

## Unpacking the Preach

Date Sunday 22nd August 2021  
Sermon Title Fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace  
Bible Passage Galatians 5:16-26

### **Introduction**

Take time to read the passage again and reflect on the below questions:

- Are there any new or different things that the scriptures have spoken to you about?

### **Recapping the preach**

Nick spoke about the ongoing battle with the sinful nature and how the challenge for Christians to grow the fruit of the Spirit, is making sure we feed the Spirit and not the flesh.

Feeding the flesh will only lead to being mastered by the passions and desires (v24) that lead to destruction. Feeding the Spirit, keeping in step with it, allows Christ to become our master who will generate in us a desire to hear, obey and discern from him the way in which we should go.

Paul knew the early church wouldn't survive with warring factions and Nick pointed to 1 Corinthians as an example of what feeding the sinful nature leads to, behaviour linked to that of v19-21 of our passage.

Nick used these examples to see how we today can become conceited, provoking and envying each other (v26) which doesn't bear a good witness to the world in which we live. Good habits we know enables the fruit of the Spirit to grow and keep us in step with God's will for our lives.

Nick reminded us that "God is love" (1 John 4) and it is the greatest gift of all (1 Cor 13) and without it the fruit of the Spirit is incomplete. Joy comes from God as a result of faith and obedience and the amount you receive is dependent on how close you walk with God. The joy of the Lord enables rejoicing in times of trouble (David & Job) and is alluring to those who are perishing. Peace is a result of having a right relationship with God and others (Rom 5) that guards our hearts and minds

(Philippians 4) and is part of our full armour of God (Eph 6). Living by and keeping in step with the Spirit grows the fruit of unselfish love, true joy and lasting peace. This is the nature of God we strive to feed.

- **Questions for reflection**

- The word “desires” in Galatians 5:16-17 literally means “over-desires” – when we feel that we must have something. It is an all-controlling drive or longing for something. It is treating a good thing as though it is a God thing. Q: What does this tell us about how our sinful nature works?
- Which of the works of the flesh are most common and most acceptable in our culture?
- In contrast to that, which aspects of the fruit of the Spirit are least noticed and celebrated within the church at large?
- Think through those first 3 fruit of the Spirit segments of Love, Joy & Peace in Galatians 5:22-23. According to (v. 18, 22, 25) what is our part in producing these qualities? What is the Spirit’s part?
- Which of the segments of this fruit do you particularly need to ask God to grow in you through His Spirit?
- How would you practically describe a believer who is walking in the Spirit?
- What are the signs that a believer is out of step with the Spirit?

- **Going Deeper**

- Getting Personal - which works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21 do you struggle with?
- Don’t simply try to change your behaviour or your feelings. Ask yourself, “Why am I gratifying my sinful nature this way? How am I looking to get myself security, satisfaction, or significance rather than allowing Jesus to give it to me?”
- How can you see the segments of Love, Joy & Peace within the fruit of the Spirit growing in your life? Do you have natural characteristics which could be confused with the fruit of the Spirit? How can you tell the difference? Which of these three do you chronically lack?

## **Response**

- Allow the Holy Spirit to search your heart
- Trust that what he finds, he will use for good and not condemn.
- Seek the Lord's help to cultivate his Love, Joy & Peace in your life.

#### Prayer pointers

- Lord, give me wisdom to know when I am feeding the flesh, rather than the Spirit.
- Help me to seek the will of God rather than my own, by being ready to hear, obey and discern the mind of Christ.
- Grow in me and the church the fruit of unselfish love, true joy and lasting peace, that only you can give.

#### **Additional resources:**

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>