

The Fruit of the Spirit Lesson 1 1Q 2010

By Their Fruit

As you read the lesson this week are there any issues that you want to be sure we cover?

SABBATH

Read first paragraph, “One of the most...” thoughts? How do we abide in Christ? What does it mean to abide in Christ? What have you found effective in your ability to abide in Christ? What interferes with our ability to abide in Christ?

Let’s keep these questions in mind as we study the lesson this week.

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph? Thoughts? How can we tell if we have received the Holy Spirit? What evidences would you cite as confirmation that the Holy Spirit has come into your life or another life?

- A change in life focus? How? Less self-centered and more other-centered.
- Loving others, compassion, tenderness, kindness, gentleness, humbleness, altruism, patience.
- Improved wisdom
- Improved reasoning ability
- Open mindedness, willing to evaluate opinions and ideas that differ from your own without bias and prejudice
- More tolerance for those different than us and those who have not yet come to Christ i.e. loving our enemies
- Love and hunger for the truth and willingness to change one’s beliefs based on evidence and truth
- Application of God’s methods to one’s life – healthier relationships and physical lifestyle

- Become a caretaker of God's planet (including animals) rather than an exploiter -
- Purposely choose actions to maintain the health of the Spirit temple - ??? moving toward a plant based diet if a healthy plant based diet is available?
- Using your time and resources to promote the love of your heart – Jesus Christ!

Is it necessary to speak in tongues to have had the life filled with the Holy Spirit? Does the Holy Spirit sometimes manifest through speaking, as Acts describes the gift of tongues, in one language and a mixed audience hears in a variety of languages? Certainly!

Does Satan ever try and counterfeit the movements of the Spirit of God? How? What might that look like?

- But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22.23

What is the last fruit of the Spirit? Self-governance or self-control, counterfeit movements of the spirit will frequently cause some loss of self-governance. This can be by emotional experiences in which the person flops on the floor, yells hysterically, barks like a dog, or other aspects in which the higher cortical functions have been turned off and the lower emotional centers are in control.

Satan wants to destroy the image of God in man. James tells us he tempts us through our desires or feelings. Jesus tells us that truth sets free (John 8:32), but truth cannot enter the mind if we are too emotional to think.

Another way the false spirit works is to get people to surrender self-control to another, hypnotism, mesmerism, surrendering thinking or judgment to authority figures, following blindly a person in charge.

Also movements of a false spirit tend to diminish the investigation of truth and evidence, which is the opposite of God's Spirit.

- For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰ and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴ for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” Eph 5:8-14

We are not to be in the dark – we are children of light, children of enlightenment, children of truth, thinkers not mere reflectors of other men’s thoughts.

God is infinite and each person is to have their own unique and personal relationship with Him. Each of us, as we know God for ourselves and He reveals Himself through us, through the fruits of the Spirit, become like facets on a diamond, windows into the heart of God. We become His Temple, radiant, pure and holy! This is why we fellowship together so that we may, through each other’s vantage point, experience a relationship with God ever drawing closer in our own experience.

But this requires each of us to think for ourselves, reason for ourselves and weigh the issues for ourselves coming to our own conclusions!

When we think about fruits of the Spirit, what manifestations are the easiest to counterfeit?

Read last paragraph – “Being a true Christian...” thoughts?

Read bottom green section – thoughts? Any definitions for good?

The dictionary had 58 different definitions for the word good, 41 adjectives, six nouns, one interjection, one adverb, nine idioms. The definition that best fits our usage is:

- morally excellent; virtuous; righteous; pious: *a good man*

But other definitions may be important as we answer the remaining questions such as:

- satisfactory in quality, quantity, or degree: *good health*.
- of high quality; excellent.
- well-behaved: *a good child*.

Can evil people do satisfactory quality and quantity of work? Can they get “good” report cards and job performance reviews? Does that mean they are “good”?

Can evil people produce high-quality and excellent products or performances – even sermons? Does that mean they are good?

Can evil people be well behaved socially? Does that mean they are good?

Can evil people be righteous, moral, and virtuous? No, what about pious? Yes!

So a person can do good and not be good,

Can a person who is good in heart, Christlike in character avoid doing good? Can a genuinely good person get poor grades or sub-par job performance evaluation? Would it be because of a lack of diligence, effort, heart desire to do good or because they are attempting some class or task they are either not prepared for or capable of?

What does all of this tell us about becoming a fruit inspector? Is it appropriate? When and why?

- When deciding someone’s fitness for church office?
- When deciding on your life partner?
- When deciding on a nanny for your child?

THURSDAY

Read top paragraph, "Between 1730 and 1745..." thoughts?

Here is an excerpt from Jonathan Edwards Sermon preached July 8, 1741:

Consider this, you that are here present, that yet remain in an unregenerate state. That God will execute the fierceness of his anger, implies, that he will inflict wrath without any pity. When God beholds the ineffable extremity of your case, and sees your torment to be so vastly disproportioned to your strength, and sees how your poor soul is crushed, and sinks down, as it were, into an infinite gloom; he will have no compassion upon you, he will not forbear the executions of his wrath, or in the least lighten his hand; there shall be no moderation or mercy, nor will God then at all stay his rough wind; he will have no regard to your welfare, nor be at all careful lest you should suffer too much in any other sense, than only that you shall **not suffer beyond what strict justice requires.**

The **misery** you are exposed to is that which God will inflict to that end, that he might show what that wrath of Jehovah is.

It is **everlasting** wrath. It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity. There will be no end to this exquisite horrible misery. When you look forward, you shall see a long for ever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts, and amaze your soul; and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all. You will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, millions of millions of ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty merciless vengeance; and then when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point to what remains. So that your punishment will indeed be infinite.

Do you find this sermon presents the “truth about the awful weight of sin, the attitude of an infinitely holy God toward sin, and the surety of a day of judgment”?

Let’s consider another Christian writer and speaker who came about 100 years after Jonathan Edwards. Ellen White and her perspective on sin and God and judgment:

- We are **not** to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The **sinner brings the punishment upon himself**. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, **men separate themselves from God**, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death. {1SM 235.2}

Does this sound like the same God?

- Could those whose lives have been spent in rebellion against God be suddenly transported to heaven and witness the high, the holy state of perfection that ever exists there,-- every soul filled with love, every countenance beaming with joy, enrapturing music in melodious strains rising in honor of God and the Lamb, and ceaseless streams of light flowing upon the redeemed from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne,-- could those whose hearts are filled with hatred of God, of truth and holiness, mingle with the heavenly throng and join their songs of praise? Could they endure the glory of God and the Lamb? No, no; years of probation were granted them, that they might form characters for heaven; but **they have never trained the mind to love purity**; they have never learned the language of heaven, and now it is too late. **A life of rebellion against God has unfitted them for heaven**. Its purity, holiness, and peace would be torture to them; the glory of God would be a consuming fire. They would long to flee from that holy place. **They would welcome destruction**, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. **The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own**

choice. Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves, and just and merciful on the part of God. Like the waters of the Flood the fires of the great day declare God's verdict that **the wicked are incurable**. GC 542

Thoughts?

Read bottom green section – thoughts? Analogy of having pneumonia, we are not cured by working not to cough and taking cold baths to keep the fever down. We are cured by taking the remedy which we did not create and the remedy does something in us we cannot do for ourselves. But when we take the remedy the fever does subside and the coughing remits. Likewise we did not procure the remedy to sin, Jesus did. When we trust God the Holy Spirit takes what Christ achieved and reproduces it in us a work we cannot do by ourselves. But, just like the antibiotics prescribed by the doctor, we must take them, follow the doctors instructions, meet the doctor for appointments etc. And when we do the symptoms of sin will also remit and lives will be changed.

MONDAY

Read John 15:1-5

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^a so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Thoughts? How do we connect to Christ? How do we stay connected? How do we grow and produce fruit?

^aThe Greek for *prunes* also means *cleans*.

What disconnected us (humanity) from God? Lies told by Satan that we have believed.

God designed us for adaptation – we actually change physically, neurologically and genetically based on life experience including based on the beliefs we hold.

We have power over what we believe, but our beliefs have power over us!

- When given a placebo we believe will benefit us the brain releases endorphins and dopamine which makes us feel good.
- When we believe something bad has happened, taken a toxin, heard bad news, told we are cursed and will not get well, the brain stops the release of dopamine and endorphins and increases cholecystokinin which causes pain and dysphoria.
- The continued belief in something negative fires the amygdala, generates fear, elevates stress hormones, activates immune system, increases inflammatory cytokines which damage neurons, glia, synaptic signaling increasing mental illness and autoimmune diseases
- One study found that women who believed they are particularly prone to heart attack are nearly four times as likely to die from coronary conditions than other women with the same risk factors.
- In November 1998, a teacher at a Tennessee high school noticed a "gasoline-like" smell, and began complaining of headache, nausea, shortness of breath and dizziness. The school was evacuated and over the next week more than 100 staff and students were admitted to the local emergency room complaining of similar symptoms.

After extensive tests, no medical explanation for the reported illnesses could be found. It was the nocebo effect on a grand scale, says psychologist Irving Kirsch at the University of

Hull in the UK. "There was, as far as we can tell, no environmental toxin, but people began to feel ill."

In Jordan in 1998, 800 children apparently suffered side effects after a vaccination and 122 were admitted to hospital, but no problem was found with the vaccine.¹

What we believe has power over us – what belief changed in the Garden of Eden? Satan lied about God. Last quarter we just explored the metaphor of the OT sanctuary. What in the system symbolized Satan's lies?

The veil in the temple, consider the following:

- The High Priest walked in and out of the Most Holy Place despite the veil – The veil did not prevent Him from seeing God's glory unobstructed – Christ of course is the High Priest who is in heaven and unobstructed in His knowledge of the Father.
- The daily priests represent the priesthood of believers, who ministry the remedy to the world, represented by the blood. The daily priests would go in and out of the Holy Place but in the Holy Place as they looked toward the place God's presence appeared and longed to see Him something was in the way, what? The veil – and what was on the veil? Angels – a veil separating believer from God emblazoned with angels. Now, which angels are working to separate us from God? Satan and his host. And how do they separate us from God? By lying and getting us to believe lies:
 - For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 2Cor 10:3-5

¹ New Scientist May 2009

When Jesus died on the cross what happened to the veil? It was rent? What does this symbolize? The way to God, which Satan had obstructed, was now open. We can again see the truth about God! The lies of Satan have been completely and utterly refuted through the life and death of Jesus Christ!

- And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God...⁶ For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. 2Cor 4:3,4,6

The good news about God is veiled or obstructed in the minds of unbelievers by the god of this age, who is Satan – how? By telling lies about God! But Jesus is the glory or light of God and has made His true nature and character to shine in our hearts and given us “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ!”

So we read in 2Cor 3:18, when the truth has removed the lies, and remember the lies are represented by the veil, so when the veil is removed we are no longer blinded by the lies of Satan:

- And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect^a the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. 2Cor 3:18

Thoughts? Our faces are unveiled which mean what? We see the truth about God as revealed in Jesus. And then what happens? Very interesting Greek used for the word translated “reflect”. It actually means to behold in a mirror, thus other versions read:

- And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit. NRSV

^a Or *contemplate*

- So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image. NLT

What meaning to you take from this passage? As we contemplate, meditate, appreciate, behold, accept and love the truth about God as revealed in Jesus it changes us. We have a new set of beliefs. As our beliefs about God change and we realize He is trustworthy we let down the self-protective gate in our heart, and invited Jesus, who has been knocking, in. The Holy Spirit further enlightens, we experience a greater appreciation for the things of God. The fear centers calm, the love centers of the brain grow stronger. Physical health is improved and our neural wiring is changed. By beholding we are changed here and now and for eternity! And we are reflectors of Him – lights of love and truth in a dark and selfish world.

TUESDAY

John 15:8 “This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

Thoughts? Revelation 14:7, “He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come.”

How do we give God glory? By beholding Jesus and being won to trust and experiencing in our lives the transforming power of His presence which removes fear and instills love! As we become more like Him He is glorified in our lives. He gets the credit of healing us and we get the benefit of witnessing to His amazing recreative power of love.

WEDNESDAY

Read top memory verse John 15:2 – thoughts? What is the purpose of pruning? To increase the productivity of the tree. What is pruning like for a human being?

What types of things would God be pruning out of the life? Anything that would destroy you and me, anything that is out of harmony with the very principles that life is designed to operate upon.

Like:

- Entertainment?
 - Theatrical entertainment?
 - Certain video games
- Food and substances?
 - Alcohol, tobacco, drugs and destructive foods
- Groups?
- Jobs?
- Possessions?
- Friends?
- Spouses?

FRIDAY

Read last paragraph and question 2 and discuss

Read question 3 and discuss