit of the Spirit



Scripture Reference: [Galatians 5:16-26](#)

Suggested Emphasis: The Holy Spirit helps us live a Godly life.

Memory Verse: But the Spirit gives love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. There is no law that says these things are wrong. [Galatians 5:22-23, ICB](#)



Story Overview:

One of the subjects Paul discusses in his epistle to the churches of Galatia was a comparison of living with “sinful selves” and living “by the Spirit.” If a person does not follow God but does sinful things simply because they “feel good” then their life will reflect this sinful self. Sin is the fruit. Christians know that the Holy Spirit lives inside of them and they will do the good things that please the Holy Spirit and God. The good things of the Spirit are reflected in the Christian’s life. This is the fruit of the Spirit.

Background Study:

It is easy to get lost in the visual aids here. As teachers of children, our minds immediately go to the many crafts, songs and fun activities involving fruit. These are all helpful and fun in teaching but it is important to first think about what the “fruit of the Spirit” actually means to us and to our students.

This story begins in the first chapters of the Bible. There was a fruit tree in the Garden of Eden. Different to all the other trees in the garden Adam and Eve were not free to eat from this tree. This one tree in the garden represented the choice between good and evil. God provided everything good Adam and Eve needed. He knew that they were not equipped to deal with evil so he told them not to eat from that one tree. And yet they did.

- [Genesis 2:8-9](#) God planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- [Genesis 2:15-17](#) God told Adam he was free to eat fruit from every tree except one. If he ate from this tree he would die.
- [Genesis 3:1-24](#) Satan tempted Adam and Eve and they ate from the tree. This introduced evil into the Garden of Eden for the first time and meant Adam and Eve were expelled from the perfect garden God had planned for them. The rest of the Bible deals with how God brought about the answer to this problem of evil and death.

That was at the beginning. Now, at the time Paul is writing the Book of Galatians, centuries have passed. Jesus Christ provided the ultimate answer to evil and death.

“For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son. God gave his Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life.

[John 3:16](#), ICB

In Galatians, Paul talks about the freedom we have because of Christ. Unlike Adam and Eve, we live in a world where both good and evil are present. Now, we too are faced with a choice about a tree. In our case, WE ARE THE TREE. People around us will be blessed or cursed by the fruit produced through us. The choices we make determine the kind of fruit our tree (life) produces.

Choosing to do what WE want:

If we choose to always do what we want (selfish desires) then our tree produces terrible fruit such as impurity, wild living, hating, making trouble, anger and selfishness. This kind of tree takes away good. It does not help us and it does not help anyone else.

Choosing to do what the HOLY SPIRIT wants:

This tree represents a life that is lived trusting in and obeying God instead of only thinking about what we want. Since God’s Spirit lives in this tree then the fruit is all good. It helps us and it helps others. The fruit of God’s Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Jesus used the metaphor of the fruit tree on a number of occasions. He said that people are “known by their fruit”. The Pharisees said they followed God but their words and actions did not mirror who God was. They produced bad fruit. Read what Jesus said in [Luke 6:43-45](#); [Matthew 7:15-20](#) and [Matthew 12:30-37](#)

Children (especially younger ones) might not comprehend all of the metaphors but they can certainly know that we have choices to make. Living God’s way and the way of the Holy Spirit means a life that reflects God and blesses others.



Way to Introduce the Story:

Bring an apple (or other fruit) to class today. Talk about the fact that the apple grows on a tree. Cut the apple open and let the children see the seed inside. Ask the children what would happen if you plant the seed. "A tree will grow. When the tree gets big enough then little buds appear and we have apple blossoms. What happens next? Do you think lemons will start growing on the tree? Of course not! If you plant apple seeds then a tree will grow and you will get apples." You can do the same with some other fruits and then eat them. "Does anyone know what God plants inside of a Christian when he or she is baptised? . . . The Holy Spirit! If an apple seed is planted then a fruit called an apple is produced. If the Spirit is inside of you, guess what kind of fruit is produced . . . the Fruit of the Spirit. Lets read our bibles to find out what that fruit looks like . . ."

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The Story:

(show a picture of a tree with no fruit) A healthy tree has roots, a trunk and leaves. Every part is important. The roots take the nutrients in the soil to make food for the tree to grow. The roots also make the trunk of the tree stand strong and not fall over. The leaves gather sunlight and rain to help the tree be healthy.

Now that you have seen the roots and trunk and leaves can you guess what kind of tree this is? It is difficult to tell, isn't it? I'm going to give you a clue to help you know what kind of tree this is.

(show a picture of a tree with apples on it) Now can you guess what kind of tree this is? Of course, it is an apple tree. It is much easier to tell what kind of tree it is now that we can see the fruit, isn't it? Fruit is another very important part of a tree.

Jesus said that people are like trees and that their words and actions are like fruit. In the same way, you can recognise a tree by its fruit you can also know about what kind of person someone is by the way they speak and act.

In the Bible book of Galatians, we read that a person who does not follow God and thinks only about him or herself is like a bad tree that produces bad fruit. The kind of fruit produced by this sinful life includes bad words and actions and thoughts. Bad fruit like wild living, anger, jealousy, selfishness, drunkenness and many others.

And what if you were a tree? Is this the kind of fruit you would want to have on your tree?

But there is another kind of tree and another kind of fruit. The Spirit of God lives inside of people who belong to Jesus. If a person lives his or her life according to the Spirit then that person is like a tree that produces good fruit. This good fruit is called the "fruit of the Spirit". Our good words and actions and thoughts are the fruit that shows what kind of tree we are.

The Holy Spirit that lives inside a Christian is good and the fruit of the Spirit is also good. Let's learn about what kind of fruit the Holy Spirit produces.

The fruit of the Spirit is...

- Love
To love someone is to care deeply for them and to want what is best for them.
- Joy
Joy is more than just feeling happy when good things are happening. Joy is a deep good feeling we have because we trust God in both the good and bad times.
- Peace
Peace is feeling calm and secure because we know that God is in control of our world.
- Patience
Patience is waiting our turn. Patience is not losing our temper or giving up even if something takes a long time.

And the fruit of the Spirit is...

- Kindness
Kindness is considering what people need and then helping them with it.
- Goodness
God is holy and good and always does right. Goodness for Christians means trying our best to follow God's example in these things.
- Faithfulness
Faithfulness is being loyal and trustworthy. It means sticking with something or someone and not giving up too soon.

And lastly, the fruit of the Spirit is...

- Gentleness
Being gentle means not being rough or harsh. It means being careful and respectful of others.
- Self-control
Finally, self-control means not losing our temper or always having to have our own way. It is waiting our turn and considering others' needs before our own.

So what kind of tree will you be?

Will you choose to live only for yourself and produce bad fruit that only hurts yourself and others?

Or will you choose to live according to the Holy Spirit and produce fruit of the Spirit, the kind of fruit that blesses you and blesses everyone around you?

The choice is up to you.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download the slideshow](#) or [click here to download the pictures to print.](#)

Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish

to emphasise in this lesson. As mentioned earlier this lesson is long enough to divide into two parts so you may choose to only show some of the illustrations each time.

Review Questions:

1. What does God plant inside a Christian at baptism? The Holy Spirit
2. What kind of fruit should be produced in a Christian's life? The Fruit of the Spirit
3. Name some of the fruits of the Spirit. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

Song Suggestions:

- [Fruit of the Spirit song](#)
- [Oh Be Careful Song](#)
- [God is Listening When We Pray \(Song\) English/Cebuano](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

Activities:

- **Group Discussion:** Depending on your situation this discussion can be done in a shorter time or could last for the entire class time.
Read Galatians 5:16-18 together and then draw or have children draw 2 tree pictures. In each picture be sure and include roots and branches and leaves.
 - **Roots:**
Tree One: Write words or phrases on the roots that represent selfish desires (I want to do it my way, I don't care what you think, I don't like to read the bible, It feels good to do bad things, etc).
Tree Two: Write words or phrases on the roots that represent God and the Spirit (I want to make God happy, God's way is harder but I choose it, God will help me, prayer gives me strength, etc).
 - **Fruit:**
Tree One: Read or paraphrase Galatians 5:19-21 together. On the branches of the first tree write and talk about what kind of fruit is produced by a tree nourished by selfish desires (impurity, selfishness, anger, etc.) Consider the age and maturity of the children when you choose which fruits to write down.
Tree Two: Read Galatians 5:22-23 together. On the branches of the second tree write and talk about the fruits of the Spirit.
 - **Commitment Time:**
Read Galatians 5:24-26 together. Ask the children to write their names on the trunk of the tree that they want to be.
- Taste different types of fruit. For fun, you could blindfold a child and let him/her taste a piece of fruit and guess what flavour it is. Repeat for a number of children with different types of fruit.
- Write the name of a fruit down the side of a paper and ask the children to think of Godly attributes and behaviours that begin with the letters of that fruit. For example Pear: P-patience, E-eagerness to study the bible, A-a giving heart, R-righteousness.
- Play a simple word game. [Bible Wordz Game](#) is an adaptable game, children form words from letter tiles.

The words relate to words found in the Bible lesson.

Crafts:

- Use tempera paint to make fruit prints.
- Paint or draw pictures of fruit.
- Make a mobile with pictures of fruit. Cut them out of newspaper and glue them on to stiff card or draw your own. Write the fruit of the Spirit on each one.
- Make a collage of different kinds of seeds with pictures of the fruits they produce.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "Fruit of the Spirit" printables to print \(A4 paper\)](#)
[Click here for "Fruit of the Spirit" to print \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring pages and puzzle worksheets \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring pages, activities and links \(innercourt.co.za\)](#)
- [Crafts and links \(churchhousecollection.com\)](#)
- [Crafts, links and printables \(dltk-bible.com\)](#)
- [Game: "Please Pass the Fruit" \(christiancrafters.com\)](#)
- [Game: Fruit of the Spirit board game based on the "Battleship" game \(livingwaterbiblegames.com\)](#)
- [Worksheets, Crossword puzzles \(dltk-bible.com/crosswords\)](#)
- [Other, Lesson plan, craft and good printables \(kidsbibledebjackson.blogspot.co.nz\)](#)
- [Other, A selection of teaching ideas for toddlers \(toddler-activities-at-home.com\)](#)

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