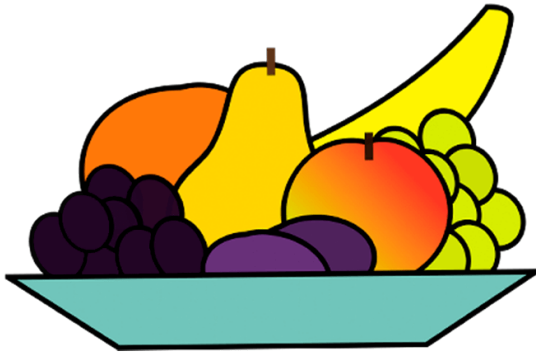


Fruit of the Spirit



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

Suggested Theme: The Holy Spirit helps us change and 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 discussed in his letter to the churches of Galatia was a comparison of living with our “sinful self” and living “by the Spirit.” If a person lives out selfish desires, the result is a sinful life. Sin is the fruit. In contrast, when Christians allow the Holy Spirit to control their lives, they will do the good things that please the Holy Spirit and God. 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 the children.

This is not the first time fruit and trees are mentioned in the Bible. There was a fruit tree in the Garden of Eden. Unlike all the other trees in the garden, Adam and Eve were not free to eat from this tree. This one tree in the garden represents the choice between good and evil. God provided everything good Adam and Eve needed. He knew they were not equipped to deal with evil, so He told them not to eat from that 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. Centuries passed before the ultimate answer to evil and death arrived in the form of Jesus.

“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 then talks about the freedom people have because of Christ. Like Adam and Eve, we are faced with a choice concerning fruit. In the case of the fruit of the Spirit, we are the tree. People around us will be blessed or cursed by the fruit produced through us. Our choices determine the kind of fruit our tree (life) produces.

Choosing to do what WE want:

If we always choose to do what we want (selfish desires), our tree produces terrible fruit, such as impurity, wild living, hate, 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:

A life in the Spirit is a life of trusting in and obeying God rather than thinking only about what we want. The fruit is all good since God’s Spirit lives in this tree. It helps us and 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 several 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 the gathering 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 planted the seed. “A tree will grow. Little buds appear when the tree gets big enough, 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. Let’s read our Bibles to find out what that fruit looks like . . .”

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 tree trunk 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, trunk, and leaves, can you guess what kind of tree this is? It is difficult to tell, isn’t it? I will 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, right? Fruit is another very important part of a tree.

Jesus said that people are like trees, and their words and actions are like fruit. In the same way, you can recognise a tree by its fruit; you can also know what kind of person someone is by how they speak and act. In the Bible book of Galatians, we read that a person who does not follow God and thinks only about himself or herself is like a bad tree that produces bad fruit. The kind of fruit produced by this sinful life includes bad words, actions, and thoughts, including wild living, anger, jealousy, selfishness, drunkenness, and many others.

And what if you were a tree? Is this the kind of fruit you want 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, 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 happen. It is a deep good feeling because we trust God in good and bad times.

- Peace

Peace is feeling calm and secure because we know that God controls 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 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 the fruit of the Spirit that blesses you and everyone around you?

The choice is up to you.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using various 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 or other group participation.

Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell 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.

[Click here for visual aids and more storytelling methods.](#)

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Review and Reflection Questions:

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story. Reflection questions encourage them to internalise the meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child's spiritual development and help them connect to God. [Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.](#)

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Review:

- What does God plant inside a Christian at baptism? (The Holy Spirit)
- What kind of fruit should be produced in a Christian's life? (The Fruit of the Spirit)
- Name some of the ways a person who doesn't have the Holy Spirit in them might be like (anger, jealousy, selfishness, saying mean words, etc.)
- Name some of the fruits of the Spirit (Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control)
- What does this story show you about God or the Holy Spirit?
- What does this story show you about people?

Reflection:

- What question do you have about the fruit of the Spirit?
- Do you know someone who has a lot of the fruits of the Spirit? Does that person follow Jesus?

- God is all of these fruits of the Spirit! He is joyful, full of peace, patient, etc. When we have these fruits, it means that the Holy Spirit is helping us become more like God. Does it surprise you that God wants us to become like Him? Why or why not?
- Why do you think the fruits of the Spirit are so good and loving? Why does God produce this kind of fruit in us when we follow Him?
- How long might it take for someone to produce the fruit of the Spirit in their lives and hearts? (This can lead to a discussion on how God can change us immediately or over time)
- What might help someone who is following God produce these fruits of the Spirit? (Ex: spend time with God, pray, read the Bible, ask God to produce the fruit in you, serve others, etc.)
- Why are there some people who don't have these fruits of the Spirit at all, but have anger, jealousy, violence, selfishness, sinful ways of living, etc. instead?
- Which of the fruits of the Spirit do you admire the most?

Prayer:

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a lifelong friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. [A variety of prayer methods are found here.](#)

Song Suggestions:

- [Fruit of the Spirit song](#)
- [He's Still Working on Me Song](#)
- [Goodbye World Song](#)
- [Oh, Be Careful Song](#)
- [God is Listening When We Pray \(Song\) English/Cebuano](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more song options.

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Activities and Crafts:

- [How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.](#)
- [Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.](#)

Activities:

- Group Discussion: Depending on your situation, this discussion can be completed in less time or could last the entire time you are together.
Read [Galatians 5:16-18](#) together and then draw or have children draw two tree pictures. In each picture, include roots, branches, and leaves.
 - **Roots:**
Tree One: Write words or phrases on the roots representing 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.).

o **Fruit:**

Tree One: Read or paraphrase [Galatians 5:19-21](#) together. On the branches of the first tree, write 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.

o **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 several 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-attitude of love, R-righteousness.
- Play a simple word game. [Bible Wordz Game](#) is an adaptable game in which children form words from letter tiles. The words relate to those in the Bible lesson.

Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable "God's Story" printable reflection page. [Free printables for this story.](#)

Crafts:

- Paint or draw pictures of fruit.
- Use tempera paint to make fruit prints.
- Make a mobile with pictures of fruit. Cut them out of newspaper and glue them onto stiff cards, or draw your own. Write the fruit of the Spirit on each one.
- Use seeds to create a collage picture.

Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. [Free printables for this story.](#)

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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" \(christiancrafters.com\)](http://christiancrafters.com)
- [Game: Fruit of the Spirit board game based on the "Battleship" game \(livingwaterbiblegames.com\)](http://livingwaterbiblegames.com)
- [Worksheets, Crossword puzzles \(dltk-bible.com/crosswords\)](http://dltk-bible.com/crosswords)
- [Other, Lesson plan, craft and good printables \(kidsbibledebjackson.blogspot.co.nz\)](http://kidsbibledebjackson.blogspot.co.nz)
- [Other, A selection of teaching ideas for toddlers \(toddler-activities-at-home.com\)](http://toddler-activities-at-home.com)

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