

The Holy Spirit makes us more like Jesus

Discussion guide

based on Galatians 5:16-26 (Linked to sermon of 14/5/17)
which can be accessed at www.stjamesbythepark.org/current-sermon-series

This was the second part of our 'What does the Holy Spirit do?' series, leading up to Pentecost.

Intro: What's your favourite fruit? Why? Have you ever tried growing it, and did it work? Is it attractive to look at? (You can interpret 'fruit' broadly - courgettes count!)

The fruit of the Spirit -

Read Gal.5:22-23. 'Fruit' here is singular. Which aspect of this fruit of the Spirit would you like to see more of in your own life?

Can you think of practical situations at work, at home or out with friends where specific 'fruits' are a key to overcoming difficulties?

Would you say that people displaying and living out these traits are attractive? If so, why, what difference do they make?

Would a community where relationships were shaped by these qualities be attractive?

In:

We can't generate or create the fruit of the spirit of ourselves. But how can we cherish it? 'Prepare the ground' for it? Value it? Look for and welcome it when we see it? Give thanks for it? Check often to see if its growing? Be eager for its ripening?

[You may need to handle this next section with care, depending on your group!]

We heard on Sunday that many of us were experts at repenting - we have to do it so often! Consider our groups and our church; perhaps take a moment to acknowledge that the fruit of the Spirit is not always found in our interactions with one another.

(You may want to reflect on this quietly, in your hearts - NB this is **not** a moment to point the finger at others - 'criticism' is **not** a fruit of the Spirit!).

Are there any situations in the fellowship where with the Lord's help you (not others!) might do better if you experienced more 'fruit'?

Up:

Spend some time dwelling on what God is doing in our lives and thanking him in your prayers (i.e. not asking! For he knows your needs). Some suggestions:

- for the tension we experience between wanting to do wrong, and the Holy Spirit, which leads us to do good - a sign of 'sanctification' as God is at work in our lives!
- for the Holy Spirit who is quietly and patiently making us more like Jesus.
- for the beauty and attraction of lives and communities where these 'fruits' flourish.
- for God's love for and goodness to us who are imperfect, through Christ's cross
- for inheriting the Kingdom of God, now and in future.

Out: Consider:

- situations or relationships where you, or your Cell/missional community, need 'fruit'.
- the specific difficulties and challenges that school, work or family situations will face each of us in the coming days.

Bring these concerns to the Lord

- Pray that you would cherish and value and encourage the fruit of the Spirit in your lives as a group, and that its attractiveness would be seen.
- Pray that in the coming week, you might know the fruit of peace especially, and that it would bless you and those you know '-for against such things, there is no law'.