Transformed by the Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23

 Good morning to you all! To all of the children and families who are visiting with us I would like to once again welcome you to Nankin Community Church. Working with your children over the past week has been a pleasure and an experience that all of us in the church treasure. Learning about the fruit of the spirit together has equipped all of us with knowledge on how God takes sinners like you and me who have no hope and instill in us His new nature through the Holy Spirit. With the time that I have with you this morning I would like to share with you some insights on the message the Apostle Paul is sharing with us regarding the Fruit of the Spirit in his epistle that he wrote to the church in Galatia.

 As we begin today, we need to explain why Paul is writing these words. The epistle of Galatians was written by the Apostle Paul to the churches who were located in the southern part of the Roman Empire. This letter is addressed to the Galatians which includes people that were in churches that Paul planted in cities such as Antioch, Iconium and Lystra. The purpose of the letter was to encourage his readers because there had been some very harmful teaching being spread by some that in order to become a Christian a person must first become a Jew. This work- based attitude was causing many to stumble and it was hindering many people from becoming believers in Jesus Christ. Paul’s teaching in this epistle, as was the same teaching in his other epistles, is that a believer in Jesus Christ is not saved by their works, but they are justified by their faith meaning that they are saved by grace.

 In the verses we are looking at today Paul is outlining the fruit of the Spirit that is planted in a believer when they accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The old man who is dealing with his sin nature and contempt for God is now indwelt with the Holy Spirit and is experiencing a new way of life. The Holy Spirit transforms the person from their old sin nature to the new life guided by the Holy Spirit. When a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ this new nature is manifested in the nine ways that Paul lists for us in these verses. Let us take a few moments to become better acquainted with each of these Fruits of the Spirit:

 There is a chart provided for you on the screen that shows how the fruit of the Spirit manifest the new creation that God creates when someone comes to faith in Jesus Christ. Let’s take a few moments to look at how this new creation is much different than the way we were without Christ. The fruit of the Spirit is love (First, we are called to love God. Second, we are called to love each other). When we have the proper attitude towards God then we can have that same attitude towards others. Joy (our joy comes from God). Without the freedom from sin and security God provides it would be impossible to have true joy. Peace (peace is the calm that comes from knowing God). The blessed assurance of knowing God gives us a peace that surpasses all understanding. Patience (the more we grow in patience, the more we are like God, who is always patient with us). Our God loves us and even though we sin against Him continually He still is patient and loved us through those sins. Kindness (God saved us out of His kindness. This is why we are called to be kind). God has saved us from our sins even though there is nothing we can do to earn His favor. God’s grace has allowed each of us to be saved, so we need t be kind to others just like God is towards us. Goodness (we should seek to bless others, care for them, and bring good things into their lives). When we seek what is good for others, we seek to bring them things in their lives that are good for them. Our God always seeks to do what is good for us because He cares for His creation. Faithfulness (God will never leave us or forsake us. As God is faithful, so we too must be faithful). The Spirit gives us the ability to model the attitude God has towards us. He has promised to never leave nor forsake us when we live in obedience to His word. Just like God we need to remain faithful to others not forsaking them when they are going through a struggle or have a sin they are facing in their life. Gentleness (when we speak gently toward one another it gives life). We show this fruit in the way that we are gentle with others. Speaking gently is not attacking or putting others down just because we may have a disagreement or might be frustrated with them. Finally, we have the fruit of self-control (to be in control of one’s thoughts and actions). This is the fruit regarding accountability because as Scripture teaches, we will be held accountable for every word we speak and action we take. The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to have restraint and do the things that are pleasing to God. The Apostle Paul reminds us that life outside of the Spirit cannot please God, so those who have the spirit and live with the fruits of the spirit can please God and live in a way that honors Him.

 As we have learned this past week in vacation Bible School, God gives us the gifts of His Spirit when we place our trust in Him as our Savior. We cannot have these fruits without the Spirit present in our lives. As we go out into the world and interact with others who may not know Christ may we use these fruits to reach those who need to hear the good news of the gospel. Our children will be doing that with us this morning as they share their music with us from the week. May each of us be known by the love we have for others and the way that we speak truth in a culture that so badly needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. Please join me in a word of prayer.