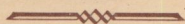




The Fruit of the Spirit



David Alsobrook

The Fruit of the Spirit

by
David Alsobrook

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David Alsobrook Evangelistic Association
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The Fruit of the Spirit

This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Galatians 5:16-17

1

The New Nature

Notice that the letter "S" of the word "Spirit" is capitalized. Since there is no basis for this in the original language, "Spirit" could as accurately read "spirit." In this context the Apostle Paul is not referring to the third person of the Godhead. He is speaking about the *new-born spirit* which is a product of the Holy Spirit. This new-born spirit is born out of the Holy Spirit, **"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit"** (1 Cor. 6:17). Paul is writing about the old nature and the new nature. It could be worded: "This I say then, walk by the new nature."

Walk according to the nature of the recreated man, the new nature, and then you won't fulfill the desires of the old nature. The old nature fights against the new nature and the new nature against the old. The two are contrary the one to the other. The greatest battle in the life of the Christian is not his battle with Satan, but it is the battle within himself. It is the battle of learning how to bring the flesh into subjection to the spirit, the new spirit. That spirit that has been born of God.

When God made man he was a spiritual being, that is, he lived out of his spirit. He was governed *by* his spirit, *through* his soul, *in* his body. When Adam sinned this spirit life died, we call it "the fall." The spirit, rather than being the first in command now became the third, or last, and the soul and the body did what they wanted because the spirit was deadened by sin.

2

Works or Fruit

The Apostle Paul is talking about the product of the old nature and the product of the new nature. **"Now the works of the flesh are manifest"** [the old nature]:

- I. The sexual, sensual realm:
 - A. adultery
 - B. fornication
 - C. uncleanness
 - D. lasciviousness
- II. The religious realm:
 - A. idolatry
 - B. witchcraft
- III. The emotional realm:
 - A. hatred
 - B. variance
 - C. emulations
 - D. wrath
 - E. strife
 - F. envy
 - G. murders
- IV. The intemperate realm:
 - A. drunkenness
 - B. revellings, and such like
- V. The doctrinal realm:
 - A. seditions
 - B. heresies

Note that wrath, strife, jealousy, envy, etc., are just as

much products of the old nature and are just as much works of the flesh as adultery and murder. Many Christians who are not involved outwardly in adultery, fornication, murder or drunkenness, are inwardly steeped in strife, envy and jealousy. You can have works of the flesh in the ATTITUDE as much as you have works of the flesh in ACTIONS. This is the product of the old nature.

"... of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21).

"... shall not inherit the kingdom of God" is frequently taken as being strictly in the eternal aspect. But we must remember that the kingdom of God does not begin in eternity. It begins when a man is born again; for at that moment one enters the kingdom of God.

Colossians 1:13 tells us that God has translated us out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. Not that He will translate us, but has. **"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"** (John 3:3). This translation is from the power of Satan to the power of God, from darkness to light, and at that moment **"the kingdom of God is within you"** (Luke 17:21).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17). When we have the works of the flesh, such as strife in our life, then we don't have kingdom joy and peace. We forfeit that inheritance in the kingdom.

When I have fleshly strife I can't have kingdom peace. I lose the kingdom blessing and I'm not inheriting the kingdom of God—right now (and possibly as well as in eternity).

Note the divine alternative given in Galatians 5:22 in

contrast to verse 19: **"Now the works of the flesh are"**—that's the devil's talk. He would say, "Well, the world is that way. You have got to do that, after all, you are just human." The works of the flesh are—**BUT** note God's divine alternative: (When God puts in a BUT it is all right, He gives you the choice of a different life style.)

"BUT the fruit of the Spirit is ..." The fruit of the Spirit is the product of the new nature and is produced by the Holy Spirit dwelling within your human spirit. Here is a wonderful option to the works of the flesh.

Before you come to the fruit of the Spirit you cultivate the works of the flesh. When the individual is deadened by sin all his old fleshly nature does is bring forth the works of the flesh. But, when he is saved, God shows him that wonderful alternative.

All too often, the believer continues in the works of the flesh more than in the fruit of the spirit. There is that familiar battle within.

The flesh must be dealt with by the cross. It must be crucified, it must be brought into subjection so that the fruit of the spirit can be cultivated, because the works of the flesh are like weeds that choke the fruit.

When we are talking about fruit we are talking about MATURITY.

Why does one grow fruit? Fruit is grown *for the purpose of a harvest*. One doesn't grow fruit in orchards just to say, "Look, it is ripe and it is come to season. Are they not beautiful, all those apples, pears, apricots?"

Fruit is not grown for its ornamental qualities. It is grown to be eaten. And you don't harvest it when it is still green. If you do, it will likely make you ill.

Often new believers are full of "I love you, brother."

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This is the. nauseous "green" love. One way I know if that love is still "green" is if they have "barbecued preacher" for lunch after they have "loved" me. Their love was not yet matured.

The mark of the maturing believer is the fruit of his recreated spirit. We need to come into the fruit of the reborn spirit, which is the character of Christ revealed through the new nature of the Christian's life.

When considering the fruit of the Spirit one cannot overlook the works of the flesh. When you read Galatians Chapter 5 you come to verse 19 (the works of the flesh) before you come to verse 22 (the fruit of the Spirit). The flesh must be dealt with before the fruit can be cultivated.

The subject of the works of the flesh is not very popular. People generally consider it in the negative realm, but it must be dealt with before the fruit of the Spirit can come to maturity.

3

Gifts and Fruits (Bells and Pomegranates)

Every fruit is listed according to divine order.

Let us look into something that is given in the Old Testament that will give us some understanding of this divine order.

When the high priest went into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, he went behind the veil. While there the other priests in the Holy place could not see him. If the high priest was in any way defiled, he immediately died in the presence of God. The high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year, in fear. The other priests had tied a rope to his foot, for if he died God didn't want him staying in the Holy of Holies; yet no one could go in to get him out, but with the rope he could be pulled out. Now they needed to know if he died, or if he lived. The only way they could know is by hearing, for they could not tell by seeing. Around the border of his garments were sewed bells, and as he walked the bells would make this tinkling sound while in the Holy of Holies, as he was sprinkling blood on the mercy seat.

As long as there was noise there was life. When it became quiet the other priests began pulling out the high priest.

When you look in the Bible and see life and restoration, you nearly always hear "noise." On the Day of Pentecost "there came a SOUND from heaven." In Ezekiel 37 when

the prophet saw that valley of dry bones, what was the very first sign of life in that valley? "There was a noise"! At times God does things NOISILY.

Between the bells were sewed pomegranates, which were used as cushions for the bells. Each of the bells made their particular sounds, but along with the pomegranates, they made a beautiful melodic tune unto the Lord. We are priests and we are to go into the presence of God, we are to enter into the Spirit, the Holy of Holies, every day. We are not going in the fear of death, for Jesus took that fear from us, but we can go in boldness. When we go, we need bells and pomegranates placed alternately between each other.

The bells correspond to the GIFTS and the pomegranates, of course, refer to the FRUIT.

In 1 Corinthians 13 the Apostle Paul speaks of "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love"—what do I become? "A clanging cymbal." That is, I'm making a harsh noise. Just as the pomegranates cushioned the bells, the fruit of the Spirit will cause the gifts of the Spirit to be operated in harmony.

Chapter 12 of 1 Corinthians is on the subject of divine energy.

Chapter 13 of 1 Corinthians is on the subject of divine charity.

Chapter 14 of 1 Corinthians is on the subject of divine harmony.

Whenever you get divine energy and divine charity in combined operation the final result is divine harmony.

With the understanding about the border of the garments, we can better understand 1 Corinthians 12 as a bell, Chapter 13 as a pomegranate and Chapter 14 as a bell. That is, bell, pomegranate, bell, etc. Chapter 12 and 14 are

primarily on the gifts, whereas Chapter 13 is on the fruit.

I. FRUIT

- A. love
- B. joy
- C. peace
- D. longsuffering
- E. gentleness
- F. goodness
- G. faith
- H. meekness temperance

I. GIFTS

- A. word of wisdom
- B. word of knowledge
- C. faith
- D. healing
- E. miracles
- F. prophecy
- G. discerning of spirits
- H. kinds of tongues
- I. interpretation of
tongues

The Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote 1 Corinthians and the Book of Galatians. In Chapter 12 of 1 Corinthians he lists nine different distinct supernatural manifestations of the Spirit, or gifts. In Galatians 5:22-23 he lists five different and distinct manifestations of the fruit.

A fruit with every gift!

The word of wisdom should be exercised in love.

The word of knowledge will bring forth the fruit of joy. Many times I have seen when the word of knowledge is operated, joy is in the heart of the individual who receives that word. They know it is their time for healing, and it brings such joy.

The gift of faith will bring peace. Jesus was on the stormy sea. He arose and said, "Peace, be still," (a word of faith) and immediately there was a great calm. When faith is exercised, peace is experienced.

What is the most popular gift of the Spirit that is most talked about and is sometimes elevated above the other

gifts? The gifts of healing.

What is the most unpopular fruit? Longsuffering.

Can you see how God puts this in balance? The most *popular* gift with the most *unpopular* fruit. The gifts of healing are to have the fruit of longsuffering. I have been in services where there was present the gifts of healing, but they did not have the fruit of longsuffering. Yes, healings took place, but it was a clanging noise. When the fruit of longsuffering is present, it not only reveals the ability of Christ, but also makes known the character of Christ.

The gifts of the Spirit reveal the *power* of Christ in me.

The fruit of the Spirit reveals the *nature* of Christ in me.

The gift of working of miracles, this "bell" needs the "pomegranate" fruit of gentleness.

I have witnessed miracle ministries that were abundantly blessed with the workings of miracles, and as the minister was gentle with the people it also brought forth the nature and character of Jesus, and the people glorified Jesus. I have also been where there was working of miracles and those ministering were very demonstrative and rough in their ministry. Miracles still happened because of the gifts, but the people tended to look more toward the man than unto God because of the lack of "pomegranates."

It is not how many miracles occur in our ministry, it is how much the Father is glorified. The less of us, the more of God is seen.

The fruit helps God to get the glory. **"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples"** (John 15:8). When the fruit is exercised WITH the gifts it brings God glory.

Tied with the gift of prophecy is the fruit of goodness.

Did you ever witness a prophetic ministry that went sour and started prophesying condemnation? They had lost that fruit of goodness.

Along with the discerning of spirits is the fruit of faith. That also means *faithfulness*. When ministering deliverance evil spirits will lie to you. You must believe what God has shown you and continue in it. You must be faithful. The Word tells us that "the spirit came out the same hour," you have to be faithful in the deliverance ministry; sometimes it takes an hour.

Along with kinds of tongues is the pomegranate of meekness.

Sometimes there is an utterance in tongues that sounds like an army general barking his orders. Surely it was the gift of the Spirit, but because it did not come forth with the fruit of meekness it poured a bucket of cold water on the meeting. But the utterance given in meekness prepares the hearts of the hearers before the interpretation is given.

The gift of interpretation of tongues needs the pomegranate of temperance.

When I first prayed for the gift of interpretation and was asking God to give me the ability to interpret, one night there came an utterance in tongues. The Lord poked me in the ribs and said, "You're on!" I was encouraged and excited. I knew I was going to get to interpret. As soon as the utterance in tongues ceased I waited and waited. Out came three words. And about that time out came the fourth word, then some more and some more. After a bit I was at ease and more confident. I was amazed at what came out of my mouth for I hadn't thought it. Then I thought, in my natural mind, surely those people didn't understand it, and so when God stopped I kept right on going! Have you heard of an interpretation that kept going on and on and on? Now

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you know what happened! I began in the Spirit and ended in the flesh. Along with every gift must be a fruit.

We are to pray that the appropriate fruit be cultivated that it may minister to the greatest degree of results for the body of Christ and glory of God.

4

The Three Harvests

We read in Galatians 5:22-23: **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."**

The fruit of the Holy Spirit joined to the believer's spirit can be divided into three groups of three. Each is a harvest for someone.

The first group, *love, joy, peace*, is a harvest for me. That is, this harvest benefits the believer.

The second group, *longsuffering, gentleness, goodness*, is a harvest for others. It benefits those with whom the believer comes in contact.

The third group, *faith, meekness, temperance*, is a harvest for God. These are virtues which the Father looks for in the believer's life.

The Greek word used for fruit is *karpos* and means harvest (that which has been plucked). It is the "harvest of the Spirit."

One of the things the Holy Spirit does for us is produce a harvest in our lives. This harvest (fruit) is as real to the spiritual man as literal fruit is to the natural man. Ezekiel 47:12 indicates that the fruit on the tree has a ministry in itself. **"... and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."** The fruit shall be for meat, for nourishment. It shall be for strengthening. With your spiritual mouth you can **"taste and see that the Lord is good"** (Ps. 34:8). It goes into your spiritual man, which is

in the image of Jesus Christ, and you are strengthened, edified and nourished.

The fruit of the Spirit will *nourish* your spiritual man. The fruit of the Spirit will *minister* to your spiritual man. When you are around a brother or sister who is mature in the fruit of the Spirit it strengthens and edifies your inner man. You are eating from their tree and it is ministering strength to your inner man.

The Spirit produces a *harvest* within God's people.

The word "fruit" is in the plural, so many people call it the "fruits" of the Spirit. The word FRUIT does not have to have an "s" on the end of it to make it plural. When you have apples, oranges and other fruits, it can be referred to as a sack of fruit. It is in the plural. Some think of the word FRUIT as being singular, and in that one fruit there are slices like that of an orange: a slice of love, a slice of joy, a slice of peace, a slice of longsuffering, etc.

It is true that love is the motivational fruit for all the other fruits, however, joy, peace, longsuffering, etc., are each a separate fruit from love. Each has its own characteristic differences.

The fruit can be seen as a HARVEST. Fruit must be harvested. When it is harvested, it is to be eaten.

The Harvest For Me. All the fruit can minister to everyone indirectly, but on this first particular harvest the fruit primarily blesses those who have it.

The first harvest—love, joy, peace—consists of the most popular fruit. When one is saved the minister doesn't usually say, "Come to Jesus tonight. He will give you longsuffering and work meekness in your life, and produce more temperance in you." The seeking one is usually told, "Come to Jesus and you'll get love, joy and peace."

When teaching about the fruit of the Spirit folk will say, "Yummy! I want to hear about the fruit of the Spirit." And they really do want to hear about love, joy and peace, but when you get to longsuffering many stop right there.

The first harvest is the fruit that primarily blesses me. When I say "me," I mean, of course, each individual believer. This is the harvest of love, joy and peace. It will bless or primarily minister to the person who has love, joy and peace in his or her life.

Most people regard love as primarily benefiting others, yet in 1 Corinthians 13:3 we read: **"Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth *me* nothing."** Paul did not say, "If I give my goods to feed the poor and have not love it profiteth the poor nothing." The motivation for giving one's goods would make no difference to the hunger of the poor man. But when *given in love* is when it blesses the giver.

The reason "God loves a cheerful giver" is because giving out of love is the way to experience joy. Joy is expressing love. That is why joy is next on the list. Love expressed brings joy experienced, which primarily blesses you.

Your cup of joy could overflow, but the joy still primarily blessed you.

When you confess that **"the joy of the Lord is your strength"** (Neh. 8:10), then the joy of the Lord strengthens you and blesses you. Joy makes you happy. Joy makes you feel good. Joy primarily blesses the individual who has it.

The same is true with peace. Psalm 37:11 tells us, **"But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."** Peace is an

inward quality, it ministers tranquility to the soul. The Psalmist pictures each individual delighting himself with the abundance of peace in his own heart.

Who wants this first harvest? The whole world wants this fruit! We hold it out as bait to others: "You want the baptism? You get baptized in the Spirit and you'll have love, joy and peace like a river." You won't hear that about longsuffering. God "hooks" us with the first harvest—love, joy and peace. He wants us to have a love, joy and peace that blesses us. But He also wants us to go on to the second harvest. God wants me to minister life to those I contact.

The Harvest for Others. The second harvest—longsuffering, gentleness, goodness—is fruit that is produced in my life and costs me something to produce it. This is fruit that is grown on my tree, but I have to lay down my life in order for you (others) to partake of it. **"The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep"** (John 10:11). I'm to have a life laid down if I'm to minister to others and be as my Master.

The first fruit to be harvested is longsuffering. It is long and it is suffering. And there is also gentleness and goodness. These three fruit primarily bless others through you, and it costs me something to have the Spirit produce that in my life. The Holy Spirit does cultivate this fruit in my life, but only as I yield.

Now you can't produce this fruit yourself, the Holy Spirit has to do it in your human spirit. God creates it in you.

You never go out to an orchard, look at an apple tree and hear it groaning and groaning, and say, "Mr. Apple Tree, why are you groaning so?"

"Oh, I'm just trying to make an apple."

No, apples just come. As we yield to the Lord and get our sap from the Lord, and get plenty of Sonshine, the fruit just comes. But we have to lay down our lives in order for it to grow.

Each of us has a ministry to the body of Christ. In Colossians 4:17 we read: **"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it."** You can write your own name above that of Archippus. It is YOU the Apostle is speaking to. All in the body of Christ are to minister one to the other. It may not be a ministry of the Word, or teaching, but it could be a ministry of helps, or a ministry of giving, etc. There are so many ministries in the church that God would like to bless you with, and He is saying to you, **"Take heed to your ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."**

In order to fulfill this particular ministry you must have longsuffering, gentleness and goodness because it is these fruit that the body of Christ will partake, or eat of from you. These three fruit must be present before the body of Christ can be ministered to through you and can see Jesus in you.

Longsuffering, gentleness and goodness in us manifest Jesus to our brothers and sisters. When this fruit is present in my life then others can say, "I see Jesus in him." "I see Jesus in her." In 2 Corinthians 6:6 the Apostle Paul writes that he proved himself a minister for others through his longsuffering. Without this suffering there could not be that harvest for others that grows on each believer's tree.

Before we were married, Dianne, my wife had seen me in the meetings and she thought, "Oh, won't it be wonderful to be married and travel around the country with him. He has so much love when he's ministering." After we were married she found out what I was like when I woke up early

in the morning, before I had the shower. Then there were other discoveries. After a while she wasn't saying, "He's so longsuffering and patient." But when she did see longsuffering she said, "Thank You, Jesus!"

We should give God the glory for the *fruit* that we see in our brothers and sisters as much as the *gifts* that we see.

Some say, "Well, the gifts are supernatural."

So are the fruit! The fruit comes by the supernatural power of God, it does not come by man. You cannot work this up.

Some ministers deny the Holy Spirit baptism, and don't want anything to do with it. Some then will say, "They might not have the gifts, but they've got the fruit." Often all they have is social refinement, and that is not the fruit of the Spirit. They are not really gentle, they have only learned how to stand at the church door and greet and talk to people. This is something that is acquired, not something God has worked into them, so don't be mistaken by counterfeit fruit.

There is counterfeit fruit just as there are counterfeit gifts. Satan has a counterfeit for everything God has. Some people say Satan can't counterfeit the fruits and gifts. He does it all the time. He says:

"Follow me, I'll give you love." He spells it 1-u-s-t.

"Follow me, I'll give you joy." A temporary thrill.

"Follow me, I'll give you peace." It is only momentary.

Satan even counterfeits the blood of Jesus. Witch doctors sacrifice little lambs to their idols. This is a counterfeit.

The counterfeit proves one thing: *there must be a genuine.*

We can have genuine longsuffering. "Brother, don't you know I've been redeemed from suffering?"

Yes, you have been redeemed from suffering sin and suffering sickness, but you haven't been redeemed from suffering. All who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, reproach, necessity and distresses (2 Timothy 3:12).

The "thorn" the Apostle Paul talked about was an evil spirit that stirred up the crowds. That is why he received so many insults, distresses, beatings and persecutions. Paul got stoned, dragged through the streets—a lot of free publicity. He had to have that fruit of longsuffering and patience in his life more than anything else. He said it proved to others that he was a minister of God. **"... but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God"** (2 Cor. 6:3-4). He gives his reason as: **"In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings."** Notice in Paul's list that patience is located in first place. Patience in his life towards God's people was a greater proof of his ministry of the Gospel than anything else he suffered in the ministry. The fruit of longsuffering and patience can only be produced by tribulation. **"Tribulation worketh patience"** (Rom. 5:3).

One night at a service I asked people to pray for me to have patience. After the meeting I had several ladies come to me and say, "Sonny, don't pray for patience. The Bible says 'tribulation worketh patience.' Don't you know you're going to get tribulation?"

I said, "Yes, I know that, and I'm going to rejoice in tribulation."

"Oh," they said, "you don't want tribulation!"

Our unwillingness to encounter any sort of tribulation may be the reason many of us stay in the first harvest.

Longsuffering and patience are a must to have the character of Christ revealed to others. The only way patience can be produced is through tribulation, and tribulation has to come through people. So God has given some the "ministry of tribulation." Those "anointed tribulators" know just when to call you. You could be sitting down to eat, after many interruptions, and then there are the "tribulators" who instinctively know the exact moment to call. They seem to know when you are studying the Word. They seem to know when to knock on your door. They always come when you are busy. They come when you are doing something important. They always have some problem, and it is generally the same problem you talked to them about three weeks ago. They cry on your shoulder and you keep trying to help them. Finally, you realize that you are not really going to help them; *they have been sent to help you!*

The early part of my ministry I said, "God, send me to churches that are free in the Spirit, really anointed, loving to move in the gifts and the power of God."

The Lord asked me, "Why?"

I said, "Lord, I'd be so blessed, and I would enjoy it so much."

He said, "I'm not going to send you to those churches because they don't need you."

So I was sent to all kinds of little crybaby churches. They were the split off the split that split last year. I discovered many Full Gospel churches don't grow by revival, they grow by divisions. They had problems. They all wanted to get alone with the evangelist so they could

gossip about everyone else in the church. There were so many problems, and they would get me up in the middle of the night for prayer. I realized I was in a spiritual nursery. I complained to the Lord.

He said, "It takes much more caring for a baby than for one who is grown up. You have to diaper them, you have to burp them, you have to clean them. They make a mess, and they never like your message. They are like babies, you have to test the milk. Meat you can't give them, for they will choke on it. Give them just a little milk, not too hot, not too cold, but just right."

God had put me in this "nursery" ministry, and it was glorious! It was glorious all right—longsuffering! I used to joke some that not only did God give me great tribulators in the ministry, but He let me marry and then I had a precious tribulator. Just about the time I'm getting a great revelation from God, she will ask me about some mundane thing. I'd be ready to go to church and there would be something about her hair that wasn't just right. The time is going by, and sure enough, we're late to the meeting. I would pray, "God, change her, change her!" The more I prayed, the worse she got. Finally, God said, "I am going to change *you*. The only way two stones can be polished is by friction, the one against the other."

I was in a church in Arizona and jokingly said to the pastor, "Dianne is my tribulator." Glen's wife was sitting next to him and without a moment's hesitation he said, "Why, sure, David, that's why the Book of James says, "Let patience have HER perfect work." About that moment Debbie looked at her husband and in a low, drawn-out voice exclaimed, "Glennnnn!"

Dianne's side of the story was this: "If I can just marry David, I'll grow in grace, I'll grow in the Lord so much

being under the anointed Word. I'll grow and grow and grow!"

And she did start to grow: packing, unpacking, traveling, sleeping in all kinds of beds, eating in all sorts of restaurants. She discovered it really was a way to grow! She has grown in grace greatly just by living with me. We are each other's tribulators. The longsuffering has helped work the character of Christ unto us.

Gentleness is the fruit of the Spirit that grows in my life toward those to whom I minister. This sometimes costs me great trials in order for it to be produced and cultivated, but always benefits those that receive it.

Note the following Scriptures and how they fit into this second harvest:

Galatians 6:2: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

Romans 15:1: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

The fruit of the Spirit helps us not to please ourselves, but to bear the infirmities of the weak. If we are strong we will bear the infirmities of the weak. At times we are in certain churches where some of the people like to sing in the Spirit and hear teaching more than the other Christians, and they are getting strong. Frequently their attitude is: We need to break away and have our own little strong group, have our own prayer meeting in home groups where we can be really strong. We don't need to have these little weak Christians around us to keep us down.

In reality, this is not a strong Christian. A strong Christian does not avoid a weak Christian. The stronger bears the weaknesses of the weaker. He does not please

himself, this is longsuffering. If you cannot tolerate another's weaknesses, you are weak.

Longsuffering makes gentleness possible. You will not have gentleness without longsuffering. If you are impatient you will be harsh. You can't be gentle until you are patient, so after longsuffering we see gentleness coming forth.

The fruit of gentleness is especially important when ministering to young Christians. **"But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children"** (1 Thess. 2:7). Being as careful as a nurse handling a new baby. Babies are easily bruised. Jesus warned of this: **"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea"** (Matt. 18:6). We are not to unnecessarily offend them.

We can say so easily, "Shape up or ship out," forgetting that it may have taken years to get where we are right now, and we're expecting the baby Christians to be there overnight. Never forget how patient God was with you.

We need to be especially gentle with the new baby, because they eat the fruit of gentleness, and it makes them love you.

In Psalm 18:35 David was extolling God for all His greatness and all His blessings, then he adds: **"Thy gentleness hath made me great."** That is to say, "God, it is Your gentleness in my life that has made me great. It is Your gentleness that's made me loved. It's Your gentleness that has made Your people accept me. It is not my greatness, but it is Your gentleness, that has made me great." This accounts for King David's greatness in Israel, and his being so greatly loved. It was the gentleness of God

in him of which Israel partook.

Gentleness is a trademark of a true minister. It will cause him to be greatly loved by his people.

Goodness is a beautiful fruit and is most exemplified by the life of Barnabas. The fruit of goodness was matured in him. **"He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord"** (Acts 11:24).

What brings people to repentance? Why were many people added to the Lord?

Recently a man said to me, "I just can't wait until all the plagues given in the Book of Revelation start coming on the world."

"Why?" I asked.

"When all the plagues and famines come, people are going to repent."

I questioned, "What makes you think they are going to repent? We are told in the Book of Revelation that they cursed God and repented not because of the plagues."

"Oh," he said, "you know, I hadn't thought of that. Here I've just been praising God because I thought famines would cause people to repent."

I pointed him to the verse in Romans 2:4: **"or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"**

Barnabas had this fruit of goodness more than any New Testament character other than Jesus, and people sensed that goodness of God in him. He was also full of the Holy Ghost and faith. So with the combination of these three, many people were added to the Lord.

Barnabas left Antioch and went to Tarsus to seek Saul, a still unknown disciple. There was no reason other than the goodness of God leading him there to seek out Saul. It was like he was saying, "Little brother, take a bite of the fruit of goodness growing in my life." Little Saul of Tarsus reached up and took a bite of that goodness, and was able to follow Barnabas to Antioch and get started in his ministry. It was Barnabas who went to Saul of Tarsus while he was yet an underdog. At this time he was not yet recognized as Paul the magnificent Apostle. He was Saul, the unrecognized disciple. No one wanted much to do with him. They were afraid he was going to backslide, and some thought he was a spy. Some undoubtedly had unforgiveness toward him, because friends and relatives were in prison due to his unprecedented persecution of the church as a fireball Pharisee.

When Jesus wanted to minister to Saul He had to tell Ananias to go and pray for him (Acts 9). Ananias' response was to recite to the Lord if He hadn't heard how much evil Saul had done to His saints at Jerusalem. (The Lord must get very tired of our arguments. We give Him advice as if He didn't already know.)

The Lord's response wasn't, "No, Ananias, I didn't know that," but, "INQUIRE OF JUDAS FOR ONE CALLED SAUL, OF TARSUS: FOR, BEHOLD, HE PRAYETH." And then told Ananias to put his hands on Saul that he might receive the Holy Ghost.

You always see in Barnabas the willingness to give others a second chance, the projection toward the victim of injustice or persecution, and this is the fruit of goodness being personified. The name Barnabas means "the son of consolation." He could weep with those who wept, and rejoice with those who rejoiced. He was personally

involved and interested in the needs of individuals that surrounded him.

The Harvest For God. The third harvest—faith, meekness, temperance—is a harvest for God. Faith pleases God.

Meekness is blessed by God.

Temperance will win the mastery with God.

The fruit of faith is much different from faith as a gift. It is not a momentary impartation, but a growing of the measure of faith that is within you. **"... according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith"** (Rom. 12:3). This measure of faith is to grow. **"... because that your faith groweth exceedingly"** (2 Thess. 1:3).

This fruit benefits the Father. Faith pleases Him. **"But without faith it is impossible to please him"** (Heb. 11:16). If I'm not growing in faith I'm not pleasing God.

This fruit that grows in your life blesses God. He is blessed by this fruit, and it is not only faith, but it is also FAITHFULNESS. When we are judged at the appearing of Christ He will say, **"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things"** (Matt. 25:21). **"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful"** (1 Cor. 4: 2). We are stewards. Nothing you have is yours. God has given us all things as stewards, and it is required in our stewardship that we be found faithful. All He bestows upon you, you are a steward of in the spiritual realm.

The Apostle Paul said in Romans 14:22 that if I have faith, I'm to have it to myself toward God. This faith toward God is referred to in Hebrews 6:1: **"... and of faith toward God."** God looks for us to have faith (faithfulness) toward

Him.

Faithfulness is a fruit of the Spirit that is sadly lacking in the church today. It is hard to find people who are loyal and faithful to the work of God.

Faithfulness is so important. Jesus said this would be His criteria regarding us at the judgment. We read in Matthew 25:21: **"... Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."** Notice it wasn't in how many things one has done, but **"You have been faithful over a few things."**

The fruit following faith (faithfulness) is meekness. This is to grow in my life and is blessed of the Father.

Jesus said in Matthew 11:29, **"I am meek."** If we are to be like Him, this fruit must be produced in us. When I was first baptized in the Spirit I would rather He said, "I am mighty," instead of meek, for I wanted power. When I talked about *power* He changed the subject and talked about *purity*.

Meekness is to be gentle or humble. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. **"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time"** (1 Pet. 5:6). **"For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit"** (Isa. 57:15). Notice that God said He would dwell with a man who is humble as much as He would dwell in His high and holy place. God will dwell with me if I am meek in the same measure as He does in Heaven in His great transcendent majesty!

In Micah 6:8 we read, **"He hath showed thee, O man,**

what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" So humility and meekness bless God. Jesus said, **"I always do the things that please the Father"** (John 8:29), and since He said He was meek then this is one of the greatest Christ-like characteristics in the believer.

The last fruit is temperance. Self-control, or the ability to discipline. Not only to discipline physical things, but also the ability to discipline to do spiritual things. Not only dealing with the physical appetites but also dealing with the spiritual devotions.

1 Corinthians 9:25 tells us **"and every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things."** IN ALL THINGS!

If a person eats properly, but does not pray properly that person is not temperate. By the same token, if a person studies the Word and prays much, and yet has fleshly appetites in excess, he is not temperate.

Temperance is a fruit that marks one for the mastery. **"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible"** (1 Cor. 9:25). That is, being temperate IN ALL THINGS so you may gain the mastery.

5

The Sealing Fruit of the Harvest

Every *third* fruit can be underlined because every third fruit is the sealing fruit of that harvest.

Love, joy, PEACE. If you have PEACE you have love and joy.

How can you have these fruits in your life? It all begins with love. Love is the greatest. The way to receive and manifest the love of God is to pray and ask for it. **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive"** (Matt. 21:22), and this includes love. Believe you receive and you will have it.

Love, when expressed, causes joy to be experienced. If you express love you experience joy.

Many ask me to pray for them to get joy. The only way you are going to get joy is by expressing love. When you begin to say, "I love You, Jesus" you start experiencing joy, for you are expressing love. You can't have peace without joy. Joy effervesces into peace, and you can't have joy without love. **"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them"** (Ps. 119:165).

In the harvest for others it takes longsuffering, gentleness, GOODNESS. If you have goodness you have longsuffering and gentleness. You can't have gentleness without longsuffering, and it takes longsuffering and gentleness to have goodness.

In the harvest for the Father it takes faith, meekness, TEMPERANCE. If you have temperance you have faith

and meekness. In order to be temperate you have to be faithful. Many times I have said, "I am not going to overeat," and I didn't *that* day. I wasn't temperate because I wasn't faithful. Faithfulness requires diligence, and we have to have God's grace. Well, who does God give His grace to? The meek, the humble. You have to have faithfulness and meekness in order to be temperate.

We can consider the three harvests not as individual but as all together. As we begin in the harvest for me, we grow into the harvest for others, but ultimately we bring forth the harvest for God. And if we aim for the harvest for God, we'll have the first two. To bring forth the harvest for God, we'll have a harvest for me and for others. If I have the harvest for God I have the thirtyfold, sixtyfold if I am hundredfold. You see, God doesn't want us to have our eyes on ourselves. Have you ever been around Christians who are constantly reporting, "God is blessing me, thrilling me, filling me—me—my—my." Me and mine. Us and ours. That is all they talk about. Some are "I" centered. The middle letter of P-R-I-D-E is I, and the middle letter of S-I-N is I. If you have too many "I" problems you lose sight of Jesus.

When you get in an airplane, fasten yourself in a seatbelt and all you see is ME, but when you go down the runway and get in the air you look around and you see others. That is what God does to your second stage of spiritual growth where you get your eyes off of you and on to others. In John 4:35 Jesus said, **"... look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."** Where were their eyes? Who are the fields? They are OTHERS.

However, when you have your eyes on others too much you become need-oriented and work yourself to the bone. Jesus was not need-oriented, He was FATHER-

ORIENTED. Had He been need-oriented, He would have raised everyone up at the pool of Bethesda. He wasn't motivated by needs. He was motivated by the Father. **"... for I do always those things that please him"** (John 8:29). If you get too need-oriented, you get under too much of a burden.

When I was in the Philippines there were so many needs I began to feel helpless. I felt helpless because I had my eyes off of God and had my eyes on the needs. So the Lord said, *"Grow some more. You get rid of selfishness by looking at others, but now get rid of the burden by looking at Me."* This is what the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:31, **"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."** In Hebrews 12:2 we are admonished to "looking unto Jesus."

When we look unto Jesus desiring to bring forth fruit that will bless Him we'll have the first two harvests. He will minister to you and He'll minister to others through you as you look at Him.

When a gift of the Spirit is manifested we say, "Oh, praise you, Father, no way could that man do that, glory to You!"

When the fruit of the Spirit is manifested we say, "He has such a sweet spirit," or, "That sister has so much love." We should give God just as much glory for the fruit as the gifts. Forever we must remember **"In my flesh there dwelleth no good thing"** (Rom. 7:18). God uses others to help produce the fruit in us.

You can choose which harvest you will have, thirtyfold, sixtyfold, hundredfold. There is no limit.

So this is the fruit of the Spirit:

The harvest for me.

The Fruit of the Spirit

The harvest for you.

The harvest for God.

When you go from one harvest to the other, you don't lose the harvest before it, you add to it. You add to your faith, and add to your harvest and it becomes ripe, it matures.

6

30-60-100

We read in Mark 4:20 a remarkable description of what we have been talking about. **"And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it and bring forth fruit"** [this "fruit" is the same word that is used in Galatians 5:22] **"some thirtyfold"** [the harvest for me], **"some sixty"** [the harvest for others], **"and some an hundred"** [the harvest for God]. 30-60-100!

You would think if it were 30, 60 that the third would be 90, but that is not the way it is. When you bring forth a harvest for God it is 100!

Some persons are only interested in a "harvest for me." This is the babyhood stage—love, joy, peace. You can be a charismatic baby and can have all the love, joy, peace and be shaking your little rattle in your playpen and never mature to what the Father wants you to be. This is the thirtyfold Christian.

There are also those who have reached the adult stage, such as those spoken of in 1 Corinthians 10:31: **"Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."** This is the hundredfold Christian. He continually asks, "Will this please God?" Everything is to be done to the glory of God. The baby Christian asks, "Will this please or gratify me?"

Mark 4:28 tells us: **"For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."**

The Fruit of the Spirit

First the blade—the thirtyfold Christian.

Then the ear—the sixtyfold Christian.

After that the full corn in the ear—the hundredfold Christian.

7

Spiritual Growth

In 1 John 2:12-14 we read about **"children, young men and fathers."** This is not to pre-teens, teen groups and adults, it is to SPIRITUAL BABES, SPIRITUAL ADOLESCENTS and SPIRITUAL FATHERS.

Each of us is at a different level of spiritual growth. Note the characteristics of the little children. What do the little children know? "Your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake." "You have known the Father." A little child in Christ knows that God is his "daddy," and that his sins have been forgiven. These are babes in Christ, showing forth the "harvest for me." First the blade, or the thirtyfold harvest.

The Church is just like little children. John the revelator saw a great multitude and they were singing "salvation" (Revelation 7:9-10). That was all they knew, they couldn't sing about anything else. They just barely made it into the kingdom—just little children. The new birth produces a babe and it is in the spiritual as it is in the natural: first the natural, and afterward that which is spiritual (see 1 Corinthians 15:46). In the natural you don't begin as a father, you begin as a babe, a little child, then a young man, and ultimately a father. Babyhood, adolescence and then maturity.

What do the YOUNG MEN know? **"I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one"** (1 John 2:13). The young man is strong, the Word of God abides in him and he has overcome the wicked one (v. 14).

David was a young man when he overcame the giant Goliath, and when we are young men spiritually we can overcome the devil.

We have been used to being little children so long that when we see a teenager we call him a grown-up. We say they are mature. But when you look at their life they are just STRONG. They are just developing muscle.

There is another difference between little children and young men in the natural sense, and that is young men growing out of childhood have a voice change. When you receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit you get a voice change. You will get a new tongue. You'll never be fully mature without it. You'll not be able to do those spiritual push-ups, or edify yourself without this change.

The young man learns his authority as a believer, he rebukes the devil and puts him under his foot. **"... the word of God abideth in you ..."** (1 John 2:14).

You may say, "That's a victorious, mature Christian." No, that is just an adolescent, the ear, the sixtyfold harvest.

What are the FATHERS like? **"I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning"** (v. 13).

The fathers, mature, full grown, know the deep things of God. They know the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They know the Eternal One. They have gone deeper in the Spirit. **"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God"** (1 Cor. 2:10). Here we have the full ear of corn, the hundredfold harvest.

When I become as mature as my Father (see Matthew 5: 48), then I will be a father, and I will know Him who is from the beginning. But I can't jump from being a little

child into fatherhood. From childhood I have to grow into adolescence. Adolescence is a painful time in the spiritual, as much as it is in the natural.

Most of us in the Full Gospel movement are approaching adolescence, we are approaching young manhood. We are not yet mature in the deep things of God. We are just learning how to put the devil under, and how to walk by the Word of God. We are learning how to be strong.

We are to move from a thirtyfold realm to a sixtyfold realm, and on to the hundredfold realm.


Don't you want to bring forth a full mature harvest and have a full reward?

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