

Introduction:

- In the end of 2006, Good Housekeeping magazine listed the five most-common things guests notice when they enter our homes. First, they spy piles of mail laying around, so keep an empty drawer in the kitchen for your correspondence. Second, they notice dust bunnies and cobwebs, so watch those room corners and use a broom and a hand vacuum. Third, they notice a messy bathroom, so use glass cleaner for the mirror and other handy clean-up aids for the floors and appliances. Fourth, they notice dishes in the sink. Avoid embarrassment here by throwing them in the dishwasher. Or, if needed, rinse and place them in the oven. Fifth, our guests notice full trash cans, so empty any filled container into a larger receptacle that can be kept out of sight.

APPLICATION: So, when people check your life out, what do they see? Do they see a life that is spiritually clean and orderly? Life in Christ will result in character qualities that manifests the fruit of the Spirit. This is primarily seen in how we relate to others and how we go about serving to the Lord.

- *"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!"* (Galatians 5:22-23, NLT)
- *"You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?"* (Matthew 7:16, NLT) *"A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit."* (Matthew 7:18, NLT)

I. The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Not Behavior Modification

- A. The Fruit of the Spirit is not behavior modification, it is transformation by the washing of the Word through the Holy Spirit.
 1. You are born again. That means that which was dead is now alive. It is a totally new nature that God has created within us. It is out of this 'born again' nature that the fruit of the Spirit comes. The Spirit makes us alive in Christ Jesus. It is out of the Spirit that the fruit comes.
 2. *"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."* (Romans 12:2, NLT)
 3. We put on the new man. Eph 4:24. The new man has been given. Get dressed!
- B. The Fruit of the Spirit is the description of the Father.
 1. The fruit of the Spirit is what God is like
 2. Want to know what God is like.
 - a) Read the fruit of the Spirit
 - b) 1 Cor 13:4-7 love chapter
 - c) Look at Jesus life. Jn 14:9 *"If you have seen me you have seen the Father."*
- C. The Fruit of the Spirit is the power of God to enable us to become like Him
 1. The life is in the seed.
 - a) God's Word lets me know what to believe Him for.
 - b) Gods word lets me know who I am and who I am not!

2. The fruit of the Spirit is what we are becoming. Because it is the Spirit who abides in us, we have access to the force/power of heaven to become all that God calls us to.
- D. The Fruit of the Spirit is the picture of our future
 1. Gal 5:22 is a vision of man walking in the Spirit. It is what that looks like.
 2. To operate opposite of that is to operate out of the carnal nature or the flesh nature.
 3. When we meditate on the Fruit of the Spirit, we are meditating on our future. IE. My coach would say, "Franklin, see yourself running through that hole in the line. See yourself hitting and rolling into a gap of two more yards. Replay that in your head." It was mediation that prepare for future action.

II. The Fruit of the Spirit Both Identify and Define Us

- A. Sheep or wolves: are identified by what they do and how they act, Mt 7:16-18
 1. *You can identify them by the fruit.* At first they both appear to be animals...soft, cuddly, cute.
 2. But once you see what they do and how they do it...that is the fruit of their actions. What they produce gives them their identity. What are you producing and what are people identifying you as? vs. 20 *You can identify people by their actions.* not
- B. Gal 5:22-23
 1. vs 19-21 give us the negative fruit or actions that are produced by the flesh, or the sinful natural man. 22-23 give us the actions or fruit of the righteous spiritual man.
 2. If you do the former you will not inherit the Kingdom of God. If you do the later you will!
 3. The fruit of the Spirit therefore gives us identity: whose we are; who we are; and what we are about. It also defines us or gives our lives definition. If some thing has definition we say it is distinct or clear. The fruit of the Spirit gives definition or clarity to our lives so that others know what we are about.
- C. The Fruit of the Spirit puts me in the camp of the Lord, clothes me in manifest righteousness, and make me a threat to the enemy. He can tell who I am by my uniform!

III. The Fruit of the Spirit Is Grown

- A. A believer's life is no different than a sinner's life, in what they face. It rains on the just and the unjust. What is different is how the believer responds to life. Because each of us have similar yet differing assignments we are being trained to overcome.
 1. Ie. I watched a number of war movies while recovering. The troops all had the same basic training. But as they advanced they received specialized training for what was ahead.
 2. I like how Graham Cooke says it, "*And the circumstances in your life, and the people that God puts in your life, they are all the training grounds for you to learn to be made in the image of God.*" In other words, all those challenges help us to become what God is after in us!
- B. 1 Cor 13:4-7. Description of fruit of Spirit as love is defined. (read it) If I do not have love it profits me nothing. You can do all these wonderful things but if you do not love it profits us nothing. That is a big statement!
- C. The growing fruit.

1. The nature of God sets us free from the enemy! Think about what I am saying. The fruit is the nature of God in our lives. Everything that works for us in Christ or helps to shine like the Son, works against our adversary, the devil. That alone makes me want to grow in the fruit of the Spirit.
2. When we walk in the Fruit of the Spirit,
 - a) We live a lifestyle that God takes the greatest pleasure in
 - b) We become so solid in Christ that the gates of hell can't prevail against us.
 - c) We literally become a thorn in the devils flesh
3. The Fruit of the Spirit gives us confidence in our relationship with Him
 - a) We sow into His character and reap His favor.
 - b) It is where we learn to abide in God's nature.
 - c) It empowers us to become Christ like.
4. From Graham Cooke: "By moving in the Fruit of the Spirit you can seriously affect the enemy and release yourself into power at the same time."
 - a) So what if you could exhaust the enemy with your love?
 - b) What if you could depress him by being joyful?
 - c) What if you could weary him by being at peace and rest?
 - d) What if you could demoralize him with your patience?
 - e) What if you could discourage the enemy with your kindness?
 - f) What if you could overcome him with goodness?
 - g) What if you could debilitate him with your faithfulness?
 - h) What if you could trouble him with your gentleness?
 - i) Or dismay him with your self control?
 - j) Or dishearten him with your faith?
 - k) Or weaken him with your mercy?
 - l) Or intimidate him by your intimacy?
 - m) Or devastate him by your grace?
 - n) Or paralyze him by your compassion?
 - o) Or cripple him with your humility? Graham Cooke
5. What Fruit of the Spirit is God developing in your life now?

Conclusion:

- We are not talking behavior modification. We are talking identity and Kingdom definition.
- We are talking about putting it to the devil through growth in the fruit of the Spirit.