

LESSON AIM:

To teach the students about the person and work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and how that is evidenced through the fruit of the Spirit.

** This lesson is very comprehensive; we cover a lot of scripture. You may want to spend two weeks on this lesson.*

KEY SCRIPTURE: **John 14-16** (Please read these chapters in their entirety on your own) and Galatians 5:22 (The fruit of the Spirit)

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- 1) Who was the first person to see Jesus alive?
- 2) Who was the disciple that wouldn't believe until he touched the holes in Jesus' hands and feet?
- 3) How many other people saw Jesus after he had been raised from the dead?
- 4) Review last week's verse; have students explain it in their own words.

INTRODUCTION:

- One way to illustrate this passage is to find a fruit tree branch with fruit on it (cut it from the tree and bring it to class).
- Ask the kids what you could do to make more fruit grow on it--could you put it in a bucket of water or stick it down into the dirt? No! It must be attached to the tree in order to grow fruit. Apart from the tree it will die.
- This is true in our own lives! How do we abide in Christ? By being connected to Him (our tree) and filled with the Holy Spirit (water to grow!)
- This lesson is also a perfect opportunity to treat the kids to some fresh delicious fruit to really drive the lesson home!

LESSON:

Read John 15:5 with the students. *"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."*

On the last night that Jesus was with the disciples He spoke those words. The disciples knew Jesus was going away—He had told them earlier in the evening that He was going to His Father's house where there were many mansions and that He would prepare a place for us to be with Him. The disciples must have been wondering how they were supposed to abide in Jesus when Jesus was getting ready to leave. But then Jesus answers the question in **John 16** when He says: *"It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you...When He comes, He will guide you into all truth."* Later Jesus would tell His disciples that the Counselor, who is also called the Holy Spirit, would give them (*and us*) power to be witnesses of Him.

So who is the Holy Spirit? He is called by several names in the Bible. We have already seen that He is called the Counselor; He is also called the Comforter. The Holy Spirit is a gift of the Father

sent to us by the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit is a person—He is the third person of the Godhead.

The Bible tells us that He does all the things a person does—He speaks (*Rev. 2:7, Acts 13:2*). He intercedes, testifies and leads (*Rom. 8:26, John 15:26, Acts 8:29, Rom. 8:14*). He also guides, commands and appoints (*John 16:13, Acts 16:6-7, Acts 20:28*). He has feelings; He can be grieved (*i.e., made to feel sad--Eph. 4:30*). He can also be insulted (*Heb. 10:29*), blasphemed (*Matt.12:31*) and lied to (*Acts 5:3-4*). But the Holy Spirit isn't just an "invisible" person, He is God because the Bible tells us He has attributes that only God has--He is eternal (*Heb. 9:14*). He is all powerful (*Luke 1:35*), He is everywhere present (*Psalms 139:7*). He is even called God (*Acts 5:3-4*).

It is impossible to live the life that Jesus has called us to live without the help and power that the Holy Spirit gives. The Holy Spirit works in our lives in two ways: He works in us, and he works through us. As the Holy Spirit works in our lives He produces changes in our character and behavior. The Bible calls this the "*fruit of the Spirit*". What are some of your favorite fruits?

In **Galatians 5:22** it says that the fruit of the Spirit is 9 things: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Let's look at these one at a time. (See page 3 "The Fruit of the Spirit")

When people begin to notice changes in our lives they begin to wonder what is going on. Often that will lead them to ask questions. "*Why are you different?*" "*How come you don't get mad (and fight) anymore?*" "*How come you're always so happy?*" As you share that Jesus is doing all these things in your life through the Holy Spirit, you are now being used by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is working through you drawing others to Jesus. It is exciting to be used by the Holy Spirit!

Every day we need to ask the Lord to fill us with the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Holy Spirit means that He is controlling, guiding and empowering our life. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we'll abide in Jesus and we will bear much fruit.

MEMORY VERSE:

(Every year):

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Galatians 5:22-23

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

LOVE: To seek the highest good of others.

Love is not based on emotions or feelings. It is a decision to be committed to the well-being of others without any conditions or circumstances. Many songs about love today talk about what YOU can do for ME, or how you make ME feel; but real love; God's love, makes us ask what can I do for you; how can I make YOU feel God's love through me? Love is also demonstrated in forgiveness.

JOY: Gladness, delight, a special presence of God.

Joy is not based on financial success, good health, or popularity. By obeying God's will, fellowship, ministering to others, and sharing the gospel, believers will be experiencing joy! It also can mean "grace recognized". Understanding God's grace for us will fill us with joy!

PEACE: Harmony, unity between individuals.

Peace is a state of assurance, lack of fear, and sense of contentment. It is fellowship, harmony and unity between individuals. Peace is freedom from worry, disturbance, and oppressive thoughts.

PATIENCE: Longsuffering, bearing trials without complaint.

Patience is a slowness in avenging wrongs. It is the quality of restraint that prevents believers from speaking or acting hastily in the face of disagreement, opposition and persecution. It also means "to wait".

KINDNESS: Merciful, easy to bear, morally good and upright.

Kindness is an eagerness to put others at ease. It is a sweet and attractive temperament that shows friendly regard. It can also mean "soft". We don't want to be like porcupines to others, but like a soft rabbit!

GOODNESS: Useful, generous.

Goodness is the selfless desire to be open-hearted and generous to others above what they deserve. It is also "real", not acting and not fake!

FAITHFULNESS: Trust, conviction

Faithfulness is a firm devotion to God; to simply trust and obey. It is also loyalty to friends, always being there when someone needs you, and dependability to carry out responsibilities. Faith is the conviction that even now God is working on one's behalf.

GENTLENESS: Humble, meek

Gentleness is a humble, non-threatening demeanor that derives from a position of strength and authority, and is useful in calming another's anger. Gentleness is not a quality that is weak and passive, but is "controlled strength".

SELF-CONTROL: Being in control of one's self.

Self-control is to restrain one's emotions, actions, and desires, and to be in harmony with the will of God. Self-control is doing God's will, not living for one's self.