

CHIEF MINISTRIES

August 2023

Thank you all for the feedback on May's newsletter on Joy. There were actually a few requests for a series of teachings on the fruit of the spirit. After praying about it the Lord started giving me direction for that. So, over the next few months that will be the focus. Let's get started, according to Galatians 5:22-23, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

Let's start out with a little background. First, let's differentiate between the "gift of the Holy Spirit" (there are nine of those) and the "fruit of the Holy Spirit" (also nine). It is easiest to think of a tree, an image that is often used with the Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit is that of the tree. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the roots of the tree, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit are, the fruit of the tree.

While I believe these spiritual gifts serve an important purpose in the Body of Christ, I want you to be equally (if not more) aware of the fruit of the Holy Spirit and how important it is to understand what God is doing in your very own life.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit manifesting His fruit in us is far more important than any spiritual gift. Many people continue to seek the power and manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit, but they do not place a priority on the call of every believer to a holy life. Our desire should be to earnestly seek "the Giver and not the gifts" then "all these things (Christ-like qualities) shall be added unto you" (*Matthew 6:33*) through the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. Regardless of what anyone says, God still frowns on sin and has called us to be conformed to the image of His dear Son.

We must remember that gifts are given, but spiritual fruit is developed. The fruit of the Spirit (also known as our Spiritual Medicine Chest) comes to us when we receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior; however, it only comes as a small seed that must be nurtured and developed in our lives (or watered) through prayer, by reading the Word, and by putting faith into action. If Christ is in us, then we should be Christlike. The fruit of the Spirit is the display of the character of Christ. It is His presence within us that enables us to develop the spiritual fruit in our lives.

It is quite fascinating that the Bible both begins and ends talking about fruit. *The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ^{v16} And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden," (Genesis 2:15-16 ESV). " Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ^{v2} through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life¹ with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (Revelation 22:1-2 ESV)*

God's Divine Purpose

God's divine purpose for your life is for you to bear spiritual fruit. Your relationship to Jesus is described in *John 15:5* in this way, *"He is the vine, and we are the branches."*

Again in *John 15:16*, the Bible declares, *" You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you*

should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you."

In order to bear this fruit, you must be planted and properly rooted spiritually: *"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; v2 but his delight is in the law^[b] of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. v3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers" (Psalm 1:1-3 ESV).*

If you want to bear spiritual fruit, then you must reject sin, walk in holiness, and delight in God's law. You must also be planted in the house of God - connected to the Body of Christ.

Hebrews 10:25 tells us not to *"not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."* Psalm 92:13-14 tells us that: *"They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God. v14 They still bear fruit in old age; the KJV says; "they are ever full of sap and green Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing..."*

A Supernatural Process

Bearing fruit is a supernatural process. Jesus produces the fruit, and we bear it. The Father is the divine Gardener who supervises the process: *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. v2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit." (John 15:1-2 ESV).*

The purging process is one that many Christians reject because when they go through difficulties in their lives, they always think that the devil is attacking them. God prunes productive plants for the same reason a farmer prunes - to produce more fruit.

Jesus' parable of the barren tree in Luke 13:6-9 illustrates how God works continually and patiently with the unproductive to produce fruit. *"And he told this parable: A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. v7 And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' v8 And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. v9 Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'" (ESV).*

The Nine Fruit

The book of Galatians identifies the Christ-like qualities that God wants to produce in our lives: *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22-23 (KJV)*

Notice that the "fruit" of the Spirit is singular (not plural), for there is one fruit revealed in nine separate supernatural manifestations.

Peter wrote, *"For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." II Peter 1:8 (ESV).* We are *"filled with these fruits of righteousness only by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God."* (Ephesians 5:9 ESV).

The 1st three fruit focus on your relationship with God. (Love, Joy, Peace) (September newsletter)

The 2nd three fruit focus on your relationship with others. (Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness) (October Newsletter)

The final three fruit focus directly on the individual. (Faith, Meekness, Temperance) (November Newsletter)

Discerning One's Fruit

As Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits," so watch carefully. If people display the fruit of the Holy Spirit, you can be assured that they are "good trees"; and if they don't, there is a good chance that they are "corrupt trees" in need of God's saving grace. Over the next month look introspectively and truly assess what category you fit.

Jesus says in Matthew 12:33: *"Either make the tree good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit."*

These nine manifestations of the fruit of the Holy Spirit will enable you to eliminate spiritual barrenness, to escape the corruption of the world, and become partakers of the divine nature of God. We are to become more like Him.

Therefore keep developing the fruit of the Spirit and the character of Christ in your life. Not only will it cause you to grow spiritually, but it will be a powerful witness to unbelievers as well.

What matters, however, is that the fruit is of much greater significance and consequence. Part of the current realigning that God is asking of us is to highly prize and "grow: the following: Divine love expressed. Joy that overflows. Peace that subdues. Patience that endures. Kindness in action. Faith that prevails. Along with a kind and gentle heart and a strong spirit.

Take time to consider if your focus is on fruit and if your exercise of the gifts is in sync with His heart. The growth of fruit is measurable and visible. Let's be honest and real about the quantity and quality of fruit in our life. The health of the tree and the quality of the fruit is dependent on the base (root system) of said tree. Let's grow our roots healthy and deep!



Blessing always,

Ms. Chief (aka Ms.G)

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Christ's Heart In Every Felon



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