

## The Fruit of the Spirit

### Introduction

- Began this sermon series “Bloom Where You Are Planted” with the perfect picture of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
- It didn’t take long for Adam and Eve to succumb to temptation, and shatter the perfect picture created by God in the Garden of Eden.
- However, God did not destroy Adam and Eve for their disobedience. Instead, God showed mercy by providing for them outside of the Garden of Eden.
- God’s provision through his act of mercy gives us hope that it is still possible for us to Bloom Where We Are Planted.
- Last week we learned that God provides the seed of His Word to take root in our lives if the soil of our heart is open to listening to God.
- This week we are going to talk about what the seed of God’s Word planted in our lives can produce.
- Illustration
  - A Seed, A Tree, Fruit
  - It really is a miracle that something so small could grow into something so big, that then can produce something so necessary.
  - **Galatians 5:22**
  - The Fruit of the Spirit, begins with the seed of God’s Word planted in our hearts, it grows in us as we walk with God, and then it produces the fruit of God’s character in our lives.

### God’s grace feeds the fruit in our lives

- Background of Galatians 5
  - The Apostle Paul is writing to Christian believers who have been persuaded that they can fulfill God’s law through the human act of circumcision.
  - Circumcision was required by God in the Old Testament as a physical symbol of setting God’s people apart from the world. It was a way to show that they had been “marked” by God; almost like a branding that would remind them of who they belonged to.
  - But when Jesus died on the cross, he left his mark on the world. Through Jesus’ death and resurrection the opportunity to be set free from sin and live a holy life became possible.
  - **Galatians 5:1**
- How many of you like bananas?
  - It would do us well if we could grow our own banana tree
  - Between Avery and I we can each eat a couple of bananas a day
  - Anyone seen in Banana trees in Belpre lately?
    - Why not?
    - Banana’s need hot humid climate in order to grow
    - So we have to rely on other people to supply us with Banana’s

- The Apostle Paul explains in Galatians 5 that if we are going to fulfill God's law, it would be like trying to grow Banana trees in Belpre. In other words it is impossible!
  - **Galatians 5:6**
  - So if we want Bananas we have to rely on someone else to provide the fruit for us.
  - This is the equivalent of God's grace.
  - It's why Paul says what really counts is faith working through love.
    - Faith places trust in someone else to do something for us that we can't do for ourselves.
    - God gives us an opportunity to produce the fruit of his character through his love for us.
    - God provides his love for us through the work of the cross. As we realize that we cannot produce a life of righteousness on our own, we submit our lives to the grace of God.
- There is a key ingredient to producing the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives.
  - The key ingredient is grace.
  - In order to experience God's grace, we have to surrender to God's love
  - A person who has truly surrendered to God's love has experienced God's grace
  - It is God's grace that gives us the freedom to acknowledge that we will never be good enough on our own.
  - We can't get bananas unless someone else produces them for us.
- If you haven't experienced the grace of God in your life it's really hard to love others, have joy and peace, to be patient with others, or to be kind toward other people.
  - Go back to illustration: Seed, Tree, Fruit
    - Seed- God's Word
    - Tree- the seed takes root when we open our hearts to God's Word
    - Fruit- character of God is produced as we surrender to God's grace, and receive his love.
  - God's grace feeds the fruit in our lives.

### The Spirit helps us walk with God

- **Galatians 5:16-17**
- How many of you have walked with a small child in the mall?
  - They go all over the place
  - Have you seen parents with leashes for their kids?
    - It seems so inhuman to put a leash on a kid until you try to walk with them in a mall!
    - Without a leash, a kid would run toward every shiny object and touch everything within their grasp.
- This is why Paul has attached the Spirit to Galatians 5
  - Without the Holy Spirit attached around us, we would walk around toward every shiny object and touch everything within our grasp!
  - The desires of the flesh

- **Galatians 5:19-21**
  - We are like small children let loose in a mall.
  - This is what life looks like outside of The Garden of Eden
- Examples of Walking with God
  - Adam and Eve hiding from God (Genesis 3:8)
  - Enoch walking with God (Genesis 5:22)
  - Noah walking with God during flood (Genesis 6:9)
  - Disciples walking with Jesus—“Follow Me”
- What happens when Jesus begins to talk to the disciples about the cross and resurrection?
  - The disciples begin to panic, “What will we do without Jesus?”
  - They knew they were like kids in a mall; Following Jesus kept them on the right track.
  - **John 14:25-26, “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”**
- The Holy Spirit is like a leash we might put on a kid in the mall.
  - The Spirit keeps us from going after all the desires that attract our flesh
  - We get angry, the Holy Spirit reminds us of God’s grace
  - We have a desire to hate, the Holy Spirit reminds us of God’s love
  - We become impatient, the Holy Spirit reminds us of God’s patience through grace
  - ESV Study Bible, “Walk by the Spirit implies both direction and empowerment that is, making decisions and choices according the the Holy Spirit’s guidance and acting with the Spiritual power that the Spirit supplies.”<sup>1</sup>
- Now a leash might seem like slavery, but here is why Paul says, **Galatians 5:1**
  - It is through the help of the Spirit, and the power of the Spirit that we can be set free from the control or slavery of sin
  - So when Paul argues against the obligations of the O.T. Law, the reason is because the law represents the inability for humanity to be perfect.
  - On the other hand, God’s grace allows for the Holy Spirit to perfect God’s will in our life.
- Go back to illustration
  - Seed, Tree, Fruit
  - The Holy Spirit helps us walk with God by allowing us to receive the seed of God’s Word, to then allow the seed of God’s Word to take root in our life by keeping us on the right track, and then produce the Fruit of God’s Character in our lives.

### Take inventory of what you are producing

- How many of you, when you go to the grocery store, inspect the fruit before you purchase it?

---

<sup>1</sup> *ESV Study Bible*, Wheaton: Crossway, 2008. Kindle Loc. 382500.

- It's possible that the fruit may not be ripe
- It's possible that the fruit may be bruised
- It's possible that the fruit may have gone bad
- "So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that doesn't bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruit." (Matthew 7:17-20, ESV)
  - Give the context of the passage: Warning against false prophets who appeared to be good on the outside, but inside their hearts were deceitful.
  - What is produced shows what is really planted in the heart.
  - Take inventory of what you are producing.
- The Fruit of the Spirit is like a grocery list of what should be in the cart of our heart.
  - Look to see what is missing
  - It could be that what you are producing resembles more of the Fruit of the Flesh than the Fruit of the Spirit
- Remember: It is God's grace that feeds the fruit in our lives
  - Before you start grabbing for the Fruit of the Spirit, we need to first make sure that we have received God's grace.
  - it is only by God's grace that our lives can producing any good fruit at all.
  - The first fruit that should bloom in our lives is the fruit of love. Love is the response we should have toward God's grace. Love understands that God accepts us through his grace, and that we love others not because they are perfect, but because God first loved us through grace.
  - Galatians 5:13-15
  - The whole law is fulfilled in one word: LOVE
- Think about the order of the Fruit of the Spirit
  - If love is the first fruit that the Spirit produces in our lives as a result of receiving God's grace, shouldn't joy quickly follow?
  - It's through God's love and grace that we have freedom from sin and death. This is how Joy is produced in our lives.
  - There's a good chance that if you have joy in your life, then you will have peace. And if you have peace, then you will have patience. And then the list follows from there....
- Go back to the illustration
  - Seed, Tree, Fruit
  - Seed-is God's Word
  - Tree-begins to grow as we allow God's Word to take root in our life
  - Fruit- take an inventory of what your life is producing by checking it with God's Word. Does the fruit in your life resemble to Fruit of the Spirit, or the Fruit of the Flesh?
  - Here is where the Holy Spirit can help us out.
    - The Holy Spirit can point out to us where the fruit in our lives has gone bad.

- If we respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, we can embrace God's grace and love and get back on the right track toward producing good fruit.
- You will know them by their fruits!

### Conclusion

- Illustration of Grape Vines
  - When I was a kid, my grandfather had grape vines in his garden
  - We would walk through his garden and pick all the grapes we wanted. They were in abundant supply
  - I loved his grapes so much that he took one of the vines off the grape vine and gave it to me to plant at our home
  - The vine took root and began to grow. It reproduced an abundant amount of grapes!
  - My grandfather took another vine from his garden and gave it to someone else, and the same thing happened: the vine took root and began to grow. It reproduced an abundant amount of grapes!
  - If we will allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives, God will produce his fruit in our lives, and then he will take that vine and pass it on to someone else to reproduce an abundant amount of fruit in someone else's life.
- Boom Where You Are Planted, but you will not Bloom if you just try harder!
  - You have to surrender to the grace of God and receive his love
  - Walk by the Spirit
  - Take inventory of your fruit
- Bloom Where You Are Planted
  - Seed of God's Word
  - Planted in the soil of your heart
  - Produces the Fruit of the Spirit through the grace of God