

*The Holy Spirit*  
***The Fruit of the Holy Spirit***

Lesson #8 for May 20, 2006

Scriptures: Isa. 53:3; John 3:16; 15:13; Rom. 5:5; 1 Corinthians 13; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 4:11-13; 1 John 3:16; 4:8.

1. Our lesson study begins with the following statement: "We are saved only through what Jesus Christ accomplished for us on the cross two thousand years ago." What does this mean to you?
2. **Do you agree that we are saved "by faith alone"? Is this because Jesus fully paid our debt 2000 years ago and we are legally cleared? Or is it because by his life and his death Jesus answered all the accusations against God in the great controversy? That would deal with the great controversy and show the trustworthiness of God, but what does it have to do with my salvation?**
3. If Jesus could legally pay for our salvation without any participation on our part and that is all that is required for our salvation, why can't he do that for everybody?
4. "There's not a point that needs to be dwelt upon more earnestly, repeated more frequently, or established more firmly in the minds of all than the impossibility of fallen man meriting anything by his own best good works. Salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ alone." Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works*, p. 19. Why is it so important to emphasize that we cannot be saved by our own works? Does this mean that the "fruit" of the Spirit is not *really* necessary?
5. This lesson is about the fruit we bear. What is that fruit? Jesus stated that a tree is known by the fruit it bears. (Matthew 7:15-19) **Do we have to have some fruit in order to be saved?** How much fruit do you think would be necessary?
6. **Some have suggested that the fruit consists of changes in our life brought about by the work of the Holy Spirit. Others have stated that the fruit consists of the lives of others that we have brought to the Gospel. Are there two different kinds of fruit? Do we need one or the other or both? How does this "evidence" bear testimony to the fact that we are "in Christ"?**

In Galatians 5:22,23, our key verse for this lesson, the word "fruit" is in the singular and not in the plural as we might expect. Why do you think this is?

7. Why is love the first of the "fruit"? Is it that Christians are just supposed to be nice to each other? Why is love such a fundamental principle in God's kingdom? Our *Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* suggests (Sunday, May 14) that love comes only from God. Do you agree with this? Do children learn about love from their parents and maybe their siblings even before they understand anything about God?
8. "If a human is going to possess and manifest divine love, he or she must receive it from God. There is no other source. Where else would it come from if not from above? Can beings—who are only protein, carbon, water, or even only atoms and molecules—express love? How can these elements, no matter how finely tuned, ever be able to love?" (*Ibid*) Are we as human beings more than the sum of our parts? A live person consists of the same elements exactly as that person one minute after he dies. What changed? Is life merely the manifestation of a balanced set of chemical reactions?

9. As we have discussed, the word "love" is translated from at least four different Greek words. What do we mean when we talk about "love" in a spiritual sense? Do you have to be willing to die for someone in order to prove that you love them? Does God the Father love us? Does Jesus love us? Can they only pour out their love to us through the Holy Spirit? What would that mean?
10. Why do you think that love has come to be almost the defining word of true Christianity? Why did Jesus say that if we truly love one another everyone will know that we are his disciples? (John 13:35) Is it really impossible for people of the world, without Christianity, to love?
11. What do we mean when we suggest that love is the defining attribute of God? (1 John 4:8). Is it truly impossible to have love without having the Holy Spirit? Why would that be?
12. How does the Holy Spirit give us joy and peace? Do you have joy and peace every day in your life? Why? Or why not?
13. Does it help to know that you can live forever with God in heaven? Does that make it easier to tolerate the stresses, worries, pains, etc. here on this earth?
14. Read Romans 8:28. In the older versions it said "all things work together for good to those who love God." The newer versions have instead "God works in all things for good." Which do you think more closely represents the truth? In your life?
15. Read John 14:13,14: "and I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father's glory will be shown through the Son. <sup>14</sup> if you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it." (GNB). Does it give you joy and peace to know that you have access to this kind of power and resources? Have you been successful at accessing them? Does God do everything for you that you think you need? What did Jesus mean when He stated these words?
16. Does being long-suffering sound like a virtue you would enjoy having? "Love is the law of Christ's kingdom. The Lord calls upon every one to reach a high standard. The lives of His people are to reveal love, meekness, long-suffering. Long-suffering bears something, yea, many things, without seeking to be avenged by word or act.  
 "Long-suffering' is patience with offence; long endurance. If you are long-suffering, you will not impart to others your supposed knowledge of your brother's mistakes and errors. You will seek to help and save him, because he has been purchased with the blood of Christ. 'Tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.' 'Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.' **To be long-suffering is not to be gloomy and sad, sour and hardhearted; it is to be exactly the opposite.**" -- Ellen G. White, *My Life Today*, page 52.2,3
17. Would you describe yourself as long-suffering? How do you respond when you come in contact with people who aren't very lovely?
18. Think how long God bore with the Canaanites and later the Israelites! How long has God put up with the Christian church? And what about the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Probably the best scripture to define and described God's attitudes toward his erring children is found in Hosea 11:7, 8; Philips translation:  
 "How, oh how, can I **give you up**, Ephraim!  
 How, oh how, can I **hand you over**, Israel!  
 How can I turn you into a Sodom!

How can I treat you like a Gomorrah!  
My heart recoils within me,  
all my compassion is kindled.  
I will not give vent to **my fierce anger**--  
I will not destroy Ephraim again." (*Phillips*)

19. In your relationship with others would you describe yourself as gentle and good? Would you describe the behavior of Jesus in John 8 and Matthew 23 as gentle and good? Are gentleness and goodness attributes that we should manifest only at certain times?
20. Was Jesus good to sinners? Think of how he treated Mary? And Simon! Think of how He treated the Pharisees and the Sadducees who were trying to expose the woman taken in adultery in John 8. Jesus could have revealed all of their sins even writing them on the stones of the temple wall permanently!
21. When you think about the kind of people you would like to live next door to for the rest of eternity would they be gentle and good? "Christians should not be hard-hearted, unapproachable; Jesus is to be reflected in our deportment, and we are to have a character beautiful with the graces of heaven. The presence of God is to be an abiding presence with us; and wherever we are, we are to carry light to the world. Those around you are to realize that the atmosphere of heaven surrounds you."—Ellen G. White, *RH*, September 20, 1892 par. 9; *Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 75.
22. How do you put together Acts 16:31 and Ephesians 2:8? **If faith is the only requirement for salvation and God gives it to us, then does it mean that God chooses who will be saved by choosing to whom he gives faith?**
23. How do you understand the following statement from the teachers introduction: "A) Salvation comes by faith in Jesus alone. B) Faith is a [part of the] fruit of the Holy Spirit. C) Belief isn't faith, but faith includes belief." **What is the difference between belief and faith?** Remember that these two words are translations of the same Greek word in the New Testament. Have these two words "faith" and "belief" come to mean different things in modern times? "Being filled with the Holy Spirit allows us to be like Jesus in thought, word, and deed. Yet, it is not the actions that draw us closer to God but the motivation." (*Adult Sabbath School Teacher's Bible Study Guide* p. 127) How do you understand these words?
24. The lesson goes to some length in describing the differences between faith and belief. They recognize that both come from the same Greek root in New Testament times. In your mind what is the present difference between faith and belief? "Yet, faith and belief are not the same thing. *Faith* might mean 'belief,' but *belief* doesn't automatically mean 'faith.' Scripture warns about confusing the two." (*Ibid* p. 98)
25. Read James 2:19. What do you learn from this verse about the basic meaning of faith? Or is it belief? Remember the word in Greek is the same.
26. Why doesn't the faith which the devils have help them? Do we have competing characteristics that prevent faith from healing and saving us?
27. Is the faith being described by Paul in Ephesians 2:8 a special spiritual gift of faith given to certain people for special purposes or is this describing the faith that every Christian needs for salvation? Where does faith come from? (Romans 10:17). What do we need to do to maintain our faith? Do you do something every day to help build your faith? Or does God just give it to us?

28. How do you understand the following statement: “Faith works by love and purifies the soul. Through faith the holy Spirit works in the heart to create holiness therein; but this cannot be done unless the human agent will work with Christ. We can be fitted for heaven only through the work of the holy Spirit upon the heart; for we must have Christ’s righteousness as our credentials if we would find access to the Father. In order that we may have the righteousness of Christ, we need daily to be transformed by the influence of the Spirit, to be a partaker of the divine nature. It is the work of the holy Spirit to elevate the taste, to sanctify the heart, to ennoble the whole man.—Ellen G. White, {RH, November 1, 1892 par. 2; 1SM 374.1; YRP, page 60.2; 77.2}
29. How does your understanding of the great controversy and its implications for Christian life and growth affect your life individually?
30. Our lesson for this week focuses on the parts of the “fruit” including love, joy and peace, long-suffering, gentleness and goodness, and faith. **There’s almost no mention of meekness and very little mention of self-control. Why do you think this is?** Does self-control fit with the usual understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives? **In what sense could self-control be a part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit? Why do you think the church in general is reluctant to speak about self-control?**
31. Why do you think that meekness and temperance or self-control received only minor mention in the section for Friday of this lesson? Are these portions of the fruit of the Spirit less important?
32. Are we to be controlled by the Holy Spirit or to be self-controlled? What is your understanding of the concept of temperance?
33. Do you long to be more meek? Moses was described as the meekest man on the earth. (Numbers 12:3) How would you compare the meekness of Jesus? Why is meekness a characteristic that God desires? Is meekness the same as humility?

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