

# The Fire of the Lord

an introduction to the Person and work of the Holy Spirit

Sometimes spoken of as ‘the forgotten Person’ of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit exercises a hugely important ministry in the outworking of the purpose of God.

This series of 7 introductory studies is intended to deepen your understanding of what that ministry is, and transform your experience through the enjoyment of that ministry in your life.

You can find the background to this short series [here](#).

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## 5. The fruit of the Spirit

(Galatians 5.<sup>13</sup> - 6.<sup>10</sup>)

[w/b Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2019]

*“.. a man reaps what he sows ..”*

In the previous study (4 - ‘The work of the Spirit’) we’ve already seen in broad terms what the Holy Spirit does: in this next study we look more particularly at His transforming work in the lives of believers, as He conforms us to the likeness of Jesus.

There’s a past, present, and future dimension to God’s salvation in Christ: by grace we are justified (that’s past), by grace we are being sanctified (that’s present and on-going), and by grace we will be glorified (that’s still future). The ‘fruit’ of the Spirit is the evidence of His saving work in our lives, never the reason for it!

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*[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! It may be helpful to try and ensure that in this study you cover questions 3, 5 & 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]*

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1. **Read Galatians 5.13-6.10.** There’s a temptation to focus narrowly on 5.22f which deal explicitly with the Spirit’s fruit in our lives: this whole passage, however, relates to His fruit.

Jesus said, *“By their fruit you will recognize them”*: what ‘fruit’ do you see in your own life which points to the work of the Spirit in you?

How would you summarise in a sentence or two the thrust of what Paul is saying in these verses?

**2. Read Galatians 5.13-18.** Jesus sets us free (5.1): that's the gospel! And where the Spirit is, *there* is freedom (2 Cor.3.17). This freedom, however, Paul explains, is not anarchy!

How is our freedom in Christ most truly expressed, according to what Paul says here?

Why is the Law of God significant for the Christian?

**3. Read Galatians 5.16-21.** We experience true 'freedom' as we learn to follow the lead of the Spirit of God rather than what Paul calls 'the desires of the flesh'.

How has the Spirit of God helped *you* in dealing with the self-indulgence which lies behind all 'acts of the flesh'?

Why is the last sentence in v.21 not an assertion which smacks of legalism, but a statement of the gospel?

**4. Read Galatians 5.22-23.** The Spirit of God is at work in each believer to conform us to the likeness of Jesus: Paul here sets out how that will find expression in our characters and lives.

What evidences of the 'fruit of the Spirit' warm your heart as you see them in other Christians around you - and in yourself?

What does Paul mean by saying that "*against such things there is no law*"?

**5. Read Galatians 5.24-26.** The Spirit's work in our lives is neither magic or automatic: you are to "*work out your own salvation .. for it is God who works in you*" (Phil.2.12f)

Paul states that the fruit of the Spirit involves the crucifying of the flesh: how do we 'crucify the flesh'?

In the context of this passage, what will it mean for you to 'keep in step with the Spirit'?

**6. Read Galatians 6.1-6.** Having painted in the 9-fold fruit of the Spirit, Paul now illustrates a number of ways in which such fruit will be seen in the lives of God's people.

How will 'living by the Spirit' affect the way we relate to others around us according to what Paul says here?

What does Paul mean by exhorting us to "*carry each other's burdens*" and yet stressing that "*each one should carry their own load*"?

**7. Read Galatians 6.7-10.** The analogy of 'fruit' to describe the Spirit's work in our lives sees Paul rounding this section off with reference to the harvest imagery of sowing and reaping.

What will our 'sowing to please the Spirit' involve?

What comprises the 'harvest' which Paul declares we will reap at the proper time if we do not give up?

How have you been challenged by this study on the fruit of the Spirit - and what have been the encouragements?