



ST SAVIOUR'S CHURCH

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

A SERIES GUIDE

LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE,
KINDNESS, GOODNESS,
FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS,
SELF-CONTROL

WELCOME

THIS SERVES AS A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO SIT ALONGSIDE THE PREACHING SERIES, 'FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT' AT ST SAVIOUR'S CHURCH. OUR PRAYER IS THAT IT PROVIDES WAYS FOR YOU TO GO DEEPER IN YOUR FAITH, AND FURTHER EXPLORE THE THE BEAUTY OF THESE NINE CHARACTERISTICS: PARTICULARLY IN HUB AND DWELL SETTINGS.

A SUMMARY OF THE TALK WILL BE SET OUT, FOLLOWED BY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND RESOURCES TO GO DEEPER.



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INTRODUCTION



IN BRIEF

This series we're exploring the Fruit of the Spirit which the Bible describes in Galatians 5,22-23. It's one fruit with nine recognisable characteristics. The fruit of the Spirit is a natural result of the work of the Spirit. It's a bit like organic growth: invisible, internal, interdependent and inevitable. Jesus tells us in John 15 that we have one job: to remain in Him. When we do this, the fruit of the Spirit will grow.



REFLECT

What do you think about these nine characteristics? Are there any you would expect to be there or any that surprise you? What do you think about this idea of these flowing naturally from the work of the Spirit? How might we create space for the Spirit to work?

What practical things can we put in place to truly 'remain in Him'? What can we do when it feels like we've become separated from Jesus?






DEEPER

Watch the BibleProject '[Tree of Life](#)' Video - how might this story impact how we view the Fruit of the Spirit?

What spiritual practices and disciplines do you think would be helpful to implement in order to embed the Fruit of the Spirit into your life?

What characteristics in particular do you want to go after this Summer? (How can you encourage one another in this?)






FAITHFULNESS



IN BRIEF



Faithfulness requires loyalty and courage. We are called to be faithful, both to God and to those around us, but can only do so because of Christ's faithfulness to us (Galatians 2,16),

Faithfulness is one of God's defining characteristics, as set out in Exodus 34:6. God gives us the example, as ever, in that He never lets us down (Luke 15:11-32, Parable of the Prodigal Son).



REFLECT

How would you define faithfulness?

Can you think of a time when you've experienced someone being faithful to you, or you've been faithful to someone else?

How can we remain faithful to God in the midst of our busy, demanding lives?

Who is God calling you to remain faithful to, and how can you act on that this week?





DEEPER

Watch the BibleProject '[Faithful](#)' Video - how does this affect your view of the faithfulness of God?

Where has your faithfulness to God lapsed recently? How can we encourage one-another to remain faithful?

Where has your faithfulness to people lapsed recently? How can we encourage one-another to remain faithful?

How might obedience and perseverance come to inhabit your faith, and impact on your life? ([A Long Obedience in the Same Direction](#) by Eugene Peterson)






GENTLENESS



IN BRIEF

In the Bible, gentleness is seen as a righteous strength shaped by love; meekness. This meekness is humbly and sacrificially used to achieve God's purpose of salvation (restorative justice) for a sinful and broken world, not condemnation. Jesus is the ultimate example and outworking of God's gentleness. He speaks truth, even painful truth, but in doing so allows the truth to be received through his sacrificial love.




REFLECT

How would you define gentleness?

Can you find other examples in the Gospels where you see examples of Jesus' gentleness?

What kind of people in the Gospels experience the gentleness of Jesus?

As a Christian, would you say you've experienced the gentleness of God? If so, in what ways?



DEEPER



Read Isaiah 53 then John 8:1-11. The religious teachers use the Torah law to condemn the adulterous woman (and Jesus) for their own self-righteous gain.

- Why do the religious teachers walk away after Jesus' words in v7?
- How is Jesus able to speak gentle salvation to the adulterous woman in v11? (hint: Isaiah 53, John 3:16-17).



Are we in danger of condemning ourselves or others (through our words and/or actions) to standards we cannot keep ourselves?

How can we ask Jesus (and one another) to help us?

By the power of Jesus' Spirit within you, what would Jesus' gentleness look like towards yourself and to others this week?



John 3:16-17, Matthew 12:20
and John 8:1-11






PATIENCE




IN BRIEF



Growth and life take time and patience. We live in a time that values efficiency and suggests “you can have what you want and have it now”. The life of faith challenges us to a ‘bigger picture’ view of life: changing our perspective to how God sees things and what is important in God’s Kingdom. This enables us to show patience in our circumstances and to those around us. Suggested passage - Luke 2:21.



REFLECT




Can you think of a time today when patience might have been useful?

What might it look like to be patient in your present situation?

What can we learn from the examples of patience in the Bible?






DEEPER



Watch the BibleProject video ‘[Slow to Anger](#)’. How does this depiction of God’s patience affect how we act? How might we ‘run with patience the race set before us’ in our current situation?

If we know God to be King of Kings, how might it impact on our patience?

What does the daily trusting in God look like for you at the moment?



SELF-CONTROL

IN BRIEF

If God is our heart's desire, we can (and sometimes without effort, will) realign our lives under Him. Part of this process is often letting go of things that tempt us or unhelpful coping mechanisms that we know are not good for us. The struggle to live a holy life can be individual (we all struggle with different things) but fellowship and accountability with other Christians is key.

REFLECT

Can we identify with what Paul wrote to the Roman church in **Romans 7:15**?

What practical strategies and techniques can we deploy to help us overcome our weaknesses and temptations?

Is thinking about this in terms of being involved in a spiritual warfare helpful (see Colossians 1, 15-16; and Ephesians 6, 12)? What practical difference could it make in the way we approach dealing with weaknesses and temptations?

DEEPER

Reflect on about Jesus being tempted in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11) and then in the Luke 22, 39-46. What can we learn from Jesus about how to deal with temptation?

Richard Foster in his 1980 book *Celebration of Discipline* lists a number of disciplines or practices that Christians down the ages and from different traditions have found helpful in their paths of spiritual growth. Do any of these resonate with you as a path to deepening your spiritual life? (Meditation, Prayer, Fasting, Studying and reflecting on the bible, Simplicity, Solitude, Submission, Service) 1 John 1:9 says If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. What part does confession play in your spiritual life? What does this look like in practice? You might want to think about using the general **confession** - remembering that after it there is **absolution**.

Matthew 4:1-11 or Romans 12:1-2.

GOODNESS AND KINDNESS

IN BRIEF

It's not just being good or kind to those we love or who deserve it, but seeing people how God sees them means we can show everyone goodness and kindness - whether we think they deserve it or not (Matthew 25: 31-46 Parable of the Sheep & Goats). God only ever is and does good, even in the face of evil, only with the Holy Spirit's help can we do likewise (Matthew 5, Sermon on the Mount).

REFLECT

In what ways has your behaviour and the way you think of others changed as a result of following Jesus? (Or have you seen this happen in someone else, slowly or dramatically?) Have you ever experienced the Holy Spirit cause you to act in a good or kind way when you know that you couldn't have done it by yourself?

Read Luke 6:27-36. Notice, share and discuss your reactions to this passage and consider how we are to apply these teachings to our lives today, bearing in mind the fruit of the Spirit.

DEEPER

If you are being honest with yourself, what are the motives behind your good / kind acts?

Look at Galatians 5:16-18. To what extent do you feel this conflict between the flesh and the spirit in your own life? Reflect on what Jesus means when he says to Mary 'Only one thing is needed' (Luke 10:42)



PEACE

IN BRIEF

We are not peaceful people, left to our own devices we bicker, compete, and fight. But we all crave true peace. Peace from God is a gift given in Christ not a rite earned through our own efforts. Christ's peace is something the world cannot understand because Christ makes peace by sacrificing Himself even for His enemies. When we anchor ourselves in Jesus, we can know true peace. We can then bring peace into the situations we face. Suggested passage - John 14,27 - Jesus offers his disciples peace just before His death.

REFLECT

What does peace mean to you?

How could our own lives be transformed by being more peaceful?

How does the example of Jesus (e.g. turning the other cheek) differ so much from what we currently see in the World?

DEEPER

Paul writes in Philippians 4v6 "Do not be anxious about anything, but in prayer and petition present everything to the Lord" - what impact could presenting everything to the Lord have on our lives?

How do we view wider peace not as an unattainable goal but something we can influence through our own actions and prayer?

In John 14v27 Jesus says "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" - How do you think the peace offered by Jesus differs from what the World gives, and why does this matter?


Watch the [Bible Project explanation of peace](#): what does this do to your own personal view on peace?



LOVE



IN BRIEF



Love is the first & most important fruit of the Spirit & at the heart of our faith. As humans, we understand love not by description but by action. Jesus's life & death showed us God's love. Passages to look at:

John 13 (Jesus washing His disciples feet & telling us to do likewise); John 15 (Jesus's teaching that we will be fruitful by remaining in God's love). If we remain in God's love, then we can overflow with His love for people, places & situations we're in



REFLECT



How do you understand love / what makes you feel loved?
What do Jesus' life, death & resurrection mean to you?
What does "remaining" in God look like for you each day/week - do you have any particular rhythms/practices you find helpful?
What are the people/places/situations you feel called to at the moment that you need God to give with His love for?



DEEPER

Choose a few verses from John 15 (e.g. verses 1-4, 9-11 or 12-17) or if you want a longer passage, John 13 v1-7 & read & reflect on them using lectio divina

How to do lectio divina.





JOY

IN BRIEF

The world idolises a happy life. The Bible is honest about the realities of life, but promises that we can find supernatural joy in God in the midst of them; a joy that is deeper than our circumstances. Paul is a great example of this as he writes from prison about hardships, yet testifies to a deep joy and rejoicing.

REFLECT

What does joy mean to you?

How does the biblical story of creation, decreation and recreation lead us into joy?

How do we cultivate joy in such an uncertain and complex cultural moment?

DEEPER

Watch the [BibleProject video on Joy](#); how does this affect your personal view of joy?

How might we 'choose joy' today, cultivating the practice of thankfulness?

Reflect on the quote 'anyone who counts the cost of discipleship has completely failed to grasp the greatness of the reward' (Matthew Beare). How might this impact on our sense of joy?



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