

# The Transforming Power of the Fruit of the Spirit

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## Mankind's Greatest Challenge:

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

There is a fair amount of debate about where to draw the lines, but it is proposed that the best Biblical understanding of being created in God's image describes mankind as having a body, a soul (mind, will, and emotions), and a spirit.

Genesis 2:17 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup> but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**"

As described, when Adam and Eve rebelled, eating the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, they did not instantly die, but their spirits died, leaving all mankind to inherit a broken and corrupted spirit. Thus, God's law is written on our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33, Romans 2:14-15) and it follows that love, joy, peace, and patience are fundamental needs of mankind.

Galatians 5:22,23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; **against such things there is no law.**

God identifies these important qualities, and the statement, "Against such things, there is no law", affirms that the fruits of the Spirit are common for all mankind.

However, the consequence of mankind having a fallen spirit is powerful selfish desires, described by God as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). Therefore, mankind has tremendous internal conflicts between powerful selfish desires and ingrained desires of love, joy, peace, and patience.

Given these universal needs, several avenues have been promoted to obtain these qualities:

**Marriage:** God instituted marriage, knowing that if spouses strive for Love, Joy, and Peace, they will receive tremendous benefits. The importance of marriage and families has been recognized by every culture throughout history.

**Family:** One of God's mercies is the institution of families. To the extent that parents overcome their selfish desires and instill love, joy, peace, and patience in their children, these virtues have the potential to be embraced and passed down through many generations.

However, when parents fail and families are broken, these deep desires are attempted to be fulfilled through works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21), yielding every form of violence and immorality. Sadly, each succeeding broken generation propagates destruction, which has woven bloody wars down through history.

**Religion:** To help cope with mankind's internal struggles, various religions have been invented. Important tenets of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and most other religions are to strive for love, joy, and *inner* peace. However, the selfishness of the heart corrupts these qualities, interpreting and redefining love, joy, and inner peace to be compatible with each religion's other core principles.

Another major problem with religions is that selfishness and greed motivate some to aspire to positions of leadership because they seek “peace” by being in positions to command and control others.

It is also important to understand the difference between genuine faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and forms of Christian “religions”. The foundational difference between genuine faith and religion is Jesus Christ. Genuine faith is discussed below under the fruit of Love. Christian religious sects and cults may give lip service to Jesus Christ, but in truth, they reject Him, His sacrificial love, and demand obedience to the organization’s leadership instead of to God.

**Education and Counseling:** Another method of developing love, joy, peace, and patience is through education and counseling. However, because of the deceitfulness of the heart (Jeremiah 29:11) to the degree that humanistic attempts fail, these core desires are often attempted to be fulfilled through the works of the flesh:

Galatians 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident: **sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,** <sup>20</sup> **idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,** <sup>21</sup> **envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.**

Sadly, history is full of wars, death, and destruction as the results of the works of the flesh.

### **God’s Provision for Love, Joy, Peace, and Patience:**

God is rich in mercy, and He loves mankind, so He has provided the ultimate resources to develop love, joy, peace, patience, and other fruits of the Spirit.

### **The Fruit of Love:**

God desires close relationships with us, so He demonstrated the ultimate expression of love by sending His precious son, Jesus Christ, as a sacrifice to pay for the penalty of our sins (John 3:16, Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:9,10, Ephesians 2:4,5). This act of love required the creator God of the universe, the Lord Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:16-20), to humble Himself by coming in the

form of a man. Despite being innocent, He willingly subjected Himself to a brutal death on the cross. While Jesus Christ knew He would rise from the grave, conquering sin and death, He also understood that He would be exposed to the ugliness and impurity of our sins for eternity. For a Holy God, this is a greater act of love than many realize.

Unlike any man-made gods who *demand* obedience from their followers, the Lord Jesus Christ *demonstrated* sacrificial love for mankind. This sacrifice allowed mankind with a sinful nature to develop relationships with the Holy God. When individuals embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, God further demonstrates love by completely washing their sins away and clothing them with Christ's righteousness. Then, with unblemished righteousness, the Holy Spirit is enabled to enter and reside within Believers, causing their spirits to be brought to life. Thus, they are born-again and set on a path to develop close-abiding relationships with God.

God's love is a priceless gift, but when He reveals it, many intuitively know that they need to surrender their selfish wants and desires, so they reject it. But those who embrace God's Love receive the ultimate expression of acknowledgment and love. Sadly, many Christians are presented with God's tremendous demonstration of love, but it takes many years for them to be gripped by it. They may initially desire or academically understand the importance of loving God, but without the fruit of Love, they are limited by their determination and willpower. The fruit of Love is not only understanding His love, but when Believers are gripped by it, they receive tremendous power and desire to love God and others.

Individuals who receive love from their parents have tremendous advantages and are typically more mature and successful. However, regardless of the high quality of an individual's family, if they embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, they receive a perfect love. God's love is especially important for individuals who did not receive Love, Joy, Peace, or Patience from their parents. They must embrace their adoption into God's family and hold fast to God being their new father. Regardless of the quality of family, to the extent that the fruit of Love is established, Believers will have the power and desire to develop the rest of the fruits of the Spirit.

Note: The fundamental need for love explains why fatherless children are so unsuccessful in life by every metric.

### **The Fruit of Joy:**

God identifies the second important fruit to be Joy. Scripture does not directly associate Joy with meaningful relationships, but one of the greatest sources of Joy for most individuals is substantial relationships. Therefore, after being embraced by God's love, it is proposed that the greatest source of Joy is when Believers build close friendships (an abiding relationship) with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Individuals from good families, even members of religions and groups with good characteristics, receive joy from such associations. Even within cults, despite unreasonable demands of loyalty, meaningful relationships create powerful bonds and joy.

Many attempt to fulfill the need for joy through marriage. Marriages built on friendship (Philio-based love), regardless of whether the spouses are Christian or not, have higher success rates and Joy. Genuine friendships require agreement, sacrifice, communication, and commitment, which are the result of the development of Love, Joy, and Peace.

Conversely, marriages entered into through self-centered romantic and sexual desires (eros-based love) are much likelier to fail. Ironically, individuals who desperately seek Love and Joy are willing to make great sacrifices for “meaningful” connections. However, pre-marital sex and other compromises ultimately reveal that one or both partners were seeking self-gratification, not meaningful relationships. When short-term exhilarations fail to produce genuine joy, selfish decisions yield guilt, hurts, and feelings of betrayal. Such marriages are devastating to spouses, even the “guilty” spouse, not only because of the unfaithfulness and strife, but because the loss of Joy is significant. Note: If an individual is in such a relationship, their only path to true Love and Joy is to diligently seek the Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.**

Marriages that produce the purest love and Joy are developed when both spouses demonstrate Agape love, which is only possible when both spouses walk in the light together with the Lord Jesus Christ. As the spouses develop abiding friendships with the Lord Jesus Christ, they receive the ultimate source of Joy, which is amplified by their fellowship. Note: If Christians are unequally yoked with non-Christians, they can have good Philo-based marriages, but it is impossible for them to experience the purest form of Joy.

Therefore, it is proposed that the primary goal of discipleship is to first help Believers be embraced by God’s love and then to guide them to develop a constant awareness and dependency on the Lord Jesus Christ (an abiding relationship). As the nature of these friendships is eternal, they are the ultimate source of Joy.

Many mentoring attempts encourage Believers to spend daily time in prayer, Bible reading, and meditation on God’s Word. These are all noble activities, but if they are reduced to checklist responsibilities, the point of building a close friendship with God is easily lost. Self-disciplined individuals may appear to be spiritually mature, even having significant “successful” ministries, but if they fail to develop an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, they will not receive or be empowered by the Joy of the Lord. God even warns that regardless of the extent of spiritual “accomplishments,” without an abiding relationship with Him, they are at risk of

hearing, “Depart from me, I never knew you” (Matthew 7:21-23). Therefore, it is critical for Believers to walk in the light with the Lord Jesus Christ and in true fellowship with other Believers.

Some examples of those who have great Joy and walk in fellowship can be found in Appendix A in [All Honor to the King- Discipleship](#).

### **The Fruit of Peace:**

God does not specifically describe how to develop Peace. But when Believers embrace their identity in the Lord Jesus Christ, guilt, shame, anxiety, worry, and anger, the enemies of Peace have no grip on them. Therefore, it is proposed that the Fruit of Peace is developed and maintained when Believers understand and are gripped by the truths of their identities in the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Guilt:** Regardless of whether individuals are Believers or not, there will be failures that produce guilt. Understanding that God views Believers with the same righteousness as He views the Lord Jesus Christ, and He completely cleanses them from all unrighteousness when they repent (1 John 1:9), the product is Peace.

Titus 3:4-7 But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, <sup>5</sup> He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we did in righteousness, but in accordance with His mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,** <sup>6</sup> whom He **richly poured out upon us** through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that **being justified by His grace** we would be made **heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**

**Shame:** When Believers are born again, in some cases, God supernaturally releases them from addictions. But, for those who aren’t instantly healed, their Peace is lost to shame. Therefore, they must seek to be gripped by God’s Love, to develop an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and to embrace their identities as new creations.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation.** The old has passed away; behold, **the new has come.**

**Anxiety:** Another important element of the identity of Believers is that God’s Holy Spirit dwells within them, sealing their identity (Ephesians 1:13-14).

1 Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that **God's Spirit dwells in you?**

Being the temple of the Holy Spirit also gives Believers confidence and Peace that, regardless of circumstances, feelings, or physical conditions, God will never leave or forsake them (Romans

8:38-39). Furthermore, with righteousness and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Believers can freely enter into God's presence and make requests directly to God.

Philippians 4:6,7 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And **the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding**, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The combination of being embraced by God's Love, abiding with the Lord Jesus Christ, and the freedom to make requests directly to God provides a Peace that surpasses all understanding.

Note: There are other causes of anxiety and depression, but unresolved sin is a major contributor. Genuine repentance and confidence of having God's forgiveness yield tremendous Peace.

**Worry:** God chooses every Believer and raises them to be seated with the Lord Jesus Christ, giving them a level of authority with Him. God shows Believers immeasurable riches of grace and kindness, including confidence that God is actively transforming them for honorable works.

Ephesians 2:6-10 and **raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,** <sup>7</sup> **so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.** <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> **For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Therefore, worry is replaced by Peace for Believers who grasp their new identities.

**Comments concerning the fruit of Peace:** Elements of embracing the identity of Believers conquer all enemies of inner Peace. It follows that a critical goal must be to guide Believers to be embraced by God's Love (Love). The second goal needs to encourage them to build an abiding relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ (Joy). The third goal is to help them grasp their identities in Him (Peace).

### **The Fruit of Patience:**

A reflection of being created in God's image is the desire for meaningful purpose, goals, and creativity. However, challenges, struggles, and setbacks are inevitable. The works of the flesh attempt to defend against the challenges of life by seeking riches, power in various forms, and positions of authority to control others. Without Patience, the works of the flesh produce anger, discouragement, sometimes hatred, and desires of revenge, which destroy Love, Joy, and Peace. It is significant that God does not include purpose and creativity as a fruit of the Spirit, but instead, Patience.

**Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.**

It is counterintuitive for the natural man, but God's path for developing Patience is for Believers to die to themselves and bow to Jesus Christ as Lord. When Believers humbly crucify themselves and live by faith in the Son of God, being dead to their selfish wants and desires, problems, disappointments, and failures have no power over them, yielding the ultimate source of Patience.

**Romans 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.**

But God does not want zombies, He wants Believers who are the essence of the Lord Jesus Christ living through them. In addition to perfecting the fruit of Patience, Believers become living sacrifices, which is the highest honor and worship of God.

For Christians who have a weak grasp of God's love, a poor friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and a poor identity in Him, when they are challenged to make Jesus Christ Lord, their only resource are pride, stubbornness, and determination. Such Christians often look, sound, and appear to be spiritual for a time, but experience has shown that some get tired, frustrated, and reject their relationship with God. Sadly, there are examples of men with over 20 years of successful ministry who later rejected the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, when Believers enjoy the fruits of Love, Joy, and Peace, they have tremendous desires to reflect love back to God, to worship Him by dying to their selfish desires, and bowing to Jesus Christ as Lord. *Such sacrifices are not out of obligation, religion, or fear, but a delight to reflect love back to God.*

God warns of three enemies. The "world", the result of others striving for Love, Joy, and Peace at the expense of others (the works of the flesh), the internal selfish wants and desires of the heart, and the spiritual forces of darkness that oppose God and hate His creation of mankind. While there will be strife, turmoil, and wars, God encourages Believers to be thankful in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:18) and even joyful (James 1:2-4). However, thankfulness and joy in dire circumstances can only be accomplished as the fruit of Patience is perfected.

Of course, there will be failures. When Believers climb down from their crosses, claim rights, and seek to fulfill their wants and desires, temptations lead to sins. The great news is that, while there are always negative consequences of sin, God is rich in love and mercy, and when Believers repent and once again return to their crosses, God fully forgives and restores them, promoting more Love, Joy, Peace, and Patience in their lives.

### **Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, and Gentleness:**

The fruits of Love, Joy, Peace, and Patience involve a vertical relationship of Love between Believers and God. It is proposed that as power flows down from these fruits, Believers are enabled to demonstrate more perfect love through Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, and Gentleness. Together, these vertical and horizontal fruits fulfill the Greatest Commandment (Matthew 22:37-39).

Because the terms Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, and Gentleness are relatively synonymous, there are challenges to understanding God's selection for these words. Kindness and gentleness are specifically related. Upon reflection, it is proposed that these fruits define four significant elements of love.

#### **The Fruit of Kindness:**

There is an intimate relationship between the fruit of Love (between Believers and God) and Kindness, demonstrated by love for others.

I John 4:7-12 Beloved, let us love one another, for **love is from God**, (Kindness) and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God (the fruit of Love). <sup>8</sup> Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him (the fruit of Joy and Peace). <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another (Kindness). <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us (the fruit of Joy) and his love is perfected in us (the fruits of Love and Kindness).

A hallmark of being kind and tenderhearted is forgiving others, not desiring harm or seeking revenge.

Ephesians 4:32 Be **kind** to one another, **tenderhearted**, **forgiving** one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

The classic example of Kindness is the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37). The hatred toward Samaritans amplifies God's point of the importance of forgiving, being tenderhearted, and treating all with respect. God does not reveal the motives of the Good Samaritan, but the Samaritan placed the needs of the victim ahead of his time, energy, and money, demonstrating genuine Kindness.



## The Fruit of Goodness:

Rom 8:28,29 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew **he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son**, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

The fruit of Goodness is revealed as Believers are conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. Obedience and maintaining an abiding relationship with Him allow Believers to know God and develop sincere respect for Him (fear of the Lord- Proverbs 9:10). With wisdom and an understanding of God's heart, His Word transforms and renews their mind (2 Timothy 3:16, Romans 12:2). Then as Believers are able to discern good and evil (Hebrews 5:14), God challenges them to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21), thus the fruit of Goodness.

It follows that a significant element of Goodness is defending the weak, ministering to others, and appropriate tough love, especially proper discipline and guidance in raising children.

Matthew 5:13-16 **"You are the salt of the earth**, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. <sup>14</sup> **"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> **In the same way, let your light shine before others**, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.**

Goodness strives to do what is right and to restrain evil. Given the severe consequences of sin, with the correct motivation, restraining evil reveals genuine love. Sadly, when Believers are apathetic towards evil, they fail to be salt and light or to yield the fruit of Goodness. Therefore, sharing the Good News of God's love, mentoring others (especially fathers/ parents), ministering, and serving others is Goodness.

Goodness is produced as a result of power flowing down from God's Love and Believers walking with the Lord Jesus Christ (Joy). Whereas, motives of earning God's approval, gaining spiritual riches, or striving to be famous before men yield counterfeit Goodness, motivated by the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.

## The Fruit of Faithfulness:

As Believers manifest the foundational fruits of the Spirit, it is natural for them to develop true integrity, the fruit of Faithfulness.

Psalms 15:2-5 He who walks blamelessly (*Love and Joy*) and does what is right (*Patience, and Goodness*) and **speaks truth** in his heart; <sup>3</sup> who **does not slander** with his

tongue and **does no evil** to his neighbor, **nor takes up a reproach** against his friend; (*Kindness*) <sup>4</sup> in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but who honors those who fear the Lord; **who swears to his own hurt and does not change**; <sup>5</sup> who does not put out his money at interest and does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved.

The fruit of Faithfulness is revealed by Biblical integrity. All forms of dishonesty and falsehood are enemies of Faithfulness. The lack of integrity is demonstrated when promises are not kept, ill-gotten gain is sought after, or evil is spoken about others.

The first four of the 10 Commandments address our relationship with God (Exodus 20:3-11) and correlate to the fruits of Love, Joy, Peace, and Patience. Commands 5 through 10 all require Faithfulness and demonstrate integrity:

Exodus 20:12-17 **"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. <sup>13</sup> "You shall not murder. <sup>14</sup> "You shall not commit adultery. <sup>15</sup> "You shall not steal. <sup>16</sup> "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. <sup>17</sup> "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."**

Not respecting authority, murder, adultery, stealing, bearing false witness, and coveting are all failures of integrity and loving others. Whereas Faithfulness is a key element of loving others.

### **The Fruit of Gentleness:**

Gentleness is fairly synonymous with Kindness and Goodness, but with an important emphasis on maintaining peace, often requiring reconciliation with others.

Luke 6:35,36 **But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.**

It is easy to be gentle with those who love us, but showing mercy and love to enemies and strangers is an important element of love (Gentleness). It is natural to oppose enemies, but responding as heavy-handed bullies is not Gentleness.

A lack of Gentleness becomes especially obvious for those in positions of authority, be it husbands, fathers, managers, Church leaders, or work environments. Gentleness is the expression of power under control in all areas of leadership.

Romans 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

As Representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20), there will be conflicts when engaged in battles between good and evil. While it is not always possible to live peaceably with enemies, an important characteristic of Gentleness is striving to be at peace with all.

2 Corinthians 5:17-19 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup> that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

A major aspect of living peaceably is the effort and ability of reconciliation. As Believers have been reconciled to God, one of the highest demonstrations of love is to work to reconcile conflicts, especially for them to be reconciled with God (Colossians 1:20).

### **Conclusions of Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, and Gentleness:**

The fruits of the Spirit reveal four significant aspects of Love:

1. Kindness, showing love and respect to others.
2. Goodness, overcoming evil with good, serving, and ministering to others.
3. Faithfulness, dependable integrity.
4. Gentleness, responding with gentleness to all, including enemies, and being peacemakers (Matthew 5:9).

These fruits can be accomplished through humanistic efforts, but the ultimate power comes through Love, Joy, Peace, and Patience.

### **The Fruit of Self-Control:**

It follows that the fruit of Self-control is intimately related to all the other fruits. To the extent that individuals do not feel loved, acknowledged, and valued (the fruit of Love), when they don't have lasting meaningful relationships (the fruit of Joy), and when they don't have solid identities or purpose (the fruit of Peace), they usually seek comfort and solace in unhealthy relationships, habits, and vices. Such unhealthy activities often lead individuals to be entrapped by cruel taskmasters of addictions. The good news is that regardless of bad family, challenging life circumstances, and addictions, the ultimate solution lies in developing healthy forms of Love, Joy, and Peace. These fruits yield tremendous power and desire for Believers to die to themselves and to bow to Jesus Christ as Lord (Patience). Together, these qualities generate transformative strength to overcome addictions.

Proverbs 4:23 **Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.**

Some individuals maintain self-control by diligently keeping their hearts with determination and discipline. Self-control is vital, yet without the power from Love, Joy, Peace, and Patience, individuals are vulnerable to being overwhelmed by anger, fear, sadness, anxiety, depression, and other negative emotions. Therefore, it is proposed that Love, Joy, Peace, and Patience must be developed alongside Self-control to effectively overcome addictions.

### **Recommendations:**

Given the importance of instilling God's love, it is recommended that fathers/ parents be challenged and equipped to guide their children to understand their parents' love and God's unconditional love. Some have proposed that children should feel that God loves them, the foundation of the Gospel, by the time they are 2 years old. This is the beginning of nurturing all the fruits of the Spirit, which dynamically transform their lives.

The next important challenge for mentoring children (and Believers) is to guide them to build a close friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The goal should be constant awareness and communication between them and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Parents/ fathers should be challenged and equipped to teach the truths of the Bible to their children with an emphasis on understanding not only the Gospel but the identity of Believers being chosen members of God's family.

If these first three goals are instilled into the hearts of children (and Believers), God will guide them, and they will delight to bow to Jesus Christ as Lord.

With the power and desire from the fruits of Love, Joy, Peace, and Patience, the fruits of Goodness, Kindness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-control will follow.

Sadly, over 60 years of involvement in Bible teaching, Evangelical local Churches, the above goals have been seldom recognized, taught, encouraged, or accomplished. The few individuals who have followed these narrow paths have dynamic walks with God and pure fellowship with others who walk in the light (1 John 1:7). Sadly, such dynamic relationships with God and walking in fellowship have been very rare.

The good news is that God is rich in love and mercy, and if Believers earnestly seek God's Love and develop the fruits of the Spirit, their lives will be transformed. This will drastically change the culture within the Church and our nation.

## **Appendix A, The Holy of Holies:**

A structure can be visualized from the fruits of the Spirit. The fruit of love is the cornerstone of the foundation, which also includes Joy, Peace, and Patience.

The fruit of Kindness can be visualized as a column, supported by the foundation of the fruit of Love (I John 4:19).

The fruit of Goodness transforms Believers into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ and motivates them to be salt and light. Goodness can be visualized as a column resting on the foundation of Joy.

The fruit of Faithfulness is exemplified by truthfulness, dependability, reliability, and all elements of integrity. Faithfulness can be visualized as a column supported by the foundation of Patience.

The fruit of Gentleness instills humility in Believers, which is essential for respecting others, especially within all positions of authority. Gentleness can be visualized as a column supported on the foundation of Peace.

The fruit of Self-Control empowers Believers to guard and maintain pure hearts, which protect them from self-indulgent lifestyles, vices, and addictions. Self-control can be visualized as being supported by the four columns, which are firmly held by the foundational fruits. If there are failures in any of the foundational or supporting elements, the probability of Self-control collapsing is very high. Therefore, it is important to develop, maintain, and rebuild all of the fruits of the Spirit to live a life that honors the Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?**

The Holy Spirit resides within the hearts of Believers, making them the Temple of God. Given the foundation, the columns, and a roof of Self-control, a structure of the fruits of the Spirit can be described within the hearts of Believers. Such a place can be visualized where the Holy Spirit would dwell, making it the Holy of Holies.

## **Appendix B, Walking in the Spirit**

**Galatians 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.**

Within the modern Church, various ideas have been proposed regarding what it means to “walk by the Spirit”. Given that God commands Believers to “walk by the Spirit” at the conclusion of the passage, it follows that walking by the Spirit is accomplished by developing all of the fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

As previously discussed, it is significant that God uses the term “fruit” instead of “gift”. Gifts occur naturally, while fruit implies the need for nurturing and developing. Therefore, each of the elements of the fruit of the Spirit are discussed.