

The Fruit Of The Spirit

Gal 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

KJV

If I was a doctor and I was trying to diagnose your physical condition, I would check your vital signs. I would measure your temperature. I would look in your eyes, your ears, and your mouth. I would do a physical examination of the part of your body that is experiencing pain. Honest doctors will tell you that it is not an exact science. There is so much more to learn and a need for greater technology. I

There is an exact science for measuring your spiritual condition as a Christian. Your spiritual condition is known by your fruit.

The fruit of the Spirit are specific attributes of the nature of God. The fruit of the Spirit reveals who God is. The fruit of the Spirit reveals what God is like.

If we are living by faith in Jesus Christ, the fruit of the Spirit is visible in us!

The fruit of the spirit is not divided. If we are living by faith in Jesus Christ, the nature of God is fully operational in us and through us. But what fruit is most visible to others will be determined by the circumstances we are experience and how we respond to those circumstances.

The fruit others see will change based on our circumstance.

The first fruit of the Spirit is love!

Gal 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love....

This is the Greek word agape.

Agape Love is an earnest and passionate commitment to the well-being of the one loved. It is self-less and self-sacrificing. It is pursuing the well being of another without any need for reciprocation.

In scripture, the recipients of this love include....

- God(Matthew 22:37)
- Brothers and sisters in Christ (John 13:34-35)
- Family(Ephesians 5;25; Colossians 3:19)

Agape Love for children is certainly understood but it is not specifically mentioned other than God's love for us and the Apostle's love for his children of the faith.

- Leaders in the church(I Thessalonians 5:13)
- Friends(John 15:13)

What makes Agape love even more unique is some of the other recipients. Each of the following is mentioned in scripture.

- Enemies (Matthew 5:43)
- Neighbors (Matthew 19:19)
- Sinners or evil people(Luke 6:32)

If you are living by faith in Jesus Christ, others will see this fruit of the spirit in the way you conduct yourself in each one of these relationships.

The opposite of agape love is selfishness.

Selfishness is seeking to fulfill your own lusts and desire for happiness at the expense of others.

Selfishness always results in the transgression of God's moral laws.

Selfish is what we were before we received Jesus Christ. Selfish is one of the attributes of our flesh. Selfish is what others see in us if we do not live by faith in Jesus Christ.

To live by faith in Jesus Christ, you must receive Jesus as our savior from sin. You cannot be a partaker of His divine nature unless you receive Him. When you receive Jesus, He comes to live in you by His Spirit. This is called being born again.

To live by faith in Jesus Christ you must daily surrender to the will of God and trust in Jesus to live His life through you. He will not ask you to do anything that He can't do in you and through you as you trust Him.

Who is currently the most difficult person in your life to love? How does God want you to treat that person?

If you will live by faith in Jesus Christ, you will experience the ability to love that person just as He loves them. They will see this fruit of the Spirit in you.

But you say, "I am not going to do that. You do not know how that person has treated me. You do not know how that person has treated others. You do not how long I have put up with this treatment."

Before you make up your mind to resist God's will and live in the flesh, remember that God loves you. Consider that you were unworthy of His love. Jesus came and died for your sin and you were His enemy.

You were capable of doing evil that would destroy your life and the lives of others.

You were like a harlot to Him.

Left to yourself, you would have experienced the full measure of the misery and judgment for sin!

He saved you because He loved you. You owe Him your life. He is asking you to be the vessel of His love.

But you say, "I will not be able to fulfill my desires if I live by faith in Jesus Christ. You say, I will never be happy if I do not fulfill my fleshly desires."

Before you make up your mind to resist God's will and live in the flesh remember that you have been crucified with Christ. This means that you have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. When you received Christ as your savior, you died with Christ on the cross on Calvary. Christ came to dwell in you. You are not the only person living in your earth suit.

Because of your death with Christ and His presence in you, you will never be happy being selfish.

Any personal pleasure you experience by living in the flesh will leave you feeling condemned and empty. You may even try to dull your mind and conscience with various substances but it will never work. Every expectation you have for personal happiness by fulfilling the desires of your flesh will result in disappointment.

The only way you will ever be happy is by living by faith in Jesus Christ!

If you do anything less you condemn yourself to a miserable existence. He will not leave you or forsake you. He will chasten you but He will not leave you.

Before you make up your mind to resist God's will and live in the flesh, remember that this world is not your home. If what God asks of you causes you to suffer, you will not suffer long. God has prepared a better place for you. Live in the light of eternity.

So what is your current spiritual condition? Are you living by faith in Jesus Christ? Is this fruit of the Spirit visible to those who know you best? Is it visible to your neighbors? Is it visible to your enemies? Is it visible to the lost?

If it is not, if you have received Jesus, what will you do with Him? Will you live by faith in Him? Will you resist Him?

Today I want to challenge you to determine that you will live by faith in Jesus Christ in every relationship in your life.

Commit yourself to the well-being of the one who is most difficult for you to love. Pursue their well being without any need for reciprocation. Ask the Spirit how this should be done and trust in Him to do it through you.

Others will see the fruit of the Spirit in you. Jesus will be glorified. You will be fulfilled. Amen!

Let's pray.