



ST NINIAN'S UNITING CHURCH

PRAYERS AND REFLECTION

JUNE 4TH, 2025

Based On Galatians 5:16-25

(22-25)

The Works of the Flesh

¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The Fruit of the Spirit

²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

OPENING PRAYER

Jesus, I thank you for the gift of your Spirit, which has taught me to live by your grace and love. As I sit with you today and reflect on Paul's great thoughts to the people of Galatia, I ask for your guidance to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit in my life. Help me to embody love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Lord, may I walk in the Spirit each day, allowing Your presence to lead me in my thoughts, actions, and interactions with others. I pray that you continue to teach me to steadfast in my faith, to exhibit gentleness in my responses and show kindness to those around me.

Holy One, help me to always remember to whom I have given myself to, and by your strength, I overcome my own desires and let my life be a hopeful reflection of who you are so I may draw others towards you through our witness.

Thank you for your generous and constant love and grace that enables me live in accordance with who you have called me to be.

In the name of Jesus, the risen Christ. Amen



PRAYER POINTS OF THANKS AND PRAISE

- Thank you for the call and capacity to serve Your people using the Spiritual gifts to enhance the sense of service.
- Thank you for affirming the starting point is found in the Word.
- Thank you for the seasons of life and challenges found within them.
- Thank you for the strength and wisdom of the disciples who left us with inspiration to always be looking ahead where You are leading St Ninian's future

- I give you praise for the faithfulness and joy of continuing to look forward and take the steps required
- I give you praise for the love, peace and kindness given to me which I share with others.
- I give you praise for the patience found in having more self-control in my thoughtfulness towards others.
- I give you praise for the gentleness found in the teaching of the scriptures.

PRAYER POINTS FOR PRAYER OF CONFESSION

- When I have been concerned about issues and not handed them over to you – forgive me
- When I feel unworthy of your love and grace- forgive me
- When I don't consider the hurt, my words may cause to others - forgive me
- When I shut people out because they agree with me – forgive me
- When my politics is at odds with others and I dismiss them – forgive me.

WORDS OF GRACE

In the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom; for God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. Hear then Christ's word of grace to us: 'Your sins are forgiven.' Amen

REFLECTION

There is a common buzz word that's been around for a while now – especially the past three years. That word is 'divisive'. It sits alongside polarisation and separation. The last part of the Galatian's reading for today is what we know as the 'Fruits of the Spirit' which include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. All of these qualities have the potential to raise, unity and harmony within any community, transcending differences that all too often lead to division.

Above all *love* is at the heart of the fruits of the Spirit. When we place unconditional love at the head of the fruits of the Spirit, as individuals we are encouraged to look beyond any personal judgments and biases, allowing ourselves to embrace one another with compassion and understanding. This love creates an environment where acceptance

thrives, allowing people from diverse backgrounds to come together without fear or favour – just an all-encompassing Christlike love.

Joy is another fruit that can bring people together where there may have been some gaps that needed to be filled. Shared joy nurtures camaraderie and strengthens relationships, creating a sense of belonging. Celebrating each other's successes and find common grounds amongst the differences where joyful experiences can help to dissolve existing barriers and encourage collaboration. Perhaps this is where using self-control has a special place where a quiet tongue will be of more use than a noisy gong just to prove a point or opinion.

Peace further enhances unity. In a world where conflict exists and people are often pushed into taking sides with one group or their opposers, the pursuit of peace can remind all of us to prioritise understanding and reconciliation over conflict. Christ calls us to embody peace, to become peacemakers, use *constructive* discourse, and *collaboratively* work with *integrity and honesty* rather than deceitful and costly division.

We can't forget the importance of patience and kindness and their contribution to this atmosphere of unity by showing an empathetic heart which is inclusive of consideration of the needs of others. A question we could always ask ourselves, 'Am I doing this for my own benefit, or that of the other?'. In moments of disagreement or frustration is a moment where patience, listening, a still tongue, and discernment will allow for a greater understanding of the situation which hopefully will prevent an escalation of any disagreement. Of course, kindness encourages acts of support and compassion that build trust amongst people from all persuasions, bringing them together. It's important for us to allow the fruits of the Spirit to do their work in us, so we can be beacons of light, hope, joy and love.

Amen

INTERCESSORY PRAYER: God, I have come to the end of my quiet time with you, and here I sit with a humble attitude seeking your divine guidance and grace as I try to live out the fruits of the Spirit each day and in each context, I'm living through. Lord, I ask that you instill love in my heart enabling me to love equally with the same tenderness and compassion which you have shown to me. May this love break down barriers and heal wounds, uniting us as one family in the body of Christ. I pray for joy to fill my life even when I'm challenged. Let it be joy that lights my journey through life, and draws others toward you, so they will know love and joy as I do. Grant me peace, O Lord, in this world filled with turmoil and strife, help me to be a peacemaker and a builder of Spiritual strength so that your peace lives in me, strengths and guides my heart and mind so that I can sit well and quietly with others in need.

Lord, I know sometimes I'm impatient and don't want to wait for your intervention, help me to be slow to anger and quick to forgive, help me to bear with others in love and understanding of their struggles, always showing them grace as you have shown me. I

pray that your kindness and goodness is reflected in my actions and words. Help me to live a life which is a pleasing testament to my faith that serves as an anchor providing stability in uncertain time.

Finally, Lord, grant me self-control, that I may overcome those moments of being tempted to follow another path which will only draw me away from you and the community which you have placed me in. In all things, I seek to reflect the fruits of the Spirit are my guiding light which draws me ever closer to you and the body of Christ. Thank you for hearing my prayer prayed in the name of the risen Christ Jesus.

Amen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6PLNowobwx0>

