

“You Have the Right Fruit”

(A lesson about the Fruit of the Spirit,
part of the Identity Series, and a follow up the “Job Identity” lesson)

For The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta

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Key verses:

Galatians 5:13-18, 22-26

Objective: To think about the qualities of the Fruit of the Spirit that we already possess and wonder about how to make them more evident in our lives.

This is part of a series that will be presented throughout the school year, and a follow up to the “Job identity” lesson that was posted in February of 2016. The lessons can all stand alone, but if you are looking for more resources, you can certainly go back and start the series with the original Job lesson.*

The Set up: Minimal

The Plan:

- Hook: Fruit mash up (10-15 mins): Watching a video and dreaming up what sort of new fruits we would create.
- Book: God’s Fruit Mash Up (15 mins): Learning about what it means to not live under the law, but to have all the aspects of the Fruit of the Spirit inside you.
- Look: Identity: You Have the Right Fruit (5 mins): Thinking about what qualities of the Fruit of Spirit need to be stirred up in our lives.
- Took: Fruit Juice of the Spirit (5 mins): Prayerfully drinking juice as a reminder that we possess all aspects of the Fruit of the Spirit.

The Supplies:

- Copy of lesson
- Access to the video in the hook section
- Paper and pens or markers
- Bibles
- Copies of the worksheet (back of lesson), one per student
- 9 different types of fruit juice-stick with sweet ones. Nothing savory like traditional V8!
- something to label the fruit juices with (can be duct tape and a sharpie!)
- one cup per kid

Set up: The ending prayer activity takes some set up that you will want to do beforehand. Remove the labels of all the fruit juices and replace them with new labels that are the qualities of the Fruit of the Spirit. In other word, each juice will now have one quality on it, so apple juice may now be called, “Gentleness.” It doesn’t have to be pretty, just something to indicate what it is. And sometimes those labels are impossible to remove- feel free to just pour the juice into pitchers and label the pitchers.

(Open in prayer, announcements, and any other start of gathering traditions)

Fruit Mash Up (Hook, 10-15 mins)

In this section, we will be watching a video that makes it look like different fruits have been combined to make one. Then, we are dreaming up what sort of fruits we would create if we could combine qualities from more than one fruit.

- Show the fruit mash up video: <https://vimeo.com/65302121>
 - Be sure to show the vimeo version, and not the one on YouTube. The one on YouTube is not translated and the CC is way off.

- Quick discussion questions:
 - How did the people respond when they first tasted the fruit?
 - Why did they respond that way?
 - Why was this a good advertising campaign?

- Creating your own fruit mash up
 - Now hand out paper and pens or markers.
 - Ask them to think about what fruits they would create if they could combine qualities from more than one fruit. For example, you could combine the sweetness of a mango, with the convenient bite-sized pieces like grapes. Or maybe, the crispness of an apple, with the handy packaging of a banana.
 - They can combine as many qualities as they want, but should only come up with ONE FRUIT.
 - Have them name the fruit.
 - If they are artsy, they can draw the fruit. If they are not, they can just list the qualities.
 - Allow them to ask questions
 - Give them 3 minutes to complete the task
 - Have them share their creation with the person sitting next to them, or the entire group if it is a smaller group

Transitional Statement: say something like:

“Those sound like awesome fruits- I would eat all of them! We are going to take another look at these fruits, so keep them close. But for now, we are going to look at the fruit mash up that God put together. I bet some of you know where I am going with this one...”

God’s Fruit Mash Up (Book, 15 mins)

In this section we are thinking about all the different qualities of the fruit of the Spirit and how we have access to them because we are led by the Spirit and do not live under the old law. Specifically, we are asking the kids to consider that these are the FRUIT of the Spirit, NOT the FruitS of the Spirit. In other words, these are one different fruitS, but one single fruit with different qualities. If they are in Christ, they have access to all the qualities, even if they are less noticeable in their lives.

- Ask the kids to all look up Galatians 5 so that they can follow along. Tell them to keep their bibles open when they are done reading because you want to go back and look at a few things.
- Tell them that these verses come from a letter written by Paul to one of the very first churches. They were misunderstanding some things about what it meant to be a Christian, and he was writing to make sure they were clear!
- Choose one kids to read out loud Gal. 5:13-18, and another to read 5:22-25. Ask everyone else to follow along. (you can include 19-20 if you would like, but this lesson doesn’t dig into the “acts of the flesh” and it could be a distraction from where we are trying to take the conversation)
- Here are the verses for your planning purposes:

13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh[a]; rather, serve one another humbly in love. **14** For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”[b] **15** If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. **17** For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. **18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. **24** Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **25** Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. **26** Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

- Make sure the kids keep their bibles open and go through these questions, including the hints of where to find the answer:
 - What is it that the Galatians were set free from in verse 13? (the old law)
 - How were they taking advantage of their freedom from the old law? (hint! See verse 13)
 - What was the new command they are supposed to live into? (hint! See verse 14)
 - How did Paul tell them that they would be able to successfully live into the new command? (see verse 16)
 - Who gets to live by the Spirit? (see verses 24-25)
 - What did Paul call the qualities that come along with living in the Spirit (see verse 22-23)* make sure they answer this question as “FRUIT of the Spirit,” NOT “FruitS of the Spirit” ask again and have them take a closer look until they identify that specification.

Mini-Lecture:

Say something like: In these verses, Paul is warning the Galatians that even though they are no longer a slave to the old law, that doesn't mean that they should act in sinful ways. Even if they are forgiven for their sins, if they are going to be one with the Spirit, they have to turn away from those sinful desires. Furthermore, he goes on to say that anyone who belongs to Christ (including all of us), already possess the qualities that are the Fruit of the Spirit. It may seem nit-picky to make sure we call these Fruit and not FruitS, but the difference is important. If they were FruitS, then you could have one without having the others. BUT, instead, God has created this one, awesome fruit mash up and has placed it inside all of his children. His fruit mash up includes the qualities of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Even if one or more of those qualities are less evident in your life, that doesn't mean that you don't possess them; it means that they are lying dormant, and they need to be stirred up! As Christians, it is part of our IDENTITY that we have this amazing, Godly Fruit Mash-up inside of us!

Identity: You Have the Right Fruit (Look, 5 mins)

In this section, they will think about when they have been around someone that displays all the qualities of the Fruit of the Spirit, and then thinking critically about which aspects they need to emphasize better in their lives.

- Give each student a pen/pencil the “Identity: You Have the Right Fruit” handout (back of lesson)
- They can either go through this on their own, or in groups of 2 or 3. Keep the groups small so that it doesn't take too long.

Fruit Juice of the Spirit (Took, 5-mins)

They will be creating their own Fruit Juice of the Spirit mixes that have the qualities that they most need to work on emphasizing in their lives.

- Get out all the juices and explain that each juice represents a different quality of the Fruit of the Spirit.
- Using their worksheet as guide, they will need to mix the juices in the proper amounts to indicate what they most need help with in their lives right now. For example, if I were struggling with self-control right now, then I would put a lot of that juice in my cup. If I have a pretty good handle on kindness, then I would only need to add a splash of that.
- You are NOT drinking this as you go, but making one glass of juice out of all the different varieties. You are creating a Fruit Juice of the Spirit Mash Up.
- When you are done, quietly come sit back down, but don't drink your juice until you are asked to do so.
- This is a prayerful activity, so take your time, use your words sparingly, and allow others to do the activity without distraction.
- Make sure they understand the instructions.
- Hand out the cups, and have them go for it!

(After they make their Juice Mash Ups and are seated quietly...)

- Tell that you are going to close in prayer, and as you do so, you will list off the different qualities of the fruit of the spirit. When you say the ones that they want more of in their lives, they should take a drink from their cup.

Then, reading slowly so they don't drown, say a prayer along the lines of:

God, thank you that through Jesus you have allowed us to no longer live under the old law. Thank you that we are forgiven no matter what, and forgive us when we sometimes choose to indulge in the desires of the flesh. Thank you that since we belong to Christ, it is part of our IDENTITY to possess all the qualities of the Fruit of the Spirit. Hear our earnest desires to grow more in love,..... joy,.....peace,forbearance,kindness,goodness, faithfulness,..... gentlenessand self-control. Thank you that you have promised that we have the right fruit to follow you, and that you are faithful in allowing these qualities to mature into ripe fruits. Let these qualities continue to grow in us this week. Amen.

“Identity: You Have the Right Fruit”

Think though these questions by yourself or with a friend:

1. Do you know someone, or have you ever known someone that displays all or most of the qualities of the Fruit of the Spirit?
2. What is it like to be in their presence?
3. How is being around that person similar to how the people responded to eating the fruits in the video we watched in the beginning?
4. Does that person draw you closer to God? Push you away? Have no affect?

Why to you think that Paul called it fruit? Possibly it is because fruit grows. You may have developed only the tiniest first buds, barely noticeable in your life. Or maybe your buds have opened into the beautiful, fragrant—and fragile blossoms. Those blossoms give way to the hard unripe fruit and, over time, grow and develop to full maturity. The process takes time. That’s important.

These things aren’t gifts; you don’t wake up one morning with the gift of gentleness or the gift of self-control. They grow slowly over a lifetime. But God DOES give us what we need to grow these fruits that are an important part of having a rich and meaningful life that brings glory to Him.

Thinking honestly about each quality, how developed is each quality in your life? With 1 standing for the tiniest bud, and 10 being a juicy, ripe fruit, mark an X on the scale where you land for each quality:

Love	1-----10
Joy	1-----10
Peace	1-----10
Patience	1-----10
Kindness	1-----10
Goodness	1-----10
Faithfulness	1-----10
Gentleness	1-----10
Self-control	1-----10