

# RECEPTIVE HEART

Small Group Study Guide | May 5, 2024

GRACE  
FELLOWSHIP

**Discuss:** What does a life that has received the seed of God's Word look like?

**Key Text:** *"And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold. 9 And he said, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear...20 But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.'" (Mark 4:8-9, 20)*

This is the final lesson in our "Grow (Up)" series in which we're studying Jesus' "Parable of the Sower." We've learned that the four types of soil Jesus mentions represent four kinds of hearts and how each respond to the seed of God's Word. Tragically, three of the four are unreceptive—the hard heart lacks interest (Mk.4:13-15), the shallow heart lacks depth (Mk.4:16-17), and the cluttered heart lacks room for the seed (Mk.4:18-19). We know that none of the people symbolized by these three types of soil experienced salvation since the evidence of salvation is fruit and none of them bore any fruit at all: *"You will recognize them by their fruits"* (Mat.7:16). This reminds us that salvation does not come by simply listening to the Word (hard heart), or through an emotional response to the Word (shallow heart), but by fully receiving the Word through total trust in God: *"You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God"* (1 Pet.1:23).

In contrast to the previous three types of hearts, the receptive heart is interested in the Word (unlike the hard heart) and accepts and keeps the Word (unlike the shallow and crowded hearts). The main difference between the receptive heart and the other types of hearts is the receptive heart leads to fruitfulness (Mk.4:8, 20). In Galatians 5:22-23, the Bible mentions nine different kinds of fruit of the Spirit, or Christlike characteristics, produced by the Holy Spirit in a life that has received the seed of God's Word.

1. **Love:** *"The fruit of the Spirit is love..."* (Gal.5:22a) – This is the Holy Spirit-produced selfless love which Jesus taught and demonstrated that sacrifices for the good of others.

**Discuss:** How is the fruit of the Spirit of love described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8?

2. **Joy:** *"The fruit of the Spirit is...joy"* (Gal.2:22b) – This is a Holy Spirit-produced deep, inner contentment rooted in trust in God—a settled delight in God that abides despite outward circumstances.

**Discuss:** How is the fruit of the Spirit of joy described in 1 Peter 1:8?

3. **Peace:** *"The fruit of the Spirit is...peace"* (Gal.2:22c) – This is a Holy Spirit-produced calm, tranquil spirit that is rooted in a right relationship with God and a trust in Him as sovereign over all things.

**Discuss:** How is the fruit of the Spirit of peace described in Philippians 4:7?

4. **Patience:** “*The fruit of the Spirit is...patience*” (Gal.5:22d) – This is a Holy Spirit-produced ability to hold one’s temper for a long time while enduring pain and suffering—whether from people or circumstances—without complaining.

**Discuss:** How is the fruit of the Spirit of patience described in Ephesians 4:2?

5. **Kindness:** “*The fruit of the Spirit is...kindness*” (Gal.5:22e) – This is a Holy Spirit-produced ability to put tender concern for others into practical action.

**Discuss:** How is the fruit of the Spirit of kindness described in Ephesians 4:32?

6. **Goodness:** “*The fruit of the Spirit is...goodness*” (Gal.5:22f) – This is a Holy Spirit-produced moral and spiritual uprightness of heart and life that involves being good for God’s glory and the benefit of others—not to attain superior self-righteousness.

**Discuss:** How is the fruit of the Spirit of goodness described in Galatians 6:10?

7. **Faithfulness:** “*The fruit of the Spirit is...faithfulness*” (Gal.5:22g) – This is a Holy Spirit-produced ability to be dependable, trustworthy, steadfast, and loyal.

**Discuss:** How is the fruit of the Spirit of faithfulness described in Luke 16:10?

8. **Gentleness:** “*The fruit of the Spirit is...gentleness*” (Gal.5:23a) – This is a Holy Spirit-produced humility and thankfulness toward God, and polite, restrained behavior toward others.

**Discuss:** How is the fruit of the Spirit of gentleness described in Galatians 6:1-2?

9. **Self-Control:** “*The fruit of the Spirit is...self-control*” (Gal.5:23b) – This is a Holy Spirit-produced power to restrain our baser thoughts, desires, words, and actions.

**Discuss:** How is the fruit of the Spirit of self-control described in 2 Timothy 1:7?

**Discuss:** In which of the nine fruit of the Spirit have you experienced the most growth recently? Which of the nine do you currently need to grow in the most?

**Discuss:** Look up these passages that highlight other fruit in a Christian’s life and discuss how each fruit can be displayed in a believer’s daily life:

- **The Fruit of Sanctification (growth in holiness):** Romans 6:22
- **The Fruit of Righteousness (growth in reliance upon and enjoyment of the benefits of knowing Christ):** Philippians 1:11
- **The Fruit of Good Works (growth in actions rooted in faith):** Colossians 1:10
- **The Fruit of Praise (growth in acknowledging God’s greatness and goodness):** Hebrews 13:15

**For Further Study:**

Free online study tools (commentaries, dictionaries, etc.) at [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)

*The Fruitful Life* by Jerry Bridges

“What is the Fruit of the Holy Spirit?” article at [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org)