

The Fruit of the Spirit

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: God's Spirit grows good fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace and more.

Bible passage: Galatians 5:13–26. Read it before class.

Memory verse: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." *Galatians 5:22–23 (KJV)*

You need: a Bible, chairs in a circle (one fewer than the number of kids), 9 paper fruit shapes or sticky notes, a marker, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child. If you have one: a real apple.

Before class: write one fruit word on each paper fruit (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at Galatians 5:22.

1. Opening game: Fruit Basket Swap (5–10 minutes)

Kids sit in a circle of chairs with one child standing in the middle. Give each seated child a fruit name: apple, grape or orange. The middle child calls a fruit, and everyone with that fruit swaps seats while the caller grabs a chair. The child left standing calls next. "Fruit basket!" means everyone swaps. Then hold up an apple and ask: *How do you know this came from an apple tree?* Say: "By its fruit! Jesus said, 'every tree is known by his own fruit' (Luke 6:44). Today we will learn about the good fruit God grows in people."

2. Bible teaching: Good Fruit From God's Spirit (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Galatians 5, so the kids can see this comes from God's Word. Explain it in your own words:

This part of the Bible is not a story. It is a **letter**. The apostle **Paul** wrote it to the churches in a place called **Galatia** (Galatians 1:1–2). An apostle is someone Jesus sent to preach. Paul had been to Galatia before and told the people there the good news about Jesus (4:13). They were so glad to have him (4:14). But after Paul left, some people came and tried to change the gospel (1:6–7). And some of the believers started fighting with each other.

So Paul wrote them a letter. He told them: Christ has set you free (5:1). But being free does not mean doing whatever you want. Paul wrote, "by love serve one another" (5:13). All of God's law fits into one word: love your neighbor as yourself (5:14).

Paul warned them: "if ye bite and devour one another," be careful, or you will hurt each other badly (5:15). That doesn't mean real biting! It means mean words and fighting. So Paul told them, "Walk in the Spirit" (5:16).

Who is the Spirit? The Spirit is the **Holy Ghost**, God's own Spirit. There is only one God (Ephesians 4:6). When God gives us the Holy Ghost, God Himself lives in us. To walk in the Spirit means we let God lead what we do, every day.



The teaching continues: Paul said two things pull against each other. One is what our selfish side wants. The Bible calls it "the flesh." The other is what God's Spirit wants (5:17). Our selfish side grows bad things, like hating, arguing, being jealous, angry outbursts and fighting (5:19–21). Those things hurt people.

Then Paul wrote one big "But." Read Galatians 5:22–23 from your Bible: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

Hold up the apple again. Say: "Does an apple tree grunt and push to make apples? No! Apples grow because the tree is alive and healthy." In the same way, this good fruit grows in people who belong to Jesus, because God's Spirit lives in them (5:24–25). Notice the Bible says "fruit," not "fruits." God wants all of it to grow in us together, not just the parts we like.

Paul ended this part of his letter like this: "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (5:25). And he said, don't be proud and show off, don't pick on each other, and don't be jealous of each other (5:26).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Who wrote the letter about the fruit of the Spirit? (*Paul, Galatians 1:1*)
2. Who did he write it to? (*The churches of Galatia, 1:2*)
3. How did Paul say we should serve one another? (*By love, 5:13*)
4. Who grows this good fruit in us? (*God's Spirit, the Holy Ghost, 5:22*)
5. What is the very first fruit on the list? Can you name three more? (*Love; then joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, 5:22–23*)

4. Memory verse: Fruit Basket Verse (5 minutes)

Write one fruit word from the verse on each of the 9 paper fruits. Explain the old words: **longsuffering** means patience, waiting without getting upset. **Meekness** means being humble and gentle. **Temperance** means self-control. **Faith** means trusting God and being faithful. **Against such there is no law** means no rule is against these good things. Say the verse together. Hand out the fruits, say the verse again, and have kids line up in order as their word is said. Mix the fruits up and race to line up again.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "We can't grow this fruit by trying hard on our own. It is the fruit of the **Spirit**. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4). Then God's Spirit lives in us and grows His good fruit in our lives."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: pick one fruit to practice, like longsuffering (patience) with a brother or sister, or gentleness with someone who is left out. Ask God each morning to help you.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Fruit of the Spirit word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/fruit-of-the-spirit-word-search), the Fruit of the Spirit coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/fruit-of-the-spirit), or **Show Me the Fruit:** read a quick situation and kids call out which fruit fits, then act out what they would do. Try these: "Your friend wins the game you wanted to win." (love, joy) "Your little brother knocks over your blocks." (longsuffering, gentleness) "You want a second cookie, but Mom said one." (temperance) "A new kid sits alone at lunch." (love, goodness)

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. Please grow Your good fruit in us: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Help us serve one another by love this week. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks, "I got angry today. Does that mean I'm bad?": answer simply and gently. Fruit takes time to grow. Everyone makes wrong choices, and when we confess our sins to God, He forgives us (1 John 1:9). Keep asking God to help you, and He will keep working in you.

