

"Like Jesus: The Fruit in You" | Rev Tim Frickenschmidt | October 04, 2020

Old Testament Readings [Gen 4:1-7](#)

⁴ Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD." ² And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. ³ In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴ and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵ but for Cain and his offering He had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. ⁶ The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? ⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."

Epistle Reading [Gal 5:16-25](#)

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Gospel Reading [John 15:1-5](#)

¹⁵ ¹ "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. ² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

Introduction

Despite Jesus being with us, we're not that much Like Jesus, not as often as we'd like. We all know what it's like to have unwanted things in the dark recesses of our hearts; it's those things which keep us from being like Jesus, they keep us from knowing what Paul describes as the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22. So, how can we know the fruit of the Spirit? Three points: (1) A fight; (2) A gaze; (3) The vine.

Background

1. A fight.

- In Gal 5:16, Paul commands Christians to walk by the Spirit (the Holy Spirit who makes Jesus present with us) so we will not gratify the desires of the flesh (so we will not finish what our sinful nature is continually trying to start in us).
- The invitation to go on a walk with the Holy Spirit is always being offered from inside of us, just as our sinful nature is always inside us. The fight is between the Holy Spirit within us against our sinful nature which is also within us.
- For Christians the fight doesn't end but it continues on in a different way; the internal fight remains but allegiances change: we're no longer fighting against our true nature (created to love and serve God) but fighting for what we want to do (Gal 5:17).

2. A gaze.

- To become like Jesus we Christians must choose an object of ultimate beauty upon which to gaze, not just with our eyes but with the deepest recesses of our hearts. That spiritual gaze connects us with that object.
- Our souls are like mirrors: we become like the object upon which we gaze. Our gaze determines which "object" we will live as (our sinful nature or the Holy Spirit). What we gaze upon is what is worth most to us.
- Whatever it is at which we gaze changes us, it conforms us, we become like it.

3. The vine.

- To become like Jesus we have to believe there is a vine for the fruit of the Spirit.
- Some of us Christians may wrongly despair that (1) we do not possess the fruits of the Spirit or (2) we could only possess the fruits of the Spirit if we worked really hard at it. In this second case, we might wrongly believe that it's mainly about our effort because the fruit is not of us but of the Spirit (God's fruit); we are the soil and the Holy Spirit has already planted His fruit in us; these fruits are the attributes of God.
- In John 15 Jesus speaks of Himself being the vine and of us as being branches of His vine. Life comes from the vine and into the branches to bear fruit. So the call is not to try harder (wrongly) but to abide in Him = Stay with Him or Gaze upon Him.

Love is self-sacrifice and on the cross Jesus died for us, patiently. He did so for the joy of having us be with Him as His friend, follower, brother and sister. In kindness He died to us, in goodness He died for us, in faithfulness He died for God the Father's will to fulfill our needs, in gentleness He endured the soldiers' abuse, in self-control He remained. He abided on the cross so that we might now abide in Him. So, we should open-up ourselves and keep in step with what God is already doing, as we walk with Jesus.

Discuss

- Do we feel a fight in us between our flesh and the Holy Spirit? If not, why not?
- Christians don't fight against our true nature but for what we want to do (1c, above)
- Our souls are like mirrors: we become like the object upon which we gaze (2b, above)
- Even if we abide in Him, don't we still have to try harder to bear the fruit of the Spirit? Isn't it difficult for us to be consistently loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, etc (3b2, above)
- Gal 5:25 How does living by the Spirit differ from keeping in step with the Spirit?
- John 15:3 "Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you" must indicate that Jesus knows that the disciples believe in Him and are justified by faith.

Conclusion/Application

- If we identify as Christians but we feel no fight between our sinful nature and the Holy Spirit, we should ask why. Maybe it's because we lack total allegiance to God.
- Put our phones down and, instead, pick up the scriptures to gaze upon Him. Take the first fifteen minutes of the day and open ourselves up to God's Word, linger with Him and gaze upon Him. Think about God, Himself, think about ourselves in relationship to Him. Use 30 minutes a day over the next 30 days and see what fruit God might produce in us.