

THE HS: FRUIT

CHECKLIST: WHAT YOU NEED

- Copies of the downloadable 622 service booklet
- Copies of the lesson handout
- Pencils or pens
- Copy of the leader's notes - *note fifth page re ice breaker, you may want multiple copies*
- OPTIONAL: Bibles (ESV or similar recommended)
- OPTIONAL: A white board, easel pad, or chalk board with markers/chalk
- OPTIONAL: Have notebooks on hand for teens to take home and use as prayer journals if they wish

ICE BREAKER: FRUITINESS QUIZ

As the teens arrive, provide copies of the quiz (page five of the leader's notes), and have them complete it, add up their totals and look up their verses. (Verses are printed on the bottom of the page in case you need them. You may wish to cut the page bottoms off if you want to see the teens look up the texts and if Bibles are available).

622: BEGINNING WITH PRAYER

Begin the formal part of the lesson by saying together the first part of the order of service for young people in the booklet, up to the middle of page 4.

AT THIS POINT IN THE LESSON, ASK IF THE TEENS SUCCEEDED IN DOING LAST WEEK'S CHALLENGE, HOW IT WENT, AND WHETHER THEY HAVE ANYTHING TO SHARE.

DISCUSSION: THE CONSEQUENCES OF FRUITINESS

Today's discussion flows quite directly from the ice breaker, so if you typically cut out the ice breaker you may want to incorporate it this week.

Ask the teens to discuss the following questions.

DEPENDING ON THE COMFORT LEVEL FOR SHARING IN YOUR GROUP, IT MAY BE EASIER TO HAVE THEM VOLUNTEER ANSWERS WITH ALL RESPONSES WRITTEN TOGETHER ON A BOARD.

- How did you do on the quiz?
- Have you ever felt an inner prompting to change something about your life?
What was it? Did you follow through on it?
If you followed through on the prompting, how did that affect your relationships with others? With God?

A few things worth pointing out (if they don't otherwise arise during the discussion):

- *Avoid comparing yourself to others. Only God knows where you started and what struggles you face - and these are different from your neighbour's circumstances. God will keep working with you in whatever ways he can to transform you into the version of yourself that you were meant to be.*
- *The Holy Spirit is always prompting us to move towards greater virtue. But we still have a choice. It is possible to "quench" or suppress the Holy Spirit, which scripture tells us not to do (1 Thessalonians 5:19). And it is possible to sit on the fence, which scripture suggests may be an even greater danger - at least if we are far from God, we may come more quickly to recognize our need for him. But God doesn't give up on us; instead, we may find ourselves*

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facing a “discipline” that is designed to turn us back to him (Revelation 3:15-16, 19-20). Moreover, the work of the Holy Spirit is never done, and our need to cultivate fruit doesn’t stop. If we feel that we are doing well, we don’t get to feel satisfied. Tomorrow will present us with new challenges and we will again need God’s help to respond with fruit (Galatians 5:25-26).

- A few examples of how the Holy Spirit might prompt you to change: He might prompt you to cut out swearing or vulgar jokes, or to show kindness to kids at school who are shunned and bullied by others. Making changes like these ones does not always win the approval of our friends in the short term! Such actions can be difficult, but they are still right.

THE LESSON: GALATIANS 4, 5

The first part of the lesson begins with a brief introduction to the topic of the Holy Spirit, followed by an introduction to today’s text. These can be read aloud. You may wish to pause in between the two so that the teens can ask any questions they have. Then the teens are asked to read the Bible text (either silently to themselves or aloud together), followed by some additional questions for discussion.

In order to begin talking about the Holy Spirit (HS), we first need to acknowledge the Spirit’s role within the Trinity. Christians believe in a triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God in three distinct persons. (If this sounds confusing to you, don’t worry. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is acknowledged to be one of the great mysteries of our faith.)

The Holy Spirit has been active throughout human history, revealing the Father and the Son to us. However, before that first Pentecost, this relationship was different. Israel had been given the law and the prophets to help guide them in knowing and doing God’s will. But this was never enough. So God promised that he would make a new covenant with his people, when he would put his Spirit *within* them, helping them to walk in his ways. In the book of Jeremiah, God says: “I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbour and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest...”

So on that first Pentecost, something important changed: the Holy Spirit was sent to *indwell* believers, to reside within us and to reveal God to us. More than this, scripture tells us that the Spirit is active in a variety of ways in our lives – comforting us, guiding us, teaching us, advocating for us, and equipping us to do God’s will. We’re going to look at two ways in which the Holy Spirit equips us: the first one is through cultivating his fruit in our lives, and the second is through spiritual gifts (next lesson).

Questions? Comments?

The epistle to the Galatians expresses the Apostle Paul’s deep concern about a church that was going in reverse. Instead of moving forward into the life of the Spirit, the Galatians were returning to empty legalism. In the passage that we’re about to look at Paul explains that observing the law is not what is going to keep Christians from sin, but rather it is the Spirit at work in our lives, cultivating virtue and showing us the heart of God.

Refer to Galatians 4:4-7, 5:16-24.

(THE TEXT IS PROVIDED ON THE BACK OF THE HANDOUTS AND IN THESE LEADERS’ NOTES SO THAT EVERYONE CAN MARK IT UP AND MAKE NOTES ON IT IF DESIRED. ALTERNATIVELY, YOU CAN READ OUT OF A BIBLE).

Read through the text. Then ask the teens to respond to what they’ve just read. Here are some questions to help guide

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the discussion.

- How does this passage describe the relationship that we have with God?
- What does Paul mean in this passage when he talks about “the flesh”?
- Paul writes that we are “not under the law”. What is supposed to be directing us instead?
- Do you feel that you are “living by the Spirit” in your own life?

A few notes and reflections for reference:

- *The relationship is one of close love and even privilege as children and heirs. The Spirit within us turns us towards our God and Father.*
- *The flesh, in this passage, is referring to all sorts of sinful inclinations that we as humans have. Paul even gives us a rather thorough list in case we’re unsure.*
- *Paul is clear in saying that even though we are not “under the law”, we’re still not supposed to do this “flesh” stuff! But instead of being kept from sin because of a set of rules, we are being directed from within by the Spirit – moved towards virtuous living in accordance with God’s will. One way of putting it would be that we are straining towards what is good rather than simply avoiding what is evil.*
- *You may have some teens that question whether they have received the Holy Spirit or feel that they do not know how to begin to “live by the Spirit”. If in doubt, we can ask God for the Spirit. Luke 11:13 says that even evil parents know how to give good gifts to their children, “so how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?” We know that if we have asked for the Spirit, he is with us, even at those times when we don’t feel it. But we can become better attuned to the Spirit by obeying when we feel him prompting (not “quenching”), and learning scripture so that we become familiar with what the work of the Spirit looks like and therefore better able to know when he is the one prompting.*

DURING EACH LESSON, IF THE TEENS RAISE THEOLOGICAL OR BIBLICAL QUESTIONS THAT YOU DON’T FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT ANSWERING, SAY SO, BUT LET THEM KNOW THAT YOU’LL FIND THE ANSWER AND RESPOND AT THE NEXT MEETING.

PREVIEW: AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Take a brief moment to look at the at-home challenge together.

THE WEEKLY “AT-HOME CHALLENGE” IS TYPICALLY A SIMPLE ASSIGNMENT TO SPEND SOME QUIET TIME IN PRIVATE PRAYER. ENCOURAGE THE TEENS TO GET NOTEBOOKS THAT CAN BE USED AS PRAYER JOURNALS. ASSURE THEM THAT THEY WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO SHOW THEIR JOURNAL OR THEIR PRIVATE PRAYERS TO ANYONE.

Each morning and evening, follow the rule of prayer that you created for yourself.

(If you didn’t make one, try saying the morning and evening prayers from the “Forms of Prayer to be used in Families,” which begins on page 728 of the BCP. If you don’t have a copy, you can look it up here: <http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer>.)

Spend some time reflecting on the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control), and asking God to make these things more evident in your life.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect, pausing to reflect after each phrase.

God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy

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Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen. (COLLECT FOR PENTECOST, BCP PAGE 205)

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Close with any prayers that might be appropriate in the context of the discussion of the day.

AT THE END OF EACH LESSON, IF YOU FIND THAT YOU STILL HAVE LOTS OF TIME REMAINING, YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO TAKE SOME TIME TO EXPLORE THE "PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS" SECTION IN THE BCP (PAGES 39-62, OR YOU CAN USE THE DOWNLOADABLE BOOKLET). AS YOUR GROUP MEMBERS COME ACROSS PRAYERS THAT THEY FIND RELEVANT, PAUSE AND PRAY THEM TOGETHER. IF YOU'RE PRESSED FOR TIME, YOU MIGHT CLOSE WITH THE THEMED PRAYER FROM THE AT-HOME CHALLENGE.

Then finish with the "Grace", the final prayer in the booklet.

GALATIANS 4, 5: **FLESH, LAW, AND THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**

4 ⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God...

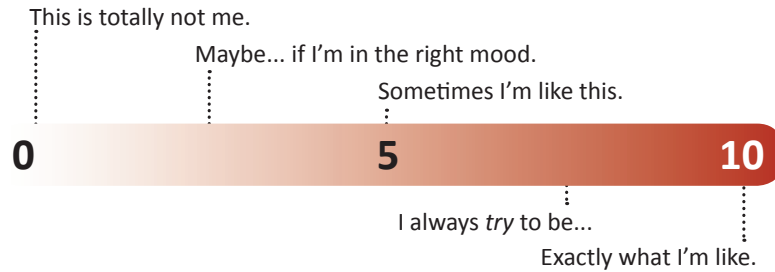
5 ¹⁶But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

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ICE BREAKER: FRUITINESS QUIZ

Galatians 5:22-23a says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” So... on a scale of 1-10, rate yourself on these character traits:



- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. I am loving: <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. I am patient: <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. I am faithful: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I am joyful: <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. I am kind: <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. I am gentle: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I am peaceable: <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. I am good: <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. I am self-controlled: <input type="checkbox"/> |

Add up your scores and look up the verse that corresponds to your total:

- **1-35:** 1 Thessalonians 5:19
- **36-60:** Revelation 3:15-16, 19-20
- **61-90:** Galatians 5:25-26

MY TOTAL:

FOR THOSE WITHOUT BIBLES...

1 THESSALONIANS 5:19 > DO NOT QUENCH THE SPIRIT. (NB. TO “QUENCH” MEANS TO “EXTINGUISH” OR “SNUFF OUT”)

REVELATION 3: 15-16, 19-20 > “I KNOW YOUR WORKS: YOU ARE NEITHER COLD NOR HOT. WOULD THAT YOU WERE EITHER COLD OR HOT! SO, BECAUSE YOU ARE LUKEWARM, AND NEITHER HOT NOR COLD, I WILL SPIT YOU OUT OF MY MOUTH... THOSE WHOM I LOVE, I REPROVE AND DISCIPLINE, SO BE ZEALOUS AND REPENT. BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK. IF ANYONE HEARS MY VOICE AND OPENS THE DOOR, I WILL COME IN TO HIM AND EAT WITH HIM, AND HE WITH ME...”

GALATIANS 5:25-26 > IF WE LIVE BY THE SPIRIT, LET US ALSO KEEP IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT. LET US NOT BECOME CONCEITED, PROVOKING ONE ANOTHER, ENVYING ONE ANOTHER.