

Westland Free Methodist Church
“The Fruit of the Spirit – What You Get”
October 21, 2007

The presence of the Holy Spirit gives Spiritual gifts, and the result is the fruit of the Spirit.

Just as we discussed last week, living out the spiritual gifts means simply doing anything that would be pleasing to the Holy Spirit. At the very least of life in the Spirit, we are functioning with the Spirit, thus living out of our giftedness in the spirit. The result of any spiritual gift being exercised is the fruit of the Spirit. That might seem complicated at first so let me illustrate it for you on the screen:

Presence of the Holy Spirit + Spiritual Giftedness = Spiritual Fruit
(Accept) (Enact) (Receive)

What is the fruit of the Spirit? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

We go to II Peter also and find in 1:5 “For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.”

We understand fruit? I ate some bananas this past week that were so perfect, they were perfect. I like them past green, yet not so yellow as to make an easy banana bread mix. You’ve heard the phrase, “the picking was so good it fell off the tree.”

(Hand out fruit to everyone in sanctuary)

Golf - I was in northern Michigan with the guys golfing a month ago, and it was said we could pick fruit while on the golf course, almost anywhere we were hitting. I ate apples and even pears that day. They were wonderful. Some of my shots were so errant that I was among them.

Fruit is fun.

Largest Pumpkin (Show picture)- The largest pumpkin ever grown is 1,502 pounds. It was grown by Ron Wallace of Greene, Rhode Island. It was weighed in on October 7, 2006

While we are at it, let’s show you the Largest Pumpkin Pie. **(Show Pic)**The current world record stands at 2,020 pounds (after baking). It was prepared and baked by the New Bremen Giant Pumpkin Growers at New Bremen, Ohio. It was made on October 8, 2005.

We just read the passages about spiritual fruit in our lives. Why is this so possible for there to be such perfect spiritual fruit in our lives? Why is this such an opportunity to the Christian?

Because of the phrase after the list of fruit in Gal. – “Against such things there is no law.”

This is so good. Can you imagine living perfectly in each of these spiritual attributes? It's amazing to think that the presence of God in your life, leading to the many spiritual gifts, and resulting in spiritual fruit ends up causing the Christian to live so far above the law that there is no longer need for the law.

You see there is a law that rules the spiritual universe. God's law. It's not complicated like the pharisaical law. It's simple. Love God, put him first in your life, and you will be fine. Put yourself first, and watch your life become complicated. Watch your life fall apart.

The law – This creates such a burden. You see the law convicts us as lawbreakers. Once we are convicted as law breakers, we no longer need the law. Life in the Spirit lives above the law. In other words, a person yielded to the Holy Spirit will have the right attitudes and the right behavior. Therefore no law is needed. Can you imagine a life free of any known law?

What kind of laws do we have? Moral laws, Natural law, Man-made law, survival law.

Moral laws – Going to Mexico in preparation for a missions trip. Was to go with interpreter, and took Katie as my accountability partner. Why didn't we trust that we would be fine.

Natural Laws – Law of Gravity. Once I am a Christian, do I defy gravity? No.

Man-made laws – the Law says do not cross the center line in the road. That is still a good law. It assists us in surviving yet another day on the interstates.

Survival Laws – yielding all to all laws – 3 cars abreast at top hill, I had to move over completely to survive. I yielded.

So does the law become dust on the pages they are written by the hand of God? By no means. You see, the fruit of the Spirit when lived are so far above the law, there is not need for the law. Life in God's spirit is amazingly true and blessed. But for the same reason, if there is no receiving of the gift, and therefore no evidence of fruit, then the law becomes necessary to bring conviction.

Read Galatians 3:15-25

When you accept the presence of the Holy Spirit through Christ, and live out your gifts of the spirit, and then live in the results of the fruit of the spirit, you live far above the law.

Life outside of The Spirit? Ineffective and unproductive. We read earlier II Peter 15-7. Now here's verse 8 -

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This is a warning for us in 1:8

- 1) **Ineffective – idle, no power – does an engine help you at all when your car is in neutral?** I remember my brother's old Impala, When you took off in first gear, and used the clutch to hit 2nd gear, you had to hit the shifter on the floor just right, at the right split second, with the right amount of gas acceleration to get it into 2nd gear. Do you find your life that tentative in circumstances whether in

relationships or resources where nothing seems to get into gear. Let me ask you, are you open to what the Holy Spirit wants to do through you. Dear friend, there's fruit for the picking.

- 2) **Unproductive – never turns, never moves, never makes a sound, never smells good.** – remember the pet rocks you could buy and take care of. Many people treated them as if they were alive. But I'm smart, I didn't buy one. Do you know why? Come close and I'll tell you. They're not really alive.

Life outside of the spirit is ineffective and unproductive.

II Peter 1:8 in the Message says it this way – “With these qualities active and growing in your lives, no grass will grow under your feet, no day will pass without its reward as you mature in your experience of our Master Jesus.”

Conclusion: What are we really saying today? We can live in the good life. It's like when on our mission trip 2 weeks ago that a man called from his van up to us upstairs saying “God bless you guys. You don't know how much this means to us.” He was bringing food to his mother I think. When he got out of the van, he reached for a crutch because he only had one leg. To me, at least at that moment, it seemed he was living in the spirit. Looking up at me, he seemed filled with the fruit of the spirit even as it overflowed to me.

It doesn't matter what you are going through. It doesn't matter what you or your family is going through. God is good and he offers that goodness to you and me. If we embrace his spirit, the giftedness will come, and result is fruit, fruit, fruit.

In *Living Faith* Jimmy Carter told of:

A group of Christian laymen involved in missionary work approached a small village near an Amish settlement. Seeking a possible convert, they confronted an Amish farmer and asked him, “Brother, are you a Christian?”

The farmer thought for a moment and then said, “Wait just a few minutes.” He wrote down a list of names on a tablet and handed it to the lay evangelist. “Here is a list of people who know me best. Please ask them if I am a Christian.”