

## The Spirit and Fruitfulness



**Character and Capability**  
**Character** has to do with who I am and how I live my life. **Capability** has to do with what I do in life and how well I do it. In the Kingdom of God the fruit of the Spirit forms my character and the gifts of the Spirit enable what I do (my capability).

### A. Growing [Character] and Gifting [Capability]

1. **Growing fruit:** The ‘fruit’ of the Spirit is the result of the ‘indwelling’ of the Holy Spirit at the time of salvation. [Ezk 36:27; 37:4; John 20:22; Rom 8:11] As the fruit on a tree must grow into maturity—so must the fruit of the Spirit.
  - a. **One fruit:** It is NOT the ‘fruits’ of the Spirit but the ‘fruit’ of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is LOVE. Like the slice of fruit in the photo above that has 8 sections—so the fruit of the Spirit ‘love’ has a basic set of eight characteristics: Peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. See also 1 Cor 13:4-8
2. **Giving gifts:** The gifts of the Spirit are bestowed by the Holy Spirit, [1 Cor 12:11] and are the result of being baptized with the Holy Spirit subsequent to salvation.
  - a. **Many gifts:** Where there is only ONE ‘fruit’ of the Spirit there are many ‘gifts’ of the Holy Spirit. The ‘gifts’ of the Spirit are for ‘enabling’ believers to minister to others in the power of the Spirit. 1 Cor 12:7

### B Use and Abuse 1 Cor 12-14

1. **The excellent way:** Paul says in 1 Cor 12:31b [ESV] “And I will show you a still more excellent way.” In 1 Cor 12 and 14 Paul deals with Spiritual gifts. But in chapter 13 he deals with the fruit of the Spirit: Love. When serving the Lord in any capacity [capability] we MUST lead with character: Love [1 Cor 13:4-8]. Paul is simply saying that the gifts of the Spirit are useless without the fruit of the Spirit. See 1 Cor 13:1-3

### C. Fruit and No Fruit John 15:1-8

1. **No fruit:** It is clear from this passage that we are expected to bear fruit, more fruit and much fruit. In other words: Grow in our fruitfulness.
  - a. **The result of no fruit:** [:2; 6] The branches that were ‘in Me,’ those who had salvation [or the appearance of salvation] but did NOT grow in fruitfulness—God removes their branch from the tree. 2 Pet 1:8-11; Matt 3:10
2. **Bearing fruit:** To bear fruit requires that the Lord continually work upon us—here called pruning. The pruning process involves God’s discipline [Heb 12:3-11] to deal with sin and our character flaws. The result is that we grow in the Lord and ‘fruitfulness.’ 2 Pet 1:8
  - a. **Abiding in Christ:** [Joh 14:4] I in Him and He in me. For my part this is an unbroken fellowship with Christ sustained by an unwavering faith in what He has done for me.

### Scripture (NKJV)

**Gal 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

**John 15:1-8** “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. **2** Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may **bear more fruit.** **3** You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. **4** Abide in Me, and **I in you.** As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

**5** “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, **bears much fruit**; for without Me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. **7** If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. **8** **By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit**; so you will be My disciples.

**2 Pet 1:8-9** For **if** these things [the fruit] are yours and abound [fruit growing in increasing measure], you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.