

Holy Living by the Spirit

Key Verse: *“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”*
—Galatians 5:22,23

Selected Scripture:
Galatians 5:18-6:10

IN TODAY’S LESSON, THE

Apostle Paul urges the necessity of leading godly lives—that is, holy living by the Spirit. By contrast, the works of the flesh are identified: Idolatry, hatred, wrath, strife, envying and drunkenness to name a few. The warning regarding these is grave, “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Gal. 5:19-21) We are reassured, however, that our pursuit of the “fruit of the Spirit” by a life devoted to righteousness and

promoting godly love will receive a great and bountiful harvest, and a blessed reward.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And ye let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of the faith.”—Gal. 6:7-10

It is relatively easy to say that we are Christ’s and

that we follow his teachings. It is quite another task to live those words. We all desire great closeness to Christ, and to be obedient to our Father in heaven. An evidence of our closeness and obedience is to bring forth spiritual fruit to God's glory. Jesus left us with this reassuring lesson: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples."—John 15:1,2,8, *New American Standard Bible*

Jesus left us a warning regarding those who would outwardly pose as Christians, while at the same time trying to lead the Lord's people astray. However, Jesus also supplied us with a method of identifying them which is quite simple: "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. . . . So then, you will know them by their fruits."—Matt. 7:15-20, *NASB*

Jesus likened our hearts, if they are pure and godly, to good soil. The Word of God is planted in that soil. Those who hear the word and understand it, bear fruit—"some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty." (Matt. 13:23, *NASB*) The proof of discipleship, the evidence of sonship, and the stamp of authentic Christianity in daily life, is bearing fruit of the Spirit. By this we prove to be Jesus' disciples. It is a great testimony to the power of God's spirit and love when we develop these qualities, even in the midst of great adversity around us. Light shines brightest in the greatest darkness. We pray that spiritual fruit—love, joy, peace, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faith—will be abundantly manifest in all of God's children. By this his name is glorified. ■