

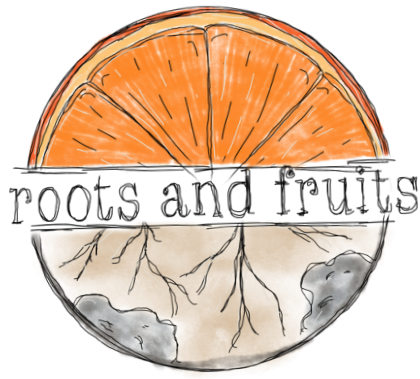


## Introduction

At District Assembly this year, our DS invited us to consider how vital it could be to cultivate the Fruit of the Spirit. What would our witness look like in the world if we were people who were following Jesus, allowing God's grace to help us, and being filled with the Spirit so we bear fruit? To accomplish this we need to partner with God. She said, "While we don't believe in works righteousness, we also don't believe in passive discipleship. We get our hands dirty in the soil with our God who is the gardener." This document is a way for us to partner with God in our own transformation! Each month you will be provided with a variety of tools to help cultivate the Fruit of the Spirit. You can use these personally or with a group.

The format is a shared spiritual practice and then a three-fold invitation to go deeper--deeper in Scripture, deeper with others, and going deeper with self. You will also find a variety of book recommendations to help you to explore the fruit that is being studied each month.

The truth is Galatians 5 says the "fruit" of the Spirit, not the "fruits." This matters because we are to allow God to help us cultivate all of them, not just the easy ones, not just the ones we like, but we are to be people who bear all the fruit of the Spirit. Join us on this adventure with God as we seek to go deeper together.



## Shared practice:

Faithfulness in Christ requires two things.

- First, we need to receive God's grace.
- Second, we need to partner with God.

We learn to be faithful by practicing it! This month as we seek to cultivate faithfulness we want to work on creating new habits in our lives. Choose one of the following activities below and work on doing it 5 out of 7 days per week. This gives you a little grace in case you miss a day, but also provides enough repetition to help shape you! Share with someone else how this practice is shaping and forming you to be more faithful.

- Bible Reading Plan: Read 5 Psalms or 5 chapters of one of the Gospels each day
- Lectio365: Listen to the morning or evening devotional
- Pray: Spend 5 minutes in prayer

See how your faithfulness, coupled with God's faithfulness, will fill and shape you!



**Deeper in Scripture:** Check out this great video on why we can trust our faithful God!

COMPASSIONATE and GRACIOUS SLOW TO ANGER  
overflowing with LOYAL LOVE and FAITHFULNESS  
EXODUS 34:6

**Deeper with others:** We live in a world where people struggle to trust. There are good reasons for this! We have been let down and we have let down others. Faithfulness is a choice we make to keep our word, to follow through, to have hard conversations that need to be had, and to forgive. This month, a practice to go deeper with others may be to start the day by praying:  
“Lord, help me to be faithful to you and faithful to my neighbor. Will you give me grace to love as you love? Will you empower me by your Holy Spirit to keep my word and demonstrate that I am committed to others, to your church, and to my responsibilities? Will you help me to be faithful? Amen.”

**Deeper with self:** Part of our spiritual journey is wrestling with the hurts of our past. We know that the things that have happened to us often continue to control us later in life. When someone has been untrustworthy to us we can become closed off to others. Take some time to write down some of the people who have let you down. Also, you can write down how God has let you down. While we know God is faithful, we can't pretend that we have always felt like God has done what we wanted or needed. It can help us to process these feelings if we write them down. Don't believe me? Look at the Psalms! They are filled with these kinds of things. As you begin to make a list, ask yourself this question: How has \_\_\_\_\_ impacted my relationships with others or with God? Is there something God wants to heal in me? Sit quietly before the Lord and see what God may say to you.