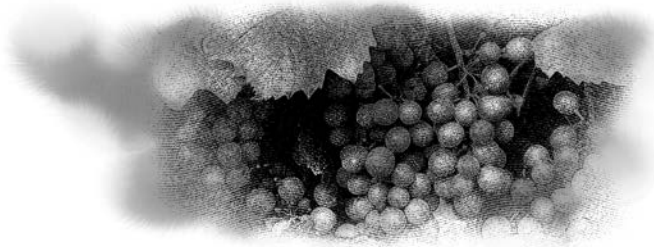


# The Holy Spirit *and* *the* Fruit of *the* Spirit



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## SABBATH AFTERNOON

**Read for This Week's Study:** *John 15:1–11, Gal. 5:22, 1 Corinthians 13, Rom. 14:17, Eph. 5:9, Matt. 5:5.*

**Memory Text:** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (*Galatians 5:22, 23, NASB*).

The fruit of the Spirit is the true essence of the Christian life. While the apostle Paul lists nine different aspects of this fruit, it is nevertheless one fruit and has to be seen in its entirety. The fruit of the Spirit does not tell us what a person might be able to do for God through spiritual gifts and talents. Rather, it shows how the person lives for God. It tells who the person is. All the virtues that are listed in Galatians 5:22, 23 are present in Jesus Christ. Hence, the fruit of the Spirit is the life of Jesus Christ in us, made possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is not something we achieve by purely human effort. It is possible to produce and display some of the same virtues through the exercise of our willpower. But that is not the same as what the Holy Spirit does in us. What we produce ourselves is like a wax fruit compared to the real. Wax fruits are artificial. From a distance they look just as beautiful, but the taste is immeasurably inferior to the real. Real fruit is not manufactured. It grows out of a relationship. When the Holy Spirit connects us with Jesus, through His Written Word, His characteristics begin to reveal themselves in our own lives.

\* Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, February 18.

## The Condition of Fruitfulness

**Read** John 15:1–11. Why can fruit come forth only out of a living relationship with Jesus, the Vine? Why is abiding in Jesus so important? How do we abide in Him?

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The first secret to genuine Christian fruit bearing is to abide in Christ. Apart from Christ, we cannot produce genuine spiritual fruit. The fruit of the Spirit is not imposed upon us from outside; it is the result of the life of Christ within us. In John 15:1–11, Jesus tells us that fruit bearing is the result of the life of Christ, the Vine, flowing through the branches of the believers. The growth of the fruit is God’s work through Jesus Christ.

The responsibility of the believer is to abide in Christ. When Christ dwells in our thoughts, He will become visible in our actions. Jesus lives His life in us. The life Christ lived will be reproduced in us, in the sense that we will reflect His character.

The fruit of the Spirit is the character of Jesus, produced by the Holy Spirit in the followers of Christ. When Christ dwells in us, we will “walk by the Spirit, and . . . will not carry out the desire of the flesh” (*Gal. 5:16, NASB*).

In the words of Jesus: “ ‘Every good tree bears good fruit; but the rotten tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a rotten tree produce good fruit’ ” (*Matt. 7:17, 18, NASB*). The good fruit is the natural product of our abiding relationship with Jesus through the Holy Spirit. When we cooperate with the Spirit’s inner promptings on our hearts, the fruit of the Spirit becomes evident in our lives. Our characters will be transformed to reflect the character of Jesus Christ in what we say and do and even think. The Holy Spirit will give us power to live victoriously and to develop the virtues that are characteristic of those who are God’s children.

**In 2 Timothy 3:5, the apostle Paul describes people who “will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly” (*NLT*). What is the difference between a religious life and a life that is filled with the Holy Spirit? How can we know which kind of life we ourselves are living?**

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## The Fruit of Love

**Read** Galatians 5:22 and 1 Corinthians 13. Why is love the first and foremost aspect of the fruit of the Spirit? How does love affect all the following aspects of this fruit?

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Love appropriately leads and crowns the various characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit and permeates the whole fruit. In a sense all other qualities listed can be seen as aspects of love. Because God is love (*1 John 4:8*), the greatest Christian virtue is love (*1 Cor. 13:13*). God's love is the foundation and source of every other goodness. God's love is poured out to us within our hearts through the Holy Spirit (*Rom. 5:5*). Love is the evidence that we are God's children.

This love is far more than mere human affection. It cannot be produced by human effort. It comes as a result of abiding in Christ. Such love is generous and unmerited. It alone has the power to transform. In its tender yet strong nature, divine love leads the sinner to repentance and awakens the desire for something better. Love has the power to unite—even those who formerly were enemies (*Luke 6:27, 28; Rom. 5:8*). Thus, by our love for each other the world will know that Christians are indeed followers of Jesus Christ (*John 13:35*). This fruit of love will also lead Christians to manifest understanding and sensitivity toward others.

It is interesting that the master description of love in 1 Corinthians 13 comes right between chapters 12 and 14. Those two chapters deal with the gifts of the Spirit. Chapter 13, however, deals with love: the fruit of the Spirit. Even the superior gifts are nothing without love. The gifts of the Spirit without the fruit of the Spirit are powerless and do not produce the blessing that God intends. Love, however, is the glue that binds all other virtues of the fruit of the Spirit into a united whole and gives authenticity to everything we do.

**Where does your life lack the quality of love? Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with love toward those people with whom you are dealing on a daily basis. Remember that God also loves us through other people. How can you show others love? How does love affect those other virtues mentioned in the fruit of the Spirit?**

## Joy, Peace, and Patience

Romans 14:17 reads: “for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (NASB). That is, joy is love’s reaction to the blessings of God and His great mercy and forgiveness.

Now, human joy often is focused upon earthly things and is affected by the conditions that surround us. The joy that is rooted in the fruit of the Spirit, however, focuses on God and what He has done for us. It is not motivated by surrounding conditions. As God’s people, we are to be joyful. This does not mean that we have to smile all the time, even though a friendly smile expresses much. But our trust in God will give us abundant reasons to rejoice with unspeakable joy over what He has done for us and in us. Spiritual joy is the result of active faith.

**Read** John 14:27 along with Romans 14:17. How is peace related to the work of the Holy Spirit?

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Peace is more lasting than joy. Peace comes as a result of being justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (*Rom. 5:1*). When we are at peace with God, the Holy Spirit will lead us to be peaceful and patient toward others. Because the God of peace will be with us (*Phil. 4:9*) through the Holy Spirit, we will not be quarrelsome and vengeful toward others. Instead, we will seek to live as peaceably as possible with everyone (*Rom. 12:18*).

**Read** 2 Peter 3:9. How does patience reflect the character of God?

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Patience is not a prevalent characteristic of human beings. It means putting up with others or with circumstances, even when things do not run smoothly. Yet, even in trials, we are not alone. God sustains us through His Holy Spirit and builds patience, which is a characteristic mark of the believers in the end time (*Rev. 14:12*). Only those who aim at a worthy goal can be patient.

**Joy, peace, and patience. How much of this fruit do you experience in your life? In which of these areas do you need more work done in you?**

## Kindness, Goodness, and Faithfulness

**Read** 1 Corinthians 13:4. Why does genuine kindness have such positive appeal to other people? Where do you see God’s kindness in His dealings with humanity?

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“Kindness” is the word frequently used in describing God’s dealings with His people. Kindness also describes our dealings with others in their failures. God could be quite harsh in dealing with our faults. Yet, He treats us as a loving father would treat a learning child (*Hos. 11:1–4*). Perhaps nothing discredits our Christian testimony and ministry more frequently than unkindness. It does not cost money to be kind, but it can open the door to the heart of the other person. No matter how firm we must be in reproof, we need not become unkind in our dealings with others, whatever their faults and issues. To reprove in kindness is perhaps the greatest sign of nobility of character.

**Read** Ephesians 5:9. What accompanies goodness in this passage?

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Goodness is love in action. The goodness that grows as the fruit of the Spirit also includes works and acts of goodness. It is goodness shown to others in practical works of love. When the Holy Spirit lives in us, there will be a positive outflow of goodness to the people with whom we come in contact.

**Read** Galatians 5:22. Why is it important to be trustworthy and faithful in our Christian walk with God?

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What we are looking at here is the faithfulness of character and conduct brought forth through the Holy Spirit. Faithfulness means trustworthiness or reliability. Those who are faithful do what they promise to do. Faithfulness is also a characteristic of Jesus Christ, who is called “the faithful witness” (*Rev. 1:5, NASB*), and of God the Father, who keeps His promises and is faithful in what He does (*1 Cor. 1:9, 10:13, 1 Thess. 5:24, 2 Thess. 3:3*). In our faithfulness, we reflect the image of God in our lives. “It is not the great results we attain, but the motives from which we act, that weigh with God. He prizes goodness and faithfulness more than the greatness of the work accomplished.”—Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 510, 511.

## Gentleness and Self-Control

**Read Galatians 5:23 and Matthew 5:5. Why is meekness, or gentleness, so important for Christlike leadership?**

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Gentleness, or meekness, does not mean weakness. It is not cowardice or lack of leadership. On the contrary, Moses was called the meekest man on earth (*Num. 12:3*); yet, he was a powerful leader of God's people. Meek people are not boisterous, quarrelsome, or selfishly aggressive. Instead, they serve in a gentle spirit. Meekness can be the outward expression of an inward faith and confidence—not in oneself, of course, but in the power of God, which works within us. Oftentimes, those who are loud, boisterous, and assertive are covering up insecurities and fears.

**Read Galatians 5:23 and Proverbs 16:32. What misery comes when we do not exercise self-control? What blessings do we gain if we are self-controlled and temperate in our lives?**

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The last aspect of the fruit of the Spirit is temperance or self-control. Here is where we all need to be careful, for who doesn't struggle, in one area or another, with self-mastery? Before one can rule a city, a community, or a church, one has to be able to control his or her own spirit. True temperance is control, not only over food and drink but over every phase of life.

All the above-mentioned aspects are parts of the one fruit of the Spirit. When the Bible describes God's work in our lives, the ethical aspects of holiness have priority over the charismatic gifts. Christlikeness in all its facets is what really matters in the life of the believer. Because the fruit of the Spirit is the common distinguishing mark of all believers everywhere, it produces a visible unity in His church.

**Think about areas of your life in which you should be more self-controlled. Perhaps you are in one area but not so much in another. Why is it important to have, through the power of God, control over all areas? Bring your answer to class on Sabbath.**

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**Further Thought:** “In modern language the passage in Galatians 5:22, 23 could read something like this: ‘The Fruit of the Spirit is an affectionate, lovable disposition, a radiant spirit and a cheerful temper, a tranquil mind and a quiet manner, a forbearing patience in provoking circumstances and with trying people, a sympathetic insight and tactful helpfulness, generous judgment and a big-souled charity, loyalty and reliability under all circumstances, humility that forgets self in the joy of others, in all things self-mastered and self-controlled, which is the final mark of perfecting. This is the kind of character that is the Fruit of the Spirit. Everything is in the word Fruit. It is not by striving, but by abiding; not by worrying, but by trusting; not of works, but of faith.’ ” —S. Chadwick, in Arthur Walkington Pink, *The Holy Spirit* (Bellingham, Wash.: Logos Bible Software, n.d.), chapter 30.

“If the love of the truth is in your heart, you will talk of the truth. You will talk of the blessed hope that you have in Jesus. If you have love in your heart, you will seek to establish and build up your brother in the most holy faith. If a word is dropped that is detrimental to the character of your friend or brother, do not encourage this evil-speaking. It is the work of the enemy. Kindly remind the speaker that the Word of God forbids that kind of conversation.”—Ellen G. White, *Ye Shall Receive Power*; p. 76.

### Discussion Questions:

- 1** In class, talk about the final question at the end of Thursday’s study regarding the need for self-control. Why, if we are saved by grace, is victory over sin so important? After all, isn’t the gospel about forgiveness of sin? At the same time, think of the character of Judas and what the sin of covetousness did to him. What can we learn from his example about the answer to the question about the need for victory? Also, how does what Ellen G. White says here help shed light on the question of the need for victory? “One wrong trait of character, one sinful desire cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 53.
- 2** Why is the fruit of the Spirit more important than any gifts of the Spirit?
- 3** Read aloud 1 Corinthians 13 in class and talk about what it means. Why does Paul put such a big emphasis on the need for love? How can we learn to love the way that Paul talks about showing love here? Why is death to self and abiding in Christ so crucial, especially in loving those whom we truly dislike?

## A Place to Belong

Leila awoke with a heavy heart. It was Sabbath, and she was homesick. She remembered her mother and brother, who would be going to church today.

In Kenya, it seemed that nearly everyone went to church. But in Denmark, where Leila now lived, it seemed that few people attended the fine churches scattered across the city. In fact, she had been so busy in the two months since she had arrived that she hadn't thought much about finding a church either.

Leila had come to Copenhagen to visit her aunt. When the woman suggested that Leila find work as an *au pair* (a live-in babysitter), Leila agreed. She obtained the necessary visa and found a job with a wonderful family who treated her well. She began saving money to attend college when she returned home. But she hadn't found a church home.

Suddenly, she turned on the computer and searched for a Seventh-day Adventist church in Copenhagen. She was thrilled to discover an international Adventist congregation that worshiped in the city. Quickly, she copied down the address. But how could she get there? Her aunt wasn't an Adventist, so Leila decided to take the bus. She found a map and hurried to catch the bus.

Arriving at the place where the Adventists normally met, Leila was dismayed to find the room empty! Then she noticed a letter explaining that the members were on a retreat. The letter gave directions, so Leila hurried to catch a bus to the region outside the city where the retreat was being held.

She got lost several times before she found the retreat center and arrived just as the sermon was ending. But Leila didn't care. She had found fellow believers!

She met Rose from Uganda, who invited her to join her for lunch. Rose introduced Leila to other members of the English-speaking church. She met people from around the world—Iceland, Philippines, Tanzania, and America, as well as from Denmark. The members welcomed her warmly and invited her to join them the next Sabbath, and Leila was determined not to miss another Sabbath of fellowship and worship!

Leila rejoices that she has found her spiritual home in Denmark in the international congregation. She feels loved and nurtured there and in turn welcomes and nurtures others who come.

The international English-language church in Copenhagen represents Adventists from at least 16 countries, yet they find unity and fellowship in their adopted country and their new church home. A portion of your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 2010 helped to provide funds for a new place of worship for this international Adventist congregation. Thank you!



## The Lesson in Brief

► **Key Texts:** *Galatians 5:22–26, John 15:1–8*

► **The Student Will:**

**Know:** Recognize the absolute necessity of abiding in Christ in order to develop the fruit of the Holy Spirit in his or her life.

**Feel:** Experience a deepening desire to spend time with Jesus and develop the fruit of the Spirit.

**Do:** Resolve to spend time with Jesus in prayer, Bible study, and Christian meditation to develop the fruit of the Spirit in each aspect of his or her life.

► **Learning Outline:**

**I. Know: Spirituality and the Fruit of the Spirit**

**A** Can you be an authentic Christian without manifesting the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your own life? Why, or why not?

**B** Of what is the fruit of the Holy Spirit evidence?

**II. Feel: Abiding in Christ and the Fruit of the Spirit**

**A** When feelings are raw and someone speaks an unkind word and you respond with love, kindness, patience, and self-control, what does that do for you? For the relationship?

**B** How do you feel when you do not exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in tense circumstances? What feelings do you have when you are unloving, impatient, or unkind?

**III. Do: Daily Living and the Fruit of the Spirit**

**A** Determine to set aside some time every day to spend time with Jesus and take inventory of your own spiritual life.

**B** Commit a specific amount of time each day to abide in Christ through prayer and a study of the Word.

► **Summary:** The fruit of the Spirit is not a natural human character trait. It is a result of abiding in Jesus that produces a supernatural change in the life of each believer. The fruit of the Spirit is evidence that we have a deeply rooted relationship with Christ. Healthy trees produce healthy fruits in abundance. As Christians, we do not struggle in our strength to produce the fruit of the Spirit. As we abide in Jesus, through Bible study and prayer, He develops this fruit in us.

## Learning Cycle

### ►STEP 1—Motivate

**Spotlight on Scripture:** *Galatians 5:22, 23*

**Key Concept for Spiritual Growth:** The greatest motivation for obedience and service is love. God’s love for us is life transforming. Understanding His love changes us. As we receive His love, we are able to love. Loving God enables us to love others. Apart from God, the human heart is naturally selfish and incapable of genuinely loving.

When we spend time beholding God’s love, revealed in Christ, we are changed. To “walk in the Spirit” (*Gal. 5:25, NKJV*) is to fix our minds on Christ. It is to “abide in [Christ]” (*1 John 4:13, NKJV*). It is to spend time with Christ. As we place priority on our relationship with Christ, His love will flow into our hearts, and the fruit of the Spirit will be manifest in our lives. Ellen G. White states it beautifully: “When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

**Just for Teachers:** This week’s lesson focuses on developing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. We will study each of the character qualities known as the fruit of the Spirit, outlined in Galatians 5:22, 23. These character qualities are really the attributes of Christ’s character. Jesus is loving, patient, kind, good, and unselfish. He always exhibits gentleness and self-control. He reveals faithfulness to the Father’s will and perfect peace, or trust, in His heavenly Father.

As we behold Him, we will become like the One we most admire. Because the Holy Spirit was sent to “testify of” (*John 15:26, NKJV*) and “glorify” (*John 16:14*) Jesus, as we submit to His promptings and yield to His convicting power, the Holy Spirit will testify of and glorify Jesus in our lives. The love of Christ will be revealed in and through us (*1 John 3:1–3, 4:9–11*). It is impossible to really love God and not love the people around us. God’s love is the fountain from which all genuine love flows. Loving Him, we love one another. The more we love God, the more His love flows through us to others (*1 John 4:12–16*). Each of the fruit of the Spirit grows out of our love for God and His love for us.

**Opening Discussion:** In Galatians 5, the apostle Paul talks about “walk[ing] in the Spirit” (*Gal. 5:16*) and the “works of the flesh” (*Gal.*

5:19). He urges us to “crucif[y] the flesh with its passions and desires” (*Gal. 5:24, NKJV*). (See *Gal. 5:17*.) Ask your class what walking “in the Spirit” means in our daily lives. What does it mean to “crucif[y] the flesh”?

Read Galatians 5:22–24, and ask class members to describe how each one of us can manifest the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. Have class members share ways that help them to “crucif[y] the flesh” and “walk in the Spirit.” How have they discovered ways to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal Himself in their lives? Invite class members to share experiences in their devotional lives that they feel are meaningful to their Christian growth.

### Questions for Discussion:

- ❶ What can we learn from the apostle Paul’s expression “walk in the Spirit” (*Gal. 5:16*) about living a life that reveals the fruit of the Spirit?
- ❷ Is the fruit of the Spirit something we develop, or is it a gift somehow given to us automatically by God? Explain. If we develop it, how do we develop it, and where does the strength to develop it come from?

## ►STEP 2—Explore

**Just for Teachers:** Modern medical research has discovered that a plant-based diet reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, most cancers, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. You do not need a different diet to reduce the risk of each one of these diseases. Eating a wide variety of fruits, nuts, grains, and vegetables reduces not only the risk of coronary artery disease but also the risk of other killer diseases of the twenty-first century.

The same is true of spiritual growth. We do not need a different approach for each of the spiritual maladies that afflict us. Impatience, unkindness, jealousy, envy, and lust all have the same cure—Jesus. Anger, hatred, envy, and bitterness all find their solution in Him. The fruit of the Spirit is the external evidence that we have spent time with Christ, and our hearts are overflowing with His love.

## Bible Commentary

### I. Growing in Christ and the Fruit of the Spirit (*Review John 15:4 with the class.*)

Jesus is the ultimate solution to all of our spiritual problems. He stated this eternal truth: “ ‘Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me’ ” (*John 15:4, NKJV*). To abide in Christ is to develop a continuous, daily relationship with Him. Branches do not grow and produce

fruit if they are united to the vine one day and broken off the next. Some individuals ride high on a wave of religious emotion one day and seem to walk in the valley of neglect the next. A vibrant, meaningful relationship with Jesus that reflects the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the life is not an on-again, off-again experience. It is a daily, constant communion with Christ.

By coming to Him, abiding in Him, and resting in His love, we become loving, patient, kind, gentle, and self-controlled. Consider this powerful statement: “The root sends its nourishment through the branch to the outermost twig. So Christ communicates the current of spiritual strength to every believer. So long as the soul is united to Christ, there is no danger that it will wither or decay.

“The life of the vine will be manifest in fragrant fruit on the branches. ‘He that abideth in Me,’ said Jesus, ‘and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.’ When we live by faith on the Son of God, the fruits [*sic*] of the Spirit will be seen in our lives; not one will be missing.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 676.

The key to manifesting the fruit of the Spirit in our lives is not placing each one of its characteristics on some spiritual checklist and checking it off when we supposedly have achieved our goal. Rather, it is focusing on knowing Jesus and letting Him reveal the fruit of His Spirit within us. When a farmer’s fruit trees produce an abundant harvest, he or she rejoices. He or she glories in the overflowing harvest. It is similar with God. Our heavenly Father rejoices when we allow the Holy Spirit to produce His fruit in our lives (*John 15:11*). When, through divine grace, we become partakers of the divine nature, the character of God is vindicated before the universe in the controversy between good and evil. (See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 1043.)

**Discussion Questions:** The question is not, does Jesus long to abide in us? The question is, will we allow Him to do so? Will we spend time getting to know Him as a Friend? All friendships require time.

- ❶ Read John 15:4, 7. What relationship does abiding in Christ have with reading the Word?
- ❷ How does Christ abide in us? Is this some vague, mystical experience, or are there some very real ways in which Jesus lives in our lives? Explain.
- ❸ What relationship does developing the fruit of the Spirit have with abiding in Christ?

### ►STEP 3—Apply

**Just for Teachers:** Read Galatians 5:22–24 with your class. Briefly review each one of the characteristics of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Ask different members of the class to define one of the nine characteristics

of the fruit listed in Galatians 5. For example, what is love? How do you define joy? What is peace? How would you describe a person who manifests long-suffering or kindness? Take this approach with each of the fruit of the Spirit.

1. Which of these nine characteristics of the fruit of the Holy Spirit do you have difficulty manifesting in your life? What do you think the reason is for this difficulty? What can you do to remedy the situation?

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2. What are the issues in your life that keep you from a vital, life-changing relationship with Christ? Commit to surrendering those issues into His hands.

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## ►STEP 4—Create

**Just for Teachers:** The different characteristics of the fruit of the Holy Spirit are not some unrealistic ideal for the average believer, available only for “supersaints.” They are the natural outgrowth of spending time with Jesus. Help your class to recognize the vital importance of spending time with Jesus every day so that the Holy Spirit can develop His fruit in their lives.

### Activities:

- ① Ask your class to spend a few minutes reviewing the list of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22–24. Have them write down the areas in which they struggle most.
- ② Encourage each class member to spend a moment in prayer at the end of the class, surrendering these undesirable character traits to God, asking Him to develop the fruit of the Holy Spirit in his or her life.