

Sermon for FBC Feb. 18, 2018

## **Fruit Brings Growth**

Good morning!

Today my message is “Fruit brings growth”!

The truth can be stated both ways, “Fruit Brings Growth and Growth Brings Fruit”. Fruit and growth come together to show how a person is following God, using their gifts and trusting God for direction.

These last few weeks have been a journey from the time we discover the God who loves us, through the obedience steps of Faith, Baptism, Membership, Gift discovery and usage, to loving God and people. Now we look at how we grow and produce fruit for God.

What fruit am I talking about? The fruit of the Holy Spirit!

### ***Gal. 5:22-23 NIV***

**22** *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

**Love** - is not emotional but action-centered. Bear one another’s burdens, listen to others, build each other up, and love your enemies.

Be on the offensive with love, make the first move of friendliness, do something for them without benefit – sacrifice and give.

The biggest example of this love is Jesus Christ. Last week we talked about loving God because Jesus loved us so much.

**1 John 3:18 NIV** *“Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”*

**Joy** - Having excitement through God no matter what is happening around you. This inner peace and happiness is not affected by circumstances or environment. It is an expression of love and a mirror of Christ. It increases as we serve others.

**Phil. 4:4 NIV** *“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!”*

**Peace** - this is an inner peace that we develop as we follow Jesus’s teaching. Personal peace begins with God’s forgiveness and having confidence in God.

We become peacemakers to those around us as we communicate God’s love. First, we live in peace and then apply it to the world.

**Phil. 4:6-7 NIV** *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

**Colossians 3:15 NIV** *“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.”*

**Patience** - We begin to grow in this as we live our life and have challenges in all areas of that life. Patience is the power of God helping us to see things through to the end. It means trust in God’s leading. It brings maturity in our faith.

**1 Peter 2:19 NIV** *“For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God.”*

**Kindness** - This is love in little acts. It is putting yourself in other’s shoes. It is friendship and listening. Kindness produces kindness in others. We hear of “pass it forward” stories and see the resulting kind acts that come from it.

**Ephesians 4:2 NIV** *“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.”*

**Goodness** - Doing good deeds, love in life-size action, cares so much to help others, results from Godliness.

**Faithfulness** - To stand fast, be loyal. Be faithful in little things and the big things will come. Let God’s Spirit come in, study God’s Word (the Bible) and trust God in all things.

**Hebrews 11:6 NIV** *“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to God must believe that God exists and that God rewards those who earnestly seek Him.”*

**Gentleness** - also known as Meekness or Humility. Means you let God have everything so there is no reason to defend stuff or retaliate. God fights for us! Trees that bear the most fruit are low to the ground! Comes from submitting to God’s wisdom.

**James 3:17 NIV** *“But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.”*

Produces a tender relationship in the church.

**1 Thessalonians 2:7 NIV** *“But we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children.”*

Reflects in consideration for all people.

**Phil. 4:5 NIV** *“Let your Gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.”*

**Self-Control** – also known as Temperance. You refrain from doing anything that you know, or think, is wrong. Discipline yourselves and reach the goal God has for you. Control your tongue, your thoughts, your money and your appetites (tempers, food etc.)

Another thought is: Abstinence in areas of life forbidden by God in His Word and moderation in all other things.

**2 Timothy 1:7 NIV** *“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”*

Another passage that tells us to use this fruit for God is:

**Colossians 3:12-14 NIV**

**12** *Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*

**13** *Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

**14** *And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

The fruit are like Baptism in that they are an outward expression of the inward nature of God in us. They are a product of the wisdom of God, produced in God’s season, on good ground, in union with the vine (Christ).

**2 Peter 1:3-8 NIV**

**1** *Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,*

*To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours:*

**2** *Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*

**3** *His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.*

**4** *Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

**5** *For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;*

**6** *and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;*

**7** *and to godliness, brotherly kindness (mutual affection); and to brotherly kindness, love.*

**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.*

As we work at growing the fruit of God in us, we grow in maturity and strength. As we grow, much more fruit is produced. This is what God wants us to strive for once we accept Jesus’s gift of love and forgiveness.

Finally, we look at why we are fruit producers and how we can continue to grow.

**John 15:4,5,8,16 NIV**

**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 (you) remains in me and I in him (you), he (you) will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*

**8** *This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*

**16** *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.*

We are chosen by God to be fruit growers. When we trust God and rely on God's strength, we become healthy fruit on the vine which is Christ.

Fruit and growth come together to show how a person is following God, using their gifts and trusting God for direction.

**Bibliography:**

New International Version (NIV)

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