



Fruit of the Spirit is patience

Galatians 5:22-23

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“The expression ‘the Fruit of the Spirit’ is a metaphor used by Paul to describe virtues that manifest in the realities of life in Christ.” (DS Dockery)

In the same way that the branches of a grape vine **cannot do other** than bear grapes, so a life lived in the love of God **cannot do other** than bear the fruit of the Spirit.

Love, Joy, Peace,

μακροθυμία,

Kindness, Generosity, Goodness

Faithfulness, and Self-Control



“The expression ‘the Fruit of the Spirit’ is a metaphor used by Paul to describe virtues that manifest in the realities of life in Christ.” (DS Dockery)

In the same way that the branches of a grape vine **must be cultivated** to bear grapes, so a life lived in the love of God **must be cultivated** to bear the fruit of the Spirit.

Love, Joy, Peace,

μακροθυμία,

Kindness, Generosity, Goodness

Faithfulness, and Self-Control



- ▶ Cultivation involves leaning into the love of God so that we might be conformed to the character of Jesus. **This is the distinctive teaching of the Apostle Paul.**
- ▶ Cultivation is always relational, not rules based (neither legalism nor license)
- ▶ Fruit is a singular collective noun, they grow together - each of the nine virtues identified by Paul share elements with one another. We cannot exempt ourselves from any of the fruit (singular).



Gordon D. Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*,

Most of these items have to do not with the internal life of the individual believer but with the corporate life of the community.

While it is true that individuals must love, work toward peace, express forbearance, kindness, and goodness, and be characterized by gentleness, in Pauline ethics these virtues characterize God's relationship toward his people. The Spirit bears fruit in our individual lives for the same purpose, to be toward one another the way God is toward us.

Thus the opening command, “walk by the Spirit” (Gal 5:16), is directed not so much toward the individual in terms of his or her own personal life in Christ, but toward the Christian community, in which some are “biting and devouring” one another, hence using their freedom in Christ as an “occasion for the flesh.” ...**They are ethics for believers who are learning to live together as God's people in a fallen world.**

The Fruit of the Spirit is μακροθυμία

Makrothumia (mak- roth- oo- mee- ah)

With situations: patience, endurance, constancy, steadfastness, perseverance

With people: **patience, forbearance, longsuffering, slowness in avenging wrongs**

“In Paul, *makrothumia* and its corresponding verb are always used in contexts involving one’s forbearance toward others. As such it often refers, as it does in Gal 5:22, to **the passive but tenacious side of love**, of which its companion “kindness” is the active side. For example, in Rom 2:4, Paul describes God’s attitude toward human arrogance as one of forbearance and kindness.” (Gordon Fee)

The Fruit of the Spirit is μακροθυμία

The unexpected patience* of God, Psalms 103:8-14

* Forbearance / Longsuffering / Slowness in avenging wrongs

The unexpected patience of me

I am[⚡] merciful and gracious to ...

I am[⚡] slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love to ...

[⚡] *if not now, I am actively cultivating it*

The Fruit of the Spirit is μακροθυμία

Jürgen Moltmann's description of God's means of Creation describes as God making space within himself for the other.

This may be our clue to being patient as God is patient.

We are displaying Fruit of the Spirit patience when we are creating and maintaining space for the other to be themselves, at their pace (!) of change and accomplishment.

Makrothumia NEEDS love, joy, peace, kindness, generosity, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control in order to be makrothumia.

Gordon D. Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*,

Although Paul nowhere else attributes such *makrothumia* to the direct working of the Spirit, its appearance in Gal 5:22 makes clear that **Spirit empowering is not simply for joy and miracles, but also for this much-needed quality of hanging in there with those who need long and patient love and kindness.**

We all grow in the Spirit when we cultivate patience with each other

Paul's Prayer for the Christians in Colossie (Colossians 1:9-12)

We have not ceased praying for *naa* [Kuarna: “all of you”] and asking that *naa* may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that *naa* may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, **as *naa* bear fruit** in every good work and as *naa* grow in the knowledge of God. May *naa* be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and **may *naa* be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks** to the Father, who has enabled *naa* to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.

Pray for one another, encourage one another, stand with one another.