

The Body (Church but not the Building) of Christ!

From the Desk

Of

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The Fruit of the Spirit

*Goodness*

Let us say at the outset that we dare NOT claim ownership of any of the Gifts (Ministry; Gift or Fruit of the Spirit). Anything God chooses to bestow upon or work in us (Typically the Fruit of the Spirit) is for the purpose to serve one another and MUST be to the Glory of God.

Our God besides creating the vastness of all that exists on earth and in the HEAVENS also created people. He then draws people to Himself through Jesus and while the work of salvation and forgiveness of sins is immediate.

The Fruit of the Spirit is a Process of God at work in us.

*Ephesians chapter 4:* In this chapter, Paul lists what have been called the five “ascension” or “gift” ministries (we feel “[equipping ministries](http://www.truthortradition.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1096)” is more accurate). However in Galatians chapter 5 we read of something that is not an exercising of a gift or an expression of POWER but a PROCESS of Him at Work in us. The aim of God is that if we allow the Holy Spirit to work in us and the interaction of people we should begin to bear fruit and HOPEFULLY good fruit. Let us remember that trees that do not bear fruit, are after pruning and caring, cut down (Wow). If the gift Ministries are going to be effective and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit prominent we will need to see a passion for The Fruit of the Spirit. The electronic age (Even in the church) does not help because it takes away from human interaction.

The fruit of the Spirit is vital to the individual and the Body of Believers. This fruit is our ability to tolerate and be forbearing. If there is NO involvement and interaction (In all things BUT must include things of a Spiritual Nature) we will find very little or NO growth in our characters. Our tolerance level of each other will be non-existent and this will impact on the function of the Five Fold Ministries and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. All this just seems to disappear from the Church Gatherings and our personal lives.

People will be afraid to be active because of NO or a very low level of tolerance. This in turn halts the function of the Gifts and the EVIDENCE of the Ministries. The end result is immaturity and our gathering together becomes a shallow meaningless time waste. (Galatians 5 verses 22 and 23 a must)

While the first fruit LOVE is VERY important so we saw also the importance of JOY. We need to qualify right now and declare that none of the Fruit of the Spirit is the soppy emotion of loose living or a book of words. This LOVE, Joy and Peace must be void of a motive or agenda (And we must not be satisfied with a shallow substitute of these Fruit) and demonstrated in an unselfish way. We have just completed “Kindness” and my if ever there is a need for us to look in the “MIRROR” (The word of God) it is now because the lack of human interaction is showing all over our society and in our churches.

In this Lecture we look at the sixth Fruit of the Spirit (Goodness) and by the time we have studied ALL nine we will see that each and EVERY fruit is VITAL to our CHARACTERS and to showing the sinners the CHARACTER and PASSION of God. There is a “SCARY path we take in The Fruit of the Spirit BUT where must never ignore the demands placed on us and our CHARACTER. The Fruit of the Spirit is the FULLNES of God revealed in Jesus and His Character. Too glibly we say “To be like Jesus” and very often the attraction is to His Power, His miracle Working and WHAT we perceive His control. Satan desired exactly that and FELL

Great men have and will continue to fall if we focus on the Dynamics of the Power of God and SPURN the Pruning Shears that will cause us to grow in Character. If our CHARACTER is WEAK how will we COPE with the Power of the Almighty? Yes it will be by His Grace BUT in the measure we allow the Holy Spirit to work the Character and nature of God in us. We are the poorer if we lack character growth BUT it is also seen by the outsiders and they will never understand any excuse or reason we give them.

Our focus should be to Grow up in Him and all else will function at the Will of God and not the GREED of our HEARTS. Growing Up in Him is our Divine Protection and HE will receive the Glory. NO claiming of OWNERSHIP. It is all His and we ought to just be an instrument available to Him.

“Goodness” is uprightness in heart and life, a moral excellence. The Greek word is agathosune. A person who exhibits the fruit known as “goodness” is upright and honorable. “Goodness” is usually associated with activity rather than inner nature, although the good actions spring from the good heart: “The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart…”(Luke 6:45). Goodness is not self-absorbed or comfort-oriented. Many “good” tasks are uncomfortable to perform, as [**Jesus showed us**](http://www.truthortradition.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=597) when he died on the cross. “Goodness” is anchored in God and in His [**revelation**](http://www.truthortradition.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=562) to man.

In Scripture, “good” is often contrasted with “evil,” and it is the Word of God that defines what is good and what is evil. Moral relativism leaves both “good” and “evil” up to the feelings and inclinations of the individual. In a system without the standards given by God, all kinds of “good” things become viewed as “evil.” For example, holding people accountable becomes evil (you may hurt their “self-esteem”), punishment becomes evil (they were not really at fault, but were victims of society), and saying that someone is wrong becomes evil (why be so narrow minded?). Also, without godly standards, many “evil” things become “good,” such as getting too much change back on a purchase and then not telling the cashier; couples living together without being married; or not returning something you find to its owner.

“Goodness” can be called the “fruit with teeth,” because goodness, while it has a lot in common with “kindness,” very clearly also contains the idea that it is a good thing to uphold standards, enforce the law, and punish wrongdoers. If there is no “goodness” in the Christian’s life or in our society, evil continues without fear of consequences. Romans 15:14 says, “And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another.”  We Christians are supposed to admonish one another, which involves reproof and correction, because we are “full of goodness.”

This brings up a very important point concerning the fruit of the spirit. Each is applicable in the life of a Christian, but not all at the same time, as we see when we compare “kindness” and “goodness.” It is both good and kind to give food to a hungry person. However, it is good (and appropriate) to [**execute a serial killer**](http://www.truthortradition.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=351), but it is not “kind” to him. Similarly, it is good of God to [**burn the wicked**](http://www.truthortradition.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=455) up in Gehenna (Rev. 20:15), but that is not “kind” to them. If earth is going to be a nice place to live, we must be “good” to one another in the full sense of the word, not just be “kind” and say we are being “good.”

We must not down play all the other fruit of the Spirit.

Here is yet another of the MORE painful pruning processes we are going to have to endure because the human nature tends to be selfish and self centered.

God Bless

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