

The Fruit of the Spirit

Bible reading Gal. 5:16ff

Today we are talking about character not gifts – explain gifts of the Spirit, gifts of the Father in creation = natural abilities surrendered to Christ. Great composers etc. some violent, unfaithful, immoral etc.

Have you ever said, some people who are not Christians, or church goers behave better are kinder, than a lot of Christians?

Why?

- **Adam in garden**
- **The tree of the knowledge of good and evil** – not evil.

In the worst of people there is some good – and in the best of people there is some evil.

A person born into a loving well-balanced secure and happy family stands a much better chance of being more loving, kind and joyful than one born into a totally dysfunctional family.

- Father never around – lot of different men in the home some violent, abusive, dictatorial, unreasonable.
- Mother – manipulative, demanding, critical addiction.
- This person becomes, angry, devious, has low self-esteem, no self-confidence turns to drugs, alcohol, sex and crime.
- **This person turns to Christ** – the effect of their upbringing still lingers on after conversion.
- He or she is starting from a long way back
- We sometimes confuse natural niceness for a work of the Spirit
- We miss the steps of grace from the one starting from way back
- It is by grace we are saved – but sanctification (becoming like Christ) is a process.

Gal 5:22 -23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, (long suffering) kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

These are the qualities of **Christ himself**.

- Fruit is the product or purpose of the tree
 - Paul. Gal 1:15-16
But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,¹⁶ **To reveal his Son in me,**

Before the fruit there is the seed

1. The Fruit is in the Seed

Rom 8:9

And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

The Holy Spirit is in every Christian as a seed – something happened when you got saved – the Holy Spirit came in.

Rom 8:11ff

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, Abba, Father.

Paul had to remind the Corinthians of this –

1Cor 6:19

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

Pauls prayer for the Ephesians

Eph 3:17-19

7 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Settle down and abide – the issue of who's in charge (the Lordship of Christ) has been settled.

Eph 3:17

Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. NLT

2. **Fruit needs to be Cultivated – feed the seed**

- a. **Love** – Gods love is nothing to do with your merit, qualities, or gifts but **because he is Love**
 - i. Jesus said, this is my command – love one another as I have loved you. Lady in Macclesfield = since I've been coming to church I love my husband better!
 - ii. **By this** shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love, one for the other. Jn.13:34-35
 - iii. When we love someone – we do not want to harm them
 - iv. We speak well of them – we put them in a favourable light.
 - v. We help them
 - vi. If we correct them, and speak truth to them, it's done from pure motives.

In Jane Austen's 1815 novel *Emma*.

During a picnic at Box Hill, Emma thoughtlessly mocks the talkative Miss Bates. Later, Mr. Knightley severely scolds Emma for her cruelty. He reminds her that Miss Bates deserves compassion rather than public humiliation.

The famous line "Badly done, Emma! Badly done!" is spoken by Mr. Knightley to Emma Woodhouse.

Heb 12:5-6

"My child don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. 6 For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child."

b. Joy - Heaven is joyful – volcanos of joy

- i. You love him (Jesus) even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. 9 The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:8-9

**ii. How many of us live like this or have experienced this?
From time to time!**

- iii. The joy of a relationship with Jesus – Jean in Macclesfield.
- iv. The joy of having an eternal salvation – the blessed hope

c. Peace - Col 3:15 And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body, you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

i. Peace with God

ii. Peace of God –

Phil 4:6-7 6

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Horatio Spafford's great hymn

**When peace like a river attendeth my way when sorrow
like sea billow's role etc.**

- iii. **Peace with yourself** – the peace of God will give you this
- iv. **Peace with others** –

2 Cor 13:11

Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you.

Jesus said, Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called sons of God.
Matt 5:8

Joseph Medlicot Scriven's hymn

What a friend we have in Jesus etc.

O what peace we often forfeit
O what needless pain we bear
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer

- d. **Patience** – Long suffering. Under provocation – it doesn't retaliate.
 - i. Love – **suffers long** and is kind – it doesn't give up.

- e. **Kindness** - Luke 6:35

For he (God) is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

- i. Jesus went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil.

Glen Campbell

If you see your brother standing by the road
With a heavy load from the seeds he sowed
And if you see your sister falling by the way
Just stop and say, "You're going the wrong way"

You've got to try a little kindness
Yes, show a little kindness
Just shine your light for everyone to see
And if you try a little kindness
Then you'll overlook the blindness
Of narrow-minded people on the narrow-minded streets

f. **Goodness** – uprightness of soul – in action reaching out to others to do good even when it isn't deserved.

g. **Faithfulness** = trustworthy or reliable – Jesus said He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful in that which is much
Luke 16:10

Prov. 25:19

Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

h. **Gentleness** –

Gal 6:1-2

Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.

I. **Self-control** – self mastery over the temptations of the flesh (sinful nature) we need the Spirit's power to overcome.

Opposition to growth

The two natures – one fights the other.

The flesh and the Spirit - What you feed will grow

- **Hurt** – offence = you keep going over it – the injustice, the lies, the loss of reputation etc. feeding it, getting friends to listen etc. Forgive and move on – hand them over to God.
- **Greed** – obsessed with what you don't have – rather than what you do have.
- **Lust** –
- **Pride** –

Paul felt he was starting again with them

Gal 4:19

My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

Jesus' story

Luke 13:7

Then he told this parable: A man had a fig-tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. So, he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig-tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig round it and fertilise it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'

Jesus said, I'll **dig** around it and **fertilize** it

- **Dig** = breaking open the hard areas of your life
 - **Unbelief**
 - **Un-forgiveness**
 - **Un-thankfulness**
 - **Un-repentance**

God needs to break the hard areas of our lives

- **Fertilize it** = feed it
 - His Grace
 - His Spirit – If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.
 - His words of encouragement from the scriptures
Ps 23 He makes me lie down in green pastures he leads me beside still waters

- David said,

Ps 119 Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope.
My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life.

Jesus spoke a lot about being fruitful

Study in Jn. 15

I am the true vine, and my father is the gardener.

He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does **bear fruit**, he prunes so that it will be even **more fruitful**.

If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear **much fruit**

This is to my father's glory, that you bear **much fruit**, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit— **fruit that will last**.

- **Fruit - V2**
- **More Fruit**
- **Much Fruit** – the Father is glorified when we bear much fruit –

How many of us would like more

Gal 5:22 -23

love, joy, peace, patience, (long suffering) kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Feed the seed – starve the flesh

Ask the Holy Spirit for help

Questions

1. A person born into a well-adjusted nice family should be better behaved than someone with a traumatic upbringing.
 - a. In what ways do we fail to see the little steps of progress that the second person is making.
 - b. How tolerant are we with new converts that still retain some old habits.
2. Christ's spirit comes in us as a seed at conversion – what encourages the growth or development of the Spirit's life within us?
3. Of the many aspects of the Spirit's life (Love Joy etc.) which
4. areas do you feel you need to grow more into and why?
5. Why is trying harder not the answer?
6. What fruit do you see in the life of each other in your group.
7. Jesus said, if you abide in me, you will bear much fruit. What is abiding in Christ.
8. What can you learn from the story in Luke 13