

The Fruit of the Spirit: Faith
(Galatians 5:22-23)

Introduction:

1. The fruit of the Spirit consists of the 9 special characteristics listed in Galatians 5:22-23.
2. In this lesson we are concentrating on the 7th characteristic: "*faith*."

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST DEFINE "FAITH"
 - A. In the Bible, "faith" has several different shades of meaning.
 - B. "Faith" sometimes refers to belief and trust in God that is demonstrated by obedience to His will.
 1. To illustrate, Abraham's faith led him to obey God's will (Hebrews 11:8).
 2. According to Hebrews 11:6, this kind of faith is essential.
 - C. "Faith" sometimes refers to *faithfulness* [fidelity, reliability, and trustworthiness].
 1. To illustrate, God is described as being faithful in 1 Corinthians 10:13.
 2. According to 1 Corinthians 4:2, this kind of faith is also essential.
 - D. The "faith" that is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) is *faithfulness*.
- II. THE BIBLE STRESSES THE NECESSITY OF FAITHFULNESS
 - A. (Matthew 10:22) "*He that endureth to the end shall be saved.*"
 - B. (Matthew 24:44-47) When Jesus returns, His faithful servants will be blessed.
 - C. The necessity of faithfulness is also seen in:
 1. the reward of the 5-talent man (Matthew 25:21)
 2. the reward of the 2-talent man (Matthew 25:23)
 3. the punishment of the 1-talent man (Matthew 25:29-30).
 - D. See Revelation 2:10
 - E. In addition to stressing the necessity of faithfulness, . . .
- III. THE BIBLE ALSO WARNS AGAINST UNFAITHFULNESS
 - A. Hebrews 3:12
 - B. Hebrews 6:4-6
- IV. SINCE FAITHFULNESS IS SO IMPORTANT, WE MUST BE CONSTANTLY STRIVING TO GROW IN OUR FAITHFULNESS TO GOD
 - A. To grow in our faithfulness, we must:
 1. first make up our minds that we are going to do it (Proverbs 23:7 -- "*As he thinketh in his heart, so is he*")
 2. pray and ask the Lord to help us (Matthew 21:22 -- "*And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive*")
 3. study and meditate upon God's Word regularly (Romans 10:17)
 4. obey the Lord (James 2:17-18)
 5. put God's kingdom and His righteousness first in our lives (Matthew 6:33)
 6. always remember that God is faithful (Psalm 119:90 -- "*Thy faithfulness is unto all generations*").
 - B. To remain faithful, we must avoid:
 1. turning our backs on our commitment to Christ (Luke 9:62 -- "*no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God*")
 2. allowing our love for God to grow cold (Revelation 2:1-4)
 3. relying upon our past reputation (Revelation 3:1-2)
 4. becoming lukewarm (Revelation 3:14-16).

Conclusion:

1. (Hebrews 10:23a) We are exhorted to "*hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.*"
2. (Hebrews 10:23b) One reason why we must do this is because "*He [God] is faithful that promised.*"
3. Let us follow the instructions given in Hebrews 12:1-2a so we may remain faithful to God.