Sermon Notes

Topic: Being With Jesus Leaves A Mark **Bible Passage: Galatians 5:22–23**

Preacher: Ps Brony Monk **Date: 8 November 2026**

Study Guide - The Way – Becoming Disciples of Jesus

Supporting Scriptures: Luke 19:1–10; Ephesians 5:8–13; Psalm 1:1–3; Hebrews 12:1–2; Romans 12:2

1. GETTING STARTED – THE GARDEN OF OUR LIVES

The sermon began with the story of peace lilies that grew healthy green leaves for years but didn't flower until they were moved closer to the light.

Discuss:

1. Are you a gardener, or do you tend to neglect your garden? What has been your experience?

2. The peace lilies were growing, but they weren't producing flowers. What might be the difference between spiritual growth and spiritual fruitfulness?

3. Have you ever experienced a season when you realised that something needed to change in your life to help you grow closer to Jesus?

2. UNDERSTANDING THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT – WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT ISN'T

Read Galatians 5:22–23

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

The fruit of the Spirit is not simply good behaviour, trying harder, or ticking off a list of Christian characteristics. It is the deep transformation of our character through the work of the Holy Spirit within us. Let's look at what each characteristic really means.

1. Love

Love is NOT: Simply liking someone, attraction, lust, tolerance or agreement.

Love IS: Selflessness, patience, kindness, humility, truthfulness, protection, trust, hope and perseverance. It is not self-seeking, easily angered or keeping a record of wrongs.

2. Joy

Joy is NOT: Happiness, euphoria or a positive feeling that depends on our circumstances.

Joy IS: A deep-seated confidence in God's sovereignty and eternal hope, and a contentment that His way is best, regardless of our circumstances.

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3. Peace

Peace is NOT: Keeping the status quo, remaining silent in the face of injustice or simply making sure everyone gets along.

Peace IS: Actively pursuing reconciliation and restoration of relationships, and having a sense of calm amid anxieties and trials, grounded in God's sovereignty.

4. Patience (Forbearance)

Patience is NOT: Waiting endlessly without action or putting up with poor circumstances forever.

Patience IS: Endurance, perseverance and steadfastness in difficult circumstances. Remaining faithful and courageous, and being slow to anger.

5. Kindness

Kindness is NOT: Simply being nice or speaking nicely about someone. It is not dependent on who someone is or whether they like us.

Kindness IS: Tender concern, compassion, mercy and grace. It is something we are called to show everyone, even our enemies.

6. Goodness

Goodness is NOT: Doing things that simply make us feel good or benefit ourselves.

Goodness IS: Actively working for the benefit of others.

7. Faithfulness

Faithfulness is NOT: Simply having enough faith.

Faithfulness IS: Being trustworthy, keeping our word, remaining steadfast and following through on what we say we will do. It also means being responsible stewards of what God has given us – our gifts, talents, time, relationships and families.

8. Gentleness

Gentleness is NOT: Being a pushover, compliant, weak or passive.

Gentleness IS: Strength under control. It is responding with grace, maturity and courage without being harsh, forceful or arrogant.

9. Self-Control

Self-Control is NOT: Needing to control every aspect of our environment.

Self-Control IS: Having control over our own bodies, thoughts, emotions and impulses.

It is the ability to say no to immediate gratification or sinful pleasure in order to walk in obedience to what God is asking of us.

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Discuss Together

1. Looking through these nine characteristics, which one challenged or surprised you the most? Why?

2. Was there anything in the "is NOT" descriptions that challenged a belief or assumption you previously held?

3. Which characteristic do you find most difficult to demonstrate in your everyday relationships?

4. How does understanding the difference between the fruit of the Spirit and simply being a "good person" change the way you think about spiritual growth?

5. Why is it important to remember that this fruit is produced through the Holy Spirit's work in us, rather than through our own efforts to behave better?

Remember: The fruit of the Spirit is not a checklist to measure how good a Christian we are. It is evidence of the Holy Spirit's transforming work in our lives. Our role is to remain close to Jesus and partner with the Holy Spirit as He develops Christ-like character within us.

3. BEING WITH JESUS CHANGES US **Read Luke 19:1–10.**

Zacchaeus had a life-changing encounter with Jesus. His response was not simply an emotional experience or a change in his thinking. His encounter with Jesus resulted in a dramatic change in his actions and priorities.

Discuss:

1. What stands out to you about Jesus' interaction with Zacchaeus?

2. Why do you think Jesus' willingness to spend time with Zacchaeus was so significant?

3. What evidence do we see of a changed heart in Zacchaeus?

4. The sermon said, "Being with Jesus leaves a mark on your life" What does that statement mean to you?

5. Can you identify a change in your own attitudes, character or behaviour that has come about through your relationship with Jesus?

4. CULTIVATING THE FRUIT – OUR PART IN THE PROCESS

The sermon identified three choices we need to make as we partner with the Holy Spirit in cultivating fruit in our lives.

A. Position Ourselves in the Light **Read Ephesians 5:8–13.**

We need to deliberately position ourselves where Jesus is: through prayer, worship, repentance, surrender, reading God's Word and surrounding ourselves with people who help us grow in faith.

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Discuss:

1. What does it look like in practical terms to position yourself in the light of Jesus?
2. How important is the influence of the people we allow to speak into our lives?
3. What could you change in your daily or weekly routine to spend more time with Jesus?

B. Feed and Fertilise **Read Psalm 1:1–3.**

Just as plants need nourishment to grow, we need to regularly feed our spiritual lives through God's Word, prayer, teaching and fellowship.

Discuss:

1. What are you currently doing to feed your spiritual life?
2. How can we move beyond simply reading the Bible to genuinely studying, understanding and applying it?
3. What happens when we neglect our spiritual growth?

C. Choose to Prune **Read Hebrews 12:1–2 and Romans 12:2.**

Pruning involves allowing God to remove things from our lives that hinder our spiritual growth. These might be sinful habits, attitudes, behaviours or things we hold onto for comfort or convenience.

Discuss:

1. Why do you think pruning can be such a difficult part of our spiritual journey?
2. How can we recognise when the Holy Spirit is convicting us about something in our lives?
3. What is the danger of repeatedly ignoring the Holy Spirit's prompting?
4. How can we encourage one another to make changes without becoming judgemental?

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5. PERSONAL REFLECTION – WHERE IS GOD GROWING YOU?

The sermon reminded us that the fruit of the Spirit is not a checklist to measure other people's faith. It is an opportunity to recognise where God is working in our own lives and where we still need His transforming work.

Take a few moments to reflect quietly. **Consider these questions:**

1. Which aspect of the fruit of the Spirit is God currently developing in me?
2. Is there anything I need to prune from my life?
3. Am I intentionally positioning myself in the light of Jesus?
4. What is one practical step I can take this week to deepen my relationship with Him?

If comfortable, share one thing with the group that you would appreciate prayer or encouragement for.

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CLOSING THOUGHT

“Being with Jesus leaves an unmistakable mark on your life.”

Our goal is not to try harder to produce fruit, but to remain close to Jesus, allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us as we partner with Him.

Let us be people who are found wherever Jesus is, so that we will be people who are known by our fruit.