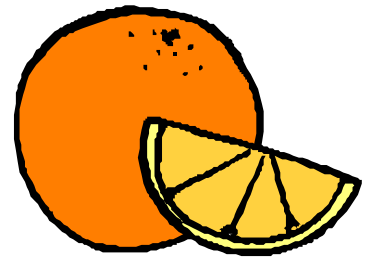


# Spirit Fruit



## 3. PEACE



1 fruit 9 segments

Why should the fruit contain the specific segments as found in Galatians 5 v 22 - 23? It is not just so that we can enjoy these qualities for ourselves, but that we sow and raise a harvest. This is clearly seen regarding peace in James 3 v 16 – 18

Peace, true peace, like joy, does not depend on circumstances. It is not the cessation of war, or quiet surroundings. Peace is the quality of peaceable-ness which comes from a close and personal relationship with the Lord.

The Encyclopedia Britannica defines peaceable as being disposed to peace: not contentious or quarrelsome: quietly behaved: marked by freedom from strife or disorder.

We see this behaviour pattern in Abraham who remained free of strife regarding the land Gen 13 v 1 – 9

The two words most often used in the Old Testament for peace are Shelem, which speaks of a peace offering. The other, more familiar word is Shalom which is used in a number of specific ways...

- a greeting, including concern for another (well) Genesis 37 v 14
- good / favourable conditions, success Leviticus 26 v 6
- free from animosity and war (friendly relations) Judges 4 v 17
- offering terms of peace Deuteronomy 20v10
- making peace with others Joshua 9 v 15
- being a person of peace Psalm 37 v 37
- speaking peace Deuteronomy 2 v 26
- sending others out in peace 1 Samuel 1 v 17

In the New Testament, Jesus left a legacy of peace to his disciples – John 14 v 27

He offered this peace as He was preparing them for His departure

This work of preparing the disciples began in John 12 when Jesus rode into Jerusalem, though at first, they did not understand the significance of what was happening around them

The first hint came shortly after in John 12 v 23 – 30

The picture then became clearer in verses 31 – 33

This clearly made little sense to them (v34)

In chapter 13, Jesus washes the disciples feet, which again, was misunderstood (v 6 – 11)

Jesus revealed a little more of what was to come in chapter 13 v 21 – 27

Once again, the significance of this discourse was missed (v 28 – 29)

Jesus goes on to comfort them in chapter 14 v 1 – 4

Again, his comments were not understood (v 5 – 6)

Jesus tried to explain further (v7), but once more, it fell on spiritually deaf ears (v8)

In His efforts to offer comfort, Jesus, who has just explained the presence of the Father, now offers the comfort of the Holy Spirit (14 v 15 – 17)

*{incidentally, here, we see the trinity at work...}*

- *The Spirit lives in you (v17)*
- *I will not leave you (v18)*
- *I am in my Father, you are in me, I am in you}*  
*(see also verse 26)*

Jesus brings this talk of comfort to a conclusion in verse 27 by offering them peace.

The peace that Jesus offers is 'Eirene' which speaks of rest in contrast with strife, (speaking of the end of strife), being untroubled, undisturbed and a sense of wellbeing.

In John 14, the Disciples were striving with the concept of Jesus being physically taken from them so he offered them his peace, rest from striving.

According to the dictionary, striving speaks of a bitter, sometimes violent conflict, fight or struggle, or dispute. In the context of John it is inner striving, conflict and struggle.

When we are in bitter turmoil and internal strife, we are reminded that we are to seek the gift of peaceable-ness, which in turn comes as a direct consequence of our discovery of peace with God through Jesus as explained in Romans 5 v 1 which we discuss here...

When Paul, the writer of Romans, reaches the section which we know as chapter 5 v1 (chapters and verses are added), he changes the focus of his writing. In the first half of chapter 1, he speaks mainly of 'I', then he speaks of 'they' (from verse 18). In chapter 2, the main pronoun changes to 'you' until chapter 3 where Paul reverts to 'they' changing to 'all' and he continues in the first person plural with 'all', and beginning chapter 5 'we'. (These are the main emphases used, though other pronouns appear as well)

In chapter 5, Paul is dealing with the benefits of Justification. He has spoken of its need (chapter 1 v 18 – 3 v 20), shown the way to justification (3 v 21 – 4 v 25) and now we see the benefits, the outworking or the fruit of justification.

Justification (by faith) is the act of God forgiving and pardoning us of our sins, when we come to him as our Lord, ask for his forgiveness and cleansing, seeking his pardon and determining in our hearts not to go there again.

The word 'Justification', here is *Dikaioo* (pronounced dik-ah-yo-o). Verbs which end with 'oo' are generally used to describe the state or wish of a person and not the method by which that can be achieved. Therefore, *dikaioo* means to bring out the truth that a person is justified, or if they are not, then to show them the need to be justified.

In classic Greek, *dikaioo* spoke of someone becoming justified by permitting a person to bear their own condemnation, punishment or chastisement. In the New Testament we see that Christ, through his death and resurrection has taken all of that on himself, for us and on our behalf.

In Romans 5 v 1, Paul introduces us to 6 benefits of justification...

1. Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (v1)
2. Grace (v2)
3. The Hope of Glory (v2)
4. Victory in suffering (v 3 – 8)
5. Eternal Salvation through Christ (v9 – 10)
6. Reconciliation (v11)

This wonderful list begins with the benefit of peace (v 1), in particular, peace with God.

Once we have peace (the opposite of striving) with God, peace with others and with self should come naturally and from this peace the other benefits begin to also play their part in our lives.

Peace with God, as we have seen, is recognizing that we are justified through Christ (4 v 25). Another word which belongs right next to Justification is reconciliation, because once we accept that we are justified with God, through Christ then it follows that we are reconciled to him, by virtue of our justification and by this restored relationship we have

peace with Him and this peace is present. It is peace now, because we are reconciled to God, now. Some versions translate it in the future tense – ‘let us have’. The Greek is such that the two tenses are very similar, so we have to rely on context and the only way in which the future tense would be relevant here, would be as an exhortation to recognize the peace which is already ours, so to view this in verse the present makes sense. To see this even clearer, we only have to look at the wider passage which contains a number of affirmations and no exhortations.

We have already seen that the opposite to peace is strife, so the opposite of peace with God is strife with God and this state is confirmed in Colossians 1 v 21 and back in Romans 5 v 10 which speaks of militant hostility toward a Ruler and the ruler having a state of enmity towards us – in which case, the ruler is more likely to be the victor in such a conflict. Charles Swindoll put it clearly, *‘through faith, we raised the white flag of surrender and became whiter than snow. We dropped to our knees in defeat and gained spiritual victory. With one stroke of faith, we signed a peace treaty with the Almighty and enlisted in His holy army of redeemed sinners. We are now at peace with God.’*<sup>1</sup>

We can take this idea of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, a little deeper by looking elsewhere in scripture.



Isaiah 48 v 22 and 57 v 21 tells us that the wicked (Hebrew Rasha - unrighteous, godless) have no peace with God



The reason for this is found in Romans 3 v 23 – a lack of measuring up to God’s standards

So, as we have seen, it is only by knowing Christ as our Lord, Saviour and Friend that we can truly know His peace.



Lamentations looks at the destruction of Jerusalem (caused ultimately by Israel’s sin and disobedience and in chapter 3 v 17, the author reveals his lack of peace



The Psalmist, on the other hand, spoke of his trust in a righteous God (Psalm 4 v 1) and the peace which comes from this confidence (v8)

There is a poster which reads ‘No God, No Peace, Know God, Know Peace’. David knew God and therefore knew His peace.

We have already seen that we have the peace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ and we need to examine this further.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘coming to terms with sin’ Charles Swindoll, insight for living, 1999



Zechariah sang a hymn of praise to God when he heard of the coming Messiah in which he included the message of peace – Luke 1 v 67 - 79



In Luke 2 v 8 – 14 we read that when Jesus came to this earth, it was with a message of peace. The shepherds were terrified (fearful). The word used here could also include the idea of reverence, but in context, it seems that human fear was largely in evidence.



Isaiah also prophesied that Jesus would be the prince of Peace  
Isaiah chapter 9 v 6

One of the most well known 'peace' verses is possibly Philippians 4 v 7

Again, it is necessary to view this verse regarding the peace of God as it appears in context...

Paul writes to the church at Philippi, ostensibly to thank them for their kindness and the gifts they had sent him when they learned that he had been detained in Rome.

Paul, though was not a man to waste a letter, so he touches on several issues...

- He brings them up to date with his situation (1 v 12 – 26 / 4 v 10 – 19)
- He encourages them to stand firm (1 v 27 – 30 / 4 v 4)
- He urges them to be humble and united (2 v 1 – 11 / 4 v 2 – 5)
- To commend Timothy & Epaphroditus to them (2 v 19 – 30)
- To warn them about the hidden agendas of Judaisers and the libertarians (chapter 3 v 1 – 16 Judaisers, legalists / v 17 – 21 libertarians, Antinomians). It is from this point that Paul goes to chapter 4 with its final exhortations and conclusions, then into chapter 4 and that peace verse.

Chapter 4 begins with the word, therefore, which signifies that Paul is still dealing with the warnings regarding those who would seek to lead them astray into extremism, before he concludes this letter.

In his exhortation he encourages them in a number of areas...

- Agree with each other, help each other (show love) v 2 – 3
- Rejoice in the Lord always (which we looked at when considering joy) v4
- Let your gentleness be evident to all (gentleness, a fruit of the Spirit) v5

- The Lord is near v5
  - Do not be anxious about anything v6
  - By prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God v6
  - and the peace of God, which transcends all your understanding,  
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus v7
- How does the peace of God rule our hearts and our minds?

To fully understand what Paul is saying we need to look a little closer at verse 6

1. 'do not be anxious'                      The opposite to peace is anxiety
2. 'about anything'                         Literally – not even one
3. 'in everything'                            this word can mean, either  
the individual within the total, or  
the total, itself  
  
for example:  
the whole of one in a number  
or the number itself  
  
so 'everything' in this context could mean a certain  
area of a wider context or the whole context  
together

So, if anxiety is not the way to handle situations, what is?

4. 'by prayer'                                a prayer to God alone
5. 'petition'                                 The word used for prayer (proseuche) is a sacred  
word as it speaks of requests made specifically to  
God alone.  
  
The word for petition (deesis) speaks..  
a. of a petition made to anyone  
b. of a petition relating to a particular benefit
6. 'thanksgiving'                            Eucharistia is made up of two words  
a. eu            well  
b. charis      grace  
  
it speaks of accepting something as an  
expression of grace by someone, and accepting it  
as undeserved.  
  
from this word came eucharisteo = to be thankful  
from which we get our word Eucharist

7. 'present your requests to God...'

These are requests made by a person to God for a particular need (used only twice in N.T)

AND...

The peace of God

1. 'Transcends'

Transcends (Gr huperecho) = surpass

It speaks of something greater, exceeding, going beyond, something of a very high degree. To go beyond the limits of something

2. 'all understanding'

Every thought (Gr Nous) – mind, the organ of mental perception, consciousness

3. 'keeps'

(Gr Phroureo) = it garrisons

Something which protects or defends, such as a military post

4. 'hearts'

(Gr Kardia)

The Bible attributes many things to 'heart', such as thoughts, reasoning, will, judgment, fear, love, joy etc as these things can affect a man's physical heart

5. 'minds'

(Gr Noema) = thoughts

Our thoughts are protected – see also 2 Corinthians 2 v 11 (schemes - noema)

6. 'through (in) Christ Jesus'

(Gr En) = to rest in a place

The measure of the inward peace of God affects our outward relationships with others

Ephesians 2 v 11 – 14 / 17

## Inclusion

In the preceding verses, Paul speaks about our personal salvation through Jesus Christ – the answer to alienation with God. In verse 11, he turns our attention towards the reconciling nature of God, between Jews and Gentiles – the answer to alienation with others. Then, in verse 13 he begins to show how Christ has made reconciliation of both Jews and Gentiles, together, with God.

In these verses Paul is addressing Gentiles, in particular and all who do not know the Lord in general.

Jews and Gentiles were not friends and had a number of derogatory names for each other. In verse 11, Paul refers to those ‘called the uncircumcised by those called the circumcision, that done in the body by the hands of men’. The act of circumcision had, of course, been instituted by God at the time of Abraham as an outward sign of His covenant with them. But, this act had become out of balance and its importance became far greater than intended and had become almost a badge of acceptance to the synagogue rather than a means of identifying the people of God. Paul seeks to bring the balance at the end of verse 11, where he is seeking to take away the mysticism of names and to show that there is a greater circumcision than that done by the hands of men. He is hinting towards another and better circumcision, that of the heart, carried out by the Holy Spirit.

Paul speaks of **those formally**... called the un-circumcised, implying that they no longer are true gentiles, then he refers to ‘those who call themselves “the circumcised”’, suggesting that they are equally, not the truly circumcised. Those who were called the uncircumcised are now the truly circumcised (in the heart) and those who called themselves the circumcised are not truly circumcised in the spiritual sense.

## Separation

By verse 12, Paul has stopped playing with words and now he turns his attention to the real truth of the matter.

In Romans 9 v 3 – 5, Paul listed the privileges granted to God’s people, namely...

- adoption as sons
- divine glory
- the covenants
- the law
- the temple
- the promises
- the patriarchs
- the beginning of the ancestry of Christ

Now, in Ephesians 2 v 12, he lists the disadvantages of the Gentiles, which were...

- separated from Christ
- excluded from Israel and its’ benefits

- foreigners to the covenants
- without hope
- without God
- by implication, there was no peace with God

Of course, in verse 12 he uses the phrase 'at that time', speaking of the time before Christ, but things had changed and now they are living after Christ and Paul had already referred to the blessings available, A.D. From the beginning or chapter one, Paul has enthusiastically laid out the amazing spiritual blessings of being 'in Christ'. There seems to have been a need, however, to remind both Jew and Gentile that things had been very different.

Verse 13, moves things on with the words 'but now in Christ Jesus'. Here we see the use of the emphatic personal pronoun, 'you' used when speaking of an individual and highlighting the individual. It was You who were once far away and it is you who are brought near through the blood of Christ. He also uses the emphatic personal pronoun in the next verse, but this time of Christ, 'He'.

The picture of 'far and near' were a common one. God had promised to be near to his people (Psalm 148 v 14) but to be distant from those who were not covenanted to him (the Gentiles). So perhaps that is why Paul wrote 'you who once were far away have been brought near' and he made it clear that it was only 'through the blood of Christ.' The rabbis use the phrase 'bringing near' when speaking of a new convert to Judaism, a proselyte (from the Greek *proselytos*, which is derived from *pros* near and *elytos* (akin to *elythe* he went). Paul however is referring to those who belong to the new covenant through His blood, irrespective of background.

In verse 14, it may be that Paul is looking back to Isaiah 57 v 19, where the Lord offers comfort to those who call on Him and a prophecy fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

The words found in verse 14 are very clear, regarding the peace we have through Jesus.

It is 'HE' – this is an emphatic personal pronoun, He (Jesus). It is he and no other, He paid the price for our sins, He has broken down the wall of partition and it is He and no other who is the source of our peace and in whom peace is found, nowhere else. He is the peacemaker between us and God.

This picture of being one by his has a very deep meaning. Here, Paul is referring to the flesh of Christ in his birth and in his death. He is also preparing us for the next verse, 16, where the use of 'body' speaks of the church and we are made one.

But there was a barrier between us and the peace of God in Jesus Christ, which he refers to here in verse 14. (also see Colossians 1 v 21 – 23)

Paul begins this verse by saying that Christ has made the two, one. Saint John Chrysostom, was born AD 347, in Antioch, Syria and was an early Church Father, [biblical interpreter](#), and archbishop of Constantinople, known for his zeal and clarity of

preaching, which appealed especially to the common people and earned him the Greek surname meaning “golden-mouthed.” Speaking of Ephesians 2 v 14 he said ‘as if one should melt down a statue of silver and another of lead, and the two should come out gold’.

There was a natural barrier standing in the way of the non-Jew, it was the barrier, or wall which separated the court of the Gentiles from the court of Israel in the Temple at Jerusalem and it is this symbol of ‘hostility. which Paul uses to describe the spiritual separation which had kept us from being ‘near’. (see the separate sheet)

In v15 we see the purpose of this peace between man and God and Jew and Gentile in Christ. Firstly, he says that the wall is abolished, literally, cancelled, made redundant and nullified – end of story! He is speaking here of the law with its commandment and regulations and this can be seen as the Torah (the law and commandments) and the Mitzvah (regulations). It is believed by the Jews that God revealed 613 Mitzvot to Moses and must be adhered to. All of these have now been fulfilled in Christ, in whom we have forgiveness and peace with God.