

FRUIT OF MY GOD



FRUIT OF MY GOD

Let's break a rule. We've been talking houses and foundations. Let's mix metaphors. Let's talk roots, dirt, and fruit. Scripture puts it like this...

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other (Galatians 5:22-26).

Scripture uses multiple metaphors describing the same reality. The different metaphors highlight unique aspects of these realities, giving us needed insight and clarity. Describing the foundation of our lives as either rock or sand gives us important insight into where we gain strength for life's storms. But for a multifaceted view of character, and for a description of how our character grows from what's rooted in our hearts, this second metaphor takes us further.

Consider fruit for a moment. Fruit is the result of a tree or plant. Put apple seeds in the ground, cultivate those seeds, and one day there will be trees producing apples. These apples are a result of the trees that produce them. They are above-ground expressions growing from below-ground realities. Healthy apple trees produce healthy apples. Unhealthy apple trees produce unhealthy apples, if they produce anything at all.

The description "*fruit of the Spirit*" is both interesting and insightful. Maybe it's new or maybe we've heard it before, but to read over it too quickly is to miss something important. Clearly, the Spirit referenced is the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. So when we say "*fruit of the Spirit*," we are effectively identifying the fruit in a person's life when God is their God. Put the Spirit of God in a person's life, this says, and new fruit will be seen above the ground.

As noted in Morph's *Love God* module, when alternate gods are considered, depth of insight is gained. What is the *fruit of the financial god*? Will we have peace and joy if financial gain is our god? Possibly. When the stock market is up, we may experience a higher degree of peace and joy. We're bowing down to a particular god, and at that moment, the god is serving us. The peace and joy will certainly feel vulnerable, though, so it's not a secure kind of peace. It's a peace that may celebrate the wins of a particular day, but anxiety will present itself when considering the volatility of tomorrow's market.

Fruit of the Spirit is a different kind of fruit. It's the kind of fruit that can endure the realities of life, because they are rooted in the Spirit and not the whims of false gods. There is the very real presence of the Almighty leading, guiding, comforting, challenging, teaching, and encouraging us. This presence does not evaporate when life's realities turn against us. The Spirit is ever-present and fully interested in our leaning fully into him.

HONEST ASSESSMENT

Time to roll up our sleeves. It's one thing to read a list of character traits, nod at their appeal, and conveniently turn the page. It's quite another to look for those character traits in specific areas of life. Do we have love? Let's not answer the question generally. Let's answer the question specifically. Let's consider specific situations to discover love or lack of love, peace or lack of peace, patience or lack of patience.

The exercise that follows is a fruit of the Spirit assessment. You will be asked a series of questions about specific situations to which you simply circle your degree of agreement or disagreement. Importantly, this assessment is not a personality assessment. Personality traits are uniquely tailored to individuals. No one person displays all personality traits. Spiritual fruit is different. A person with a genuine love for God will want to grow in all fruit produced by the Holy Spirit. This assessment gives insight into where this is or isn't yet happening.

Throughout this module, we will build on this initial assessment. Strengthened by self-awareness, we'll seek God for supernatural transformation and fruit of his Spirit. That is to say, don't rush this exercise; it will play a role in later weeks. A thoughtful experience here will set you up for more thoughtful experiences later.

To make the most of this exercise, thoughtfully follow these simple steps:

- 1) Answer the questions—Simply circle your response to the degree that you agree or disagree with the statement.
- 2) Asterisk—As you go through the questions, place an asterisk (*) by questions you find most revealing. If, for example, under *love* you find questions related to *forgiveness* most penetrating, then place an asterisk by these. These asterisks may offer greater insight than the overall assessment done through step three.
- 3) Tally and Summary—Use the final page to tally and summarize your responses. This will serve as an important guide in your upcoming Running Partner conversation.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT LOVE

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I enjoy personal success but enjoy watching others succeed as well.	1	2	3	4	5
I work toward forgiveness when others wrong me.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not insist on getting my own way and am flexible with my preferences.	1	2	3	4	5
I am a good listener.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not replay offenses of others in my mind or fantasize about revenge.	1	2	3	4	5
People do not feel judged by me but respected and enjoyed.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy winning but am gracious when I lose.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not nag those around me but give guidance and direction when truly needed.	1	2	3	4	5
I am happiest when those around me are happy, even if my wishes are not fully met.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not have any lingering unresolved relational conflict in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
I rejoice when others rejoice.	1	2	3	4	5
I mourn when others mourn.	1	2	3	4	5
I tend to see the good in other people, even when their actions don't always show it.	1	2	3	4	5
I am genuinely understanding when other's needs get in the way of my own desires.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not hold resentment toward anyone in my life right now.	1	2	3	4	5
I eagerly look for ways to help others reach their own potential.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not jealous of others when they are moving ahead in life and I am not.	1	2	3	4	5
I welcome relationships with those who are different from me.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not try to "fix" people; rather I accept them in their process.	1	2	3	4	5
I consistently consider other people's needs when making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT JOY

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I bring a positive presence to the people around me.	1	2	3	4	5
I like to laugh and do so regularly.	1	2	3	4	5
I naturally motivate people by my enthusiasm for a project.	1	2	3	4	5
I tend to brighten the mood of a room when I enter.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy play and recreation and don't consider it a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5
I tend to smile and greet people warmly, even in passing.	1	2	3	4	5
Children enjoy playing with me.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy playing with children.	1	2	3	4	5
I passionately pursue my goals with vigor and excitement.	1	2	3	4	5
I approach my work with energy rather than apathy.	1	2	3	4	5
I naturally find the silver lining in even the darkest of clouds.	1	2	3	4	5
I am content, even through challenging circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not battle with depression.	1	2	3	4	5
I rarely complain, even when I am uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy God.	1	2	3	4	5
I like myself.	1	2	3	4	5
My default disposition is generally optimistic.	1	2	3	4	5
At times, I engage in certain activities just for the fun of it.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a strong sense of adventure in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
I have interests I engage apart from my main responsibilities in life (work, family, etc).	1	2	3	4	5

* Before moving to the next page, place an asterisk by questions that are most revealing.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT PEACE

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I welcome silence and do not need constant noise (car radio, TV, cell phone).	1	2	3	4	5
I do not easily get anxious, even in challenging circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not get overly worried when finances are tight, but trust that all will be well.	1	2	3	4	5
I sleep well.	1	2	3	4	5
I am comfortable being myself with others.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not fear the unknown, but rather embrace it with openness and curiosity.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm comfortable listening or talking and do not fill the air with constant chatter.	1	2	3	4	5
I am content with my material possessions.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not hide my weaknesses.	1	2	3	4	5
I rest from my work and am not controlled by a need for constant progress.	1	2	3	4	5
When with people, I'm truly with them and not thinking about what's next.	1	2	3	4	5
I check e-mail, but not obsessively.	1	2	3	4	5
I may be physically tired, but my inner-person is not tired.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to work methodically and do not scurry through my days.	1	2	3	4	5
I welcome unscheduled days and do not fill them with pointless activity.	1	2	3	4	5
I am open with my struggles with trusted friends and family.	1	2	3	4	5
My life is not filled with unproductive striving.	1	2	3	4	5
I am unusually calm when facing challenging life circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not question God's forgiveness of my wrongs, past or present.	1	2	3	4	5
I have forgiven myself for my past wrongs.	1	2	3	4	5

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT PATIENCE

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I live my life at a doable and healthy pace.	1	2	3	4	5
I drive safely and not aggressively.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not easily agitated by unexpected traffic jams.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not annoyed when others answer a phone in my presence.	1	2	3	4	5
When frustrated, it is within proportion to the cause. I do not overreact.	1	2	3	4	5
I bring a calming presence to people around me.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not interrupt people or finish their sentences for them.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to work or play with others at their level (like children or newcomers).	1	2	3	4	5
I will gladly explain things more than once to those sincerely interested but confused.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not easily irritated by circumstances or people (flight delays, breakdowns, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
I do not enjoy complaining and only do so for constructive purposes.	1	2	3	4	5
I am taking time with this assessment and not rushing through it.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not overly bothered by having to wait for news (like results from a job interview).	1	2	3	4	5
I am not bothered by long lines at the grocery store.	1	2	3	4	5
I eat slowly.	1	2	3	4	5
People can relax around me.	1	2	3	4	5
When my computer crashes or runs slowly, I do not yell at it or bang on the keyboard.	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to be interrupted when doing things I enjoy (watching football, reading, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to be interrupted at work.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy a good story and do not hurry people to their point.	1	2	3	4	5

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT KINDNESS

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I consistently serve others even when it goes unnoticed.	1	2	3	4	5
I loan things to others and don't feel put out by it.	1	2	3	4	5
My words are not critical but edifying.	1	2	3	4	5
I see gift-giving for birthdays and Christmas as an opportunity not a burden.	1	2	3	4	5
I compliment others frequently.	1	2	3	4	5
I know my neighbors by name and look for ways to serve them.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy encouraging others even when they're succeeding where I'd like to succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
When possible, I will gladly help others move.	1	2	3	4	5
I think of people less fortunate than myself and look for ways to help them.	1	2	3	4	5
When friends need a ride to the airport, I welcome the opportunity to help.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy giving gifts and work to give gifts that others will truly appreciate.	1	2	3	4	5
I regularly volunteer to serve when a disaster leaves people in need.	1	2	3	4	5
I look for ways to edify my spouse, my kids, my roommates or others close to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy encouraging others with thoughtful words, greeting cards, or timely gifts.	1	2	3	4	5
I consistently consider other people's needs and desires when making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
I regularly volunteer to serve with a charity, church, or other nonprofit organization.	1	2	3	4	5
I am generous with my money.	1	2	3	4	5
I am generous with my time.	1	2	3	4	5
I am generous with my material possessions.	1	2	3	4	5
I regularly do unassigned chores at home or work to give others a breather.	1	2	3	4	5

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT GOODNESS

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I am careful to do the right thing, even when no one is looking.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not lie, even when I know the truth might be upsetting to others.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not lie, even when the truth might get me in trouble.	1	2	3	4	5
My priorities are healthy. Lower priorities do not overrun higher priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
I bus my tray at fast-food restaurants and don't leave a needless mess behind.	1	2	3	4	5
I let others experience the consequences of poor decisions if it's in their best interest.	1	2	3	4	5
I make wise choices.	1	2	3	4	5
I have good boundaries and can say "no" to others' requests when necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not cheat (on exams, taxes, card games, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
I tell people what they need to hear, even when it's hard to do so.	1	2	3	4	5
I will say "no" to requests that are not truly good for the person asking.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not take things that do not belong to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not hide things from my friends and family.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not cut corners at work or in my responsibilities at home.	1	2	3	4	5
I make decisions that are best for everyone involved, not just for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
I own up to and accept the consequences of my mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not attempt to blame others when something goes wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
Others consider me a man or woman of integrity.	1	2	3	4	5
I am being honest in answering these questions.	1	2	3	4	5
When someone accidentally overpays me, I return the difference.	1	2	3	4	5

* Before moving to the next page, place an asterisk by questions that are most revealing.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT FAITHFULNESS

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I keep my promises, even at great cost.	1	2	3	4	5
My friends know that I'll do what I say I'm going to do.	1	2	3	4	5
I am generally on-time and don't keep people waiting on me.	1	2	3	4	5
I am appropriately hard-working in whatever I do (job, studies, family, home, etc).	1	2	3	4	5
I am trustworthy in my responsibilities (family, studies, vocation).	1	2	3	4	5
I take good care of myself physically.	1	2	3	4	5
I take good care of myself spiritually.	1	2	3	4	5
I take good care of myself mentally and emotionally.	1	2	3	4	5
When I borrow money, I always pay it back promptly and in full.	1	2	3	4	5
Others consider me a disciplined person.	1	2	3	4	5
Others consider me a dependable and trustworthy person.	1	2	3	4	5
My friends and family ask me to take care of their things (house, car, pets) while away.	1	2	3	4	5
I always follow through with the commitments I make.	1	2	3	4	5
When I start a project, I do not leave it unfinished but work hard until it is completed.	1	2	3	4	5
I am a good steward of things that have been entrusted to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a financial budget and it guides my spending.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not behind on paying my bills.	1	2	3	4	5
People trust me not to share their secrets.	1	2	3	4	5
My car is free from clutter.	1	2	3	4	5
My home and surroundings are generally in order.	1	2	3	4	5

* Before moving to the next page, place an asterisk by questions that are most revealing.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT GENTLENESS

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I may be forthright and firm, but I avoid speaking abrasively to others.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't yell or raise my voice in anger.	1	2	3	4	5
I am sensitive to other people's feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not manipulate people to get my own way.	1	2	3	4	5
I am careful with my words in sensitive situations.	1	2	3	4	5
I give meaningful and appropriate touch to those around me.	1	2	3	4	5
I remain calm, even in disagreements with others.	1	2	3	4	5
I regularly consider others' feelings when I make decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy spending time with and tending to the elderly.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not exert my opinion over others' opinions.	1	2	3	4	5
I let others' voices be heard, even when I am confident in my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not look down on other people or their ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
I am kind to animals.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not try to control people with my words or actions.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not overly forceful in making my point in a conversation.	1	2	3	4	5
I am careful not to offend people unnecessarily.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not overpower people with my strengths.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not hard on others but give them grace and room to grow.	1	2	3	4	5
I am good with babies.	1	2	3	4	5
Children like to be around me.	1	2	3	4	5

* Before moving to the next page, place an asterisk by questions that are most revealing.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT SELF-CONTROL

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I do not overeat or eat a disproportionate amount of unhealthy foods.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not obsess over coffee, tea, chocolate, or other consumables.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not use tobacco products.	1	2	3	4	5
I have healthy drinking habits. I do not get drunk.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not abuse drugs (illegal, prescription, over-the-counter).	1	2	3	4	5
I am free from addictions.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not view pornography or sexually suggestive images and entertainment.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not entertain inappropriate sexual thoughts of those I know or don't know.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not entertain inappropriate romantic thoughts of those I know or don't know.	1	2	3	4	5
I watch healthy amounts of television and do not obsess over passive entertainment.	1	2	3	4	5
I may use the Internet, but I'm not an Internet junkie.	1	2	3	4	5
My recreational outlets enhance my life but do not overrun my life.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not have credit card debt.	1	2	3	4	5
I wait for good deals and good purchases and do not need to "buy now"!	1	2	3	4	5
I am thoughtful with my words. I speak when there is something to say.	1	2	3	4	5
My emotional responses are proportionate to the events that give rise to them.	1	2	3	4	5
I can say no to things that are not good for me, even when I really want them.	1	2	3	4	5
I am calm and level-headed when handling last-minute changes or the unexpected.	1	2	3	4	5
When angry, I do not vent to uninvolved parties. I speak to those involved.	1	2	3	4	5
When angry, I do not lash out at the offending party.	1	2	3	4	5

* Before moving to the next page, place an asterisk by questions that are most revealing.

SUMMARIZE AND TALLY

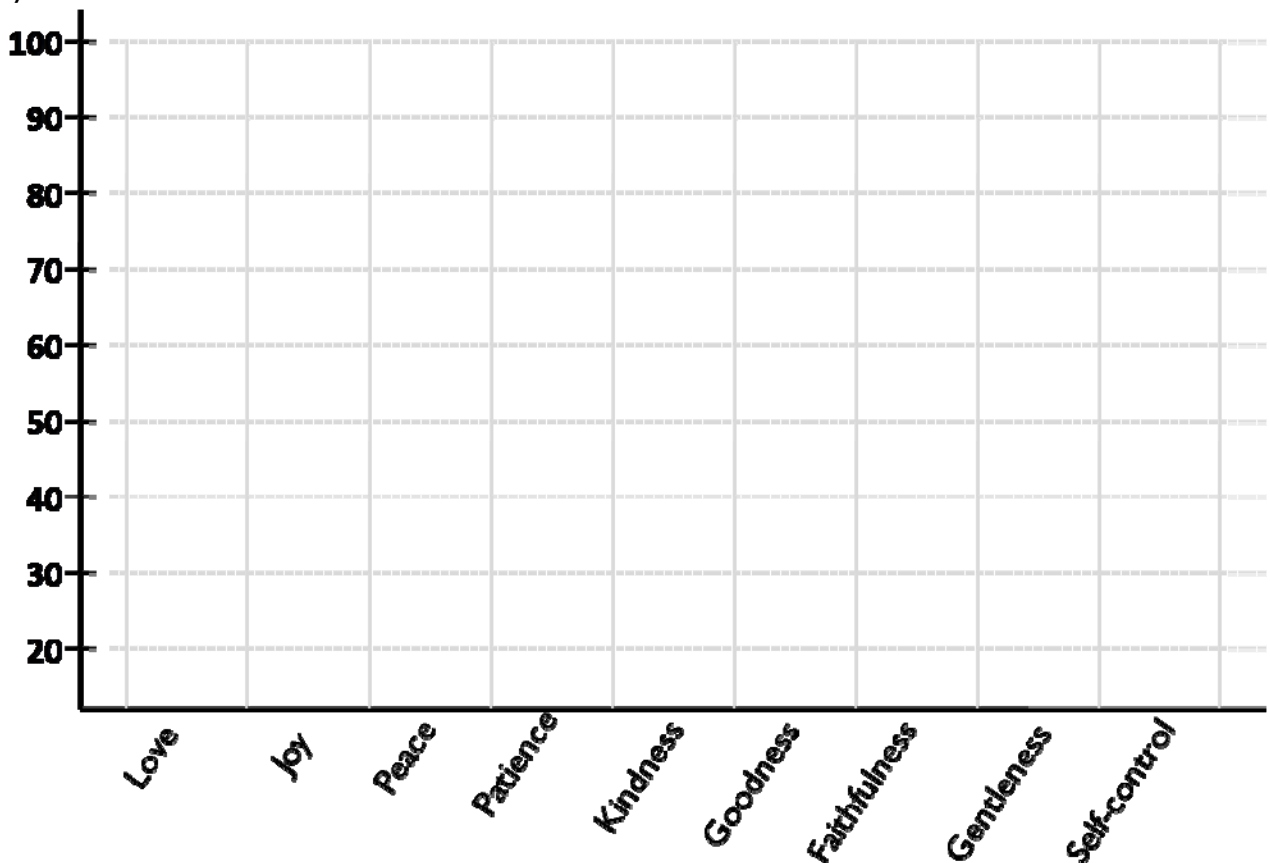
TALLY

To tally each fruit of the Spirit, simply add the total score of each page. So when you answered 5 add five, 3 add three, and so on down the page, giving how you scored on the page entirely.

	Total Score
▶ Love	_____
▶ Joy	_____
▶ Peace	_____
▶ Patience	_____
▶ Kindness	_____
▶ Goodness	_____
▶ Faithfulness	_____
▶ Gentleness	_____
▶ Self-Control	_____

GRAPH

Mark your scores on the graph below and shade in each column to see a visual comparison of each of the fruits in your life.



FRUIT OF MY GOD

Week 1, Morph Me, p. 36

SUMMARY THOUGHTS

- ▶ What part of the exercise was most revealing? Why?

- ▶ Where do you see fruit of God's presence? Where do you see fruit of false gods?

- ▶ Did you notice one or more general behavioral patterns that are particularly indicative of your weak areas on the assessment?

FRUIT OF MY GOD

Week 1, Morph Me, p. 38