



Message Discussion Guide Week of September 11, 2022

Message: Fruitful, Part 1: Cultivating Fruit

Key Scripture: Galatians 5:16-26

Preacher: Tom Parkinson

Message Highlights:

Just as you can tell a lot about the health of a tree by its fruit, so also you can tell a lot about the fruit of our lives by our fruit. What is the fruit of your life? Are you as fruitful as you want to be?

The Apostle Paul speaks of a battle inside of us between the “flesh” and the “Spirit.” This battle means that we often do not do what we want to do.

- We want to change our behavior, but we cannot do it.
- Just as no football player wants to fumble the ball but fumbles anyway, so we don't often want to sin, but we do it anyway.

If we give in to the flesh, the result is some of the rottenest fruit in our lives. If we want to be more fruitful, we must stay in the battle. But we do not fight alone, for the Spirit of God lives in us and will bear fruit.

The fruit of the Spirit are nine features that the Holy Spirit will bring forth in our lives. This fruit will not come over night, but it will come! We should expect that the Spirit will change us.

The fruit of the Spirit is expressed most fully in the life of Jesus. So, when we desire the fruit of the Spirit, we are longing to be more like Jesus. Rather than focus on the fruit we want in our lives, we should keep our focus on becoming more and more like Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

1. What fruit do you see as you look at your life? Do you wish you were more fruitful? Are there particular areas of weakness in your life that you know you want to work on?

2. Have you ever tried to make a change in your life and found it to be difficult to do? How does Paul's teaching on the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit help you understand why it is so hard to change?
3. Read Galatians 5:22-26
 - Why do you think Paul refers to all nine qualities as one singular fruit of the Spirit?
 - Which of these nine qualities do you most long for in your life?
 - What does it mean to crucify the flesh?
 - What does it mean to keep in step with the Spirit?
4. Pastor Tom shared a story about the golfer Payne Stewart. People saw a difference in Stewart's day to day actions and attitudes after he gave his life to Jesus. What difference is Jesus making in your life? How are you a different person today than when you first met Jesus?
5. What is your primary take away from this message?

Call to Action: Identify one of the nine qualities of the fruit of the Spirit that you want to see more in your life and begin praying for and looking for ways to cultivate it.