

The Fruit of the Spirit

(Lesson 8)

Introduction:

1. "The fruit of the Spirit" consists of 9 characteristics listed in Galatians 5:22-23.
2. "Faith" is the seventh of these special characteristics.
3. In the Bible, "faith" has several shades of meaning.
 - a. "Faith" sometimes refers to belief [trust] in God that is demonstrated by obedience to His will (Hebrews 11:6).
 - b. "Faith" sometimes refers to a miraculous type (Matthew 17:20; 1 Corinthians 12:9).
 - c. "Faith" sometimes refers to *faithfulness* [also known as fidelity, reliability, trustworthiness] (1 Corinthians 4:2; Galatians 5:22).

Discussion:

- I. THE BIBLE TEACHES CHRISTIANS TO BE FAITHFUL
 - A. Jesus stressed the necessity of faithfulness in His teaching.
 1. Matthew 24:44-47
 2. Matthew 25:21, 23
 - B. The New Testament letters admonish Christians to be faithful.
 1. Hebrews 10:23
 2. Revelation 2:10
 - C. The New Testament also includes warnings against unfaithfulness.
 1. Hebrews 3:12
 2. Hebrews 4:11
- II. THE BIBLE CONTAINS INFORMATION THAT WILL HELP CHRISTIANS TO BE FAITHFUL
 - A. Practices that hinder faithfulness must be avoided, including:
 1. looking back (Luke 9:62; 17:32)
 2. allowing love for God to grow cold (Revelation 2:1-4)
 3. relying upon past reputation (Revelation 3:1-2)
 4. being lukewarm (Revelation 3:14-16).
 - B. Practices that increase faithfulness include:
 1. studying and meditating upon God's Word regularly (Romans 10:17)
 2. obeying the Lord (James 2:17-18)
 3. following the instructions given in Hebrews 12:1-2.