

There is No Law Against Bearing Fruit

Galatians 5: 22-26

The epistle of Paul to the Galatians was actually written to several churches that Paul founded in the region while on his first missionary journey: Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.

While studying the book of Galatians it becomes clear that Paul had a deep affection for the churches and strongly desired them to prosper in the Lord. It also becomes evident that these churches had problems to which Paul had to address. They had become influenced by the teachings of legalistic Jews. Many were trading the liberty of their salvation for the bondage and ritualistic demands of the Jews.

In the preceding verses, Paul has dealt with their liberty and the works of the Judaizers. He has addressed the spiritual warfare that believers face. He now turns his attention to the believer's responsibility to bear fruit.

That is what I am interested in today. We live in a society that, in many ways, is much like the region of Galatia. Many have a distorted view of Christianity. (Let me say that while Christianity is considered a religion, I believe it to be a relationship. Often religion is dead, but a relationship with Christ gives abundant life!) Modern theologians and religious leaders teach much of the same doctrine that the Judaizers of old taught.

We must understand that God is not interested in works of dead religion or legalistic bondage. He is interested in Christians who are fruitful for Him. I want to examine the principles and characteristics of spiritual fruit as we consider the thought: **There is No Law Against Bearing Fruit.**

I. The Existence of Our Fruit (22) – Paul had spent the last few verses dealing with the works of the flesh and now he contrasts those with the fruit of the Spirit. I am no theologian, but I do believe that if the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write unto the Galatians concerning the fruit of the Spirit, then the believer ought to be fruitful. The fact that it is recorded in these verses concerning the church bears validity for fruit bearing Christians. It is the will of God that Christians bear fruit for the Lord.

- For those of you who need a little reassurance, turn with me to **Jn.15:4-5 – Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.**
- Clearly Jesus expects fruit of the children of God. He states that He is the Vine and we are the branches. The branch bears fruit at the will of the vine. A branch attached to the vine draws its strength and nourishment from the vine, and yet the fruit is produced on the branch through the vine.

- Did you notice the amount of fruit that Jesus declared a connected branch would produce? We are to produce much fruit; not some fruit or occasional fruit, but much fruit. This doesn't appear to be just a possibility, but a clear expectation of the Vine concerning His branches. Do you agree that Christians ought to be fruitful? So what is the fruit of the Spirit?

I. The Existence of Our Fruit (22)

II. The Expression of Our Fruit (22-23) – But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. We can identify fruit on a tree. It is easily recognizable. The fruit of the Spirit is no different. It will be evident from our lives when it is produced. So, let's consider our fruit in detail.

A. Love – This is the Greek word Agape. It speaks of God's love. That type of love is sacrificial love. It is love that is extended without restraint or merit. It isn't defined by circumstances or situations, and isn't bound by the whims of humanity. This type of love is only attained through a relationship with Christ. One cannot truly love if one doesn't know Him.

- Is your life producing the fruit of love? Do you love as God does?

B. Joy – This refers to a constant delight, an inner gladness. This too is only achieved through a right relationship. We don't always have to be happy, but we can always be joyful. There ought to be a constant delight in the Lord on behalf of the Christian. Troubles will come, but we can still possess joy.

- The world needs to see more joy being produced by the church. If we never appear to have any joy, why would the world want what we possess?

C. Peace – This has the idea of binding or weaving together. It is the sense that our lives are tightly bound in the Lord and the very fabric of our being has been woven in Him. When life is lived in that regard, how could one not possess peace?

- Many today do not enjoy peace as God desires. Their lives are lived in fear and dread. The Christian can enjoy peace in the midst of trouble. [Phil.4:7 – And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.](#)

D. Longsuffering – Patience, bearing a heavy load or suffering a long time, perseverance, being constant, steadfast, and enduring. Longsuffering never gives in; it is never broken no matter what attacks it.

- Would you agree that we need to produce more longsuffering within the church? Many today are seeking instant gratification. They attend the house of God seeking something to justify staying at home. We need those who will endure even the harshest of circumstances for God's glory.

E. Gentleness – A gentle attitude; one who is easy to get along with and easy to please. One who isn't always complaining and pessimistic. Baptist are notorious for complaining. We need those who possess an attitude of gentleness, those who desire to please the Lord and further the work of the Kingdom rather than having it their way all the time.

- We need to keep in mind that this isn't all about us anyway. We have not met today to satisfy ourselves. We have met to worship and serve the Lord. I serve at the leisure of the King and am happy to do so!

F. Goodness – It is being full of virtue and excellence, kindness and helpfulness, peace and consideration. It is simply showing a heart of goodness in all we do, thought, actions, and deeds. It is the love of God being acted out in the flesh. It is treating others the way one desires to be treated themselves.

- Clearly we need more goodness in today's society. We need a heart of compassion and consideration for others. We need to remember that we too are nothing more than sinners saved by grace.
- We must keep in mind that being and doing good does not translate into being passive. One who possesses goodness must be willing to stand and defend that which is good.

G. Faith – This means to be faithful and trustworthy; loyal and steadfast; devoted. It possesses the ability to trust God and lean on Him.

- We need more faith in our day. Rather than hearts filled with doubt, we need hearts filled with faith and assurance. We need those who are loyal unto the Lord, those who possess a genuine allegiance to Him.

H. Meekness – To be gentle, tender, humble, mild, and considerate. Meekness possesses control, discipline, and restraint. It does not throw its weight around, but seeks the good of others, as well as the Lord.

- How many times have we witnessed a Christian act in a manner that was anything but meek? We need hearts that are humble and gracious, yet stern when necessary. We need to maintain control in every situation.

I. Temperance – This has the idea of controlling the body with all of its lusts. It means self-control, able to restrain fleshly appetites and passions. It is denying the flesh to please the Lord.

- There is little temperance in our day. Most choose to satisfy the flesh at all costs. Few will practice self-control in order to please the Lord. We've all heard the comments: It's my life; I'll live it as I please; or, You only go around once; might as well make the most of it.
- We are no longer our own. We are to subdue the flesh in order to grow and mature the spirit.

I. The Existence of Our Fruit (22)

II. The Expression of Our Fruit (22-23)

III. The Evidence of Our Fruit (24-26) – Just as fruit is evident on a tree, a spirit filled Christian will produce fruit that is evident to see. These verses reveal the evidence of a life that bears fruit.

A. Submission (24) – [And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts](#). A life that bears fruit for the Lord will be a life that is submitted unto the Lord. Just as He was crucified upon the cross, we too must crucify the flesh and the lusts thereof.

- This is not always easy to perform. When we were saved, God saved our souls, but we still dwell in a body of flesh. [Mat.26:41 – Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.](#)

B. Sanctification (24) – Not only are we to crucify the flesh, but also the [affections and lusts](#). This shows a life that is maturing in the Lord. As we grow spiritually and begin to produce fruit, we are becoming more like Jesus. Our lives are beginning to become sanctified.

- This is something that is little dealt with in Baptist circles any more. We have taught the doctrine of eternal security in such a careless and vague way that many believe that once you are saved then you can live as you please. That certainly isn't what these verses present. We are to crucify the lusts and affections of the flesh, literally dying to self to magnify the Lord.

C. Obedience (25) – [If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit](#). This is very simple, yet very profound. If we live in the Spirit, and the saved do, then we are to walk in the Spirit. We are to live our lives controlled and directed by the Spirit of God.

- It is impossible to be a Christian that bears fruit unless we submit to the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit in obedience. He is to be the Guide for all of our existence. If our actions grieve the Spirit, then we must change our course. This is something that I am certain that we all could improve on.

D. Humility (26) – Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. A proud and arrogant heart will never produce fruit. Our lives are to be lived in humility and service to our Lord and one another.

- It is impossible to grow and mature in the Lord where pride and envy exist. We must seek the Lord to strengthen us, but we cannot be boastful of the gifts we've received or jealous of others whom the Lord chooses to use.

I trust that you have been challenged by the text today. Being a Christian that bears fruit is a privilege and an obligation. I fear that many may reach a stage of blooming, but never reach their full potential of bearing fruit for the Lord. Remember that Jesus desires that we bear much fruit.

How is it with you today? Is your life fruitful for Jesus? Maybe you have sin in your life that is hindering your production. Maybe you have never been attached to the Vine and need to be saved. Whatever the need is, Jesus stands waiting for you to come. Why not come as He leads?