

Fruits Of The Spirit

INTRODUCTION:

One of the most important things we can do as believers is bear fruit.

In John 15:16 Jesus said,..."we have been chosen and appointed to go and bear fruit..."

He says that when we bear fruit that the Father is honoured and glorified and that we show ourselves to be followers of Jesus." (see John 15:8)

The fruits of the spirit are; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (see Gal. 5:22-23)

THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT DISPLAY THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST.

We need to understand that GIFTINGS AND FRUIT ARE NOT THE SAME THING!

GIFTINGS are just that, they are gifts. The gifts of the spirit are freely given to us by God.

FRUIT is given to us as a seed and we have to GROW and develop in the fruits of the spirit.

GIFTS ARE GIVEN AND FRUIT IS GROWN.

Paul, in writing to the Corinthian church, who had all the spiritual giftings functioning, said to them..." I could not talk to you as spiritual men but as mere infants... and you are still unspiritual." (see 1 Cor. 3:1,3)

You see, God gives Gifts to unspiritual, immature people. Why? Because without sensing our gifting, we would not have direction in our life and we would have no motivation to press forward. We cannot pursue and cultivate something, we don't know exists.

In Matthew 21:17-17 Jesus cursed the fig tree that had leaves but no fruit on it.

LEAVES are like GIFTINGS. It's what people see first. People see our leaves; our giftings are what is obvious and visible to others. In order to see the FRUIT, you have to look under the leaves.

The bible says in Matthew 12:33 that "a tree is known and recognized by its fruit" (not by its leaves) Yet this is the very mistake we, in the church, have been making. We have been judging people by their LEAVES. We've judged them by their GIFTING and not by their FRUIT.

Let me say, that in the beginning, you might get away with operating in your gifting without much fruit, but eventually people with ONLY a gifting and no fruit will be dealt with by God. Remember Jesus did curse the fig tree that had only leaves and no fruit. (Matt.12:33)

We have seen examples of this over the years. Men with great, big, leafy, ministries with no fruit that eventually withered and died.

The fruit of self-control would have kept them faithful in their marriages and with the finances of their ministries. The fruit of humility would have allowed them to listen to the warning of others and saved their ministries.

You see, GIFTINGS ARE NOT FRUIT! You can have a good gift and bad fruit.

We, as believers, need to get serious about this fruit stuff. We have to examine our fruit and be working on growing and cultivated the fruits of the spirit in our lives.

Giftings are good but they won't last or grow and blossom without fruit.

Proverbs 11:30 says; "the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life and he who wins souls is wise."

Trees are mentioned throughout scripture and they are objects of beauty

and usefulness.

What this verse means is; operating in the fruits of the spirit gives us life and IS life to other people. A tree is a thing of beauty and usefulness. And when we are operating in the fruits, we are attractive to the unsaved and our fruit is being useful or beneficial to them. (ie, people are blessed by our kindness). And souls can we won for the kingdom, by our fruit.

Psalm 1:3 says; " And he shall be like a tree planted and tended by the streams of water, ready to bring forth fruit in it's season; its leaf shall not fade or wither and everything he does shall prosper and come to maturity."

We see here, a tree bringing forth fruit **IN ITS SEASON**. This means whatever fruit is needed for any particular time (or season), we can operate in it. If the situation calls for patience, we operate in patience, if the season calls for kindness, we operate in kindness. It means we can be ready at any time to display whatever fruit of the spirit is required.

Notice the next part of the verse, "**ITS LEAF SHALL NOT FADE OR WITHER AND EVERYTHING HE DOES SHALL PROSPER AND COME TO MATURITY.**"

If "leaves" are giftings, as we looked at earlier. Then do we see what this verse is saying... As long as we are continually operating in the fruits of the spirit, our giftings, our ministries, will not fade or wither but rather will prosper and come to maturity!

The secret to keeping your gifting or ministry alive is by operating in the fruits of the spirit.

It says **EVERYTHING** will prosper and come to maturity. That means I can prosper in ever area of my life!

* Read Psalm 1:3 again and for "fruit" insert all the fruits and for "leaf" insert the word "giftings".

The most important thing in this verse, that we don't want to miss, is the

very beginning of it... like a tree FIRMLY PLANTED AND TENDED BY THE STREAMS OF WATER..."

You see, this is where it all begins. Fruitfulness and giftings, life and maturity come from being planted by the streams of water. From being vitally united to and abiding in the one who IS the living water: JESUS!

Apart from God we can do nothing. (see John 15:5). If we are going to grow in fruitfulness and giftings and become mature Christians, it is all going to flow out of being PLANTED in Him. If we are planted anywhere else our fruit is going to be rotten and rotten fruit grows mold and stinks!! We want to bear abundant fruit that originates from God so that we "will be known and recognized by our fruit" and in doing so glorify our Father and win souls for His kingdom.

So let us, all, seek Him to help us develop more of the fruits of the spirit in our lives. Amen

This introductory teaching to fruits of the spirit will be followed by specific, individual teaching on each of the fruits mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23.

November 14,1999

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