

Divinely Blessed & Restored

DO YOU HAVE FRUIT FILLING? ©

The Lord Has Filled You With the Fruit of the Spirit!

Series VI

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But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance, against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23 KJV)

The month continues a series on the Fruit of the Spirit. Over 2000 years ago, we received the greatest expression of love anyone could ever have given – a gift that cost the giver **"everything"** and for the **"receiver,"** it is a gift that will last forever, and ever, and ever! **What was this gift?** The gift of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. John 3:16 KJV tells us: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but shall have everlasting life."* KJV

This gift, as with any gift, requires our acceptance. Once accepted, we are "born again", not physically, but spiritually, which means we are changed - *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* (II Corinthians 5:17 KJV) and our life will begin to exemplify the Fruit of the Spirit. This month we will look at the fruit of *"goodness."*

Goodness is defined as the state or quality of being good, especially morally good or beneficial. Goodness is holiness put into practice and results from knowing God. (Romans 15:14). When we talk about goodness we should be aware that goodness is not about recognition. In fact, Jesus taught about false goodness and "performing" for others. Goodness is a virtue, a Christ-like characteristic. Goodness is exemplified in our lives by being a "Good Samaritan", which means as Romans 15:2-3 (Msg) tells us; "Each one of us needs to look after the good of the people around us, asking ourselves, "How can I help?" That's exactly what Jesus did. He didn't make it easy for himself by avoiding people's troubles, but waded right in and helped out. "I took on the troubles of the troubled," is the way Scripture puts it."

Goodness is contagious. Oftentimes, when we display goodness, it serves as a catalyst to encourage others to be "good". Besides the blessing goodness provides to others, it also blesses you! As you spread goodness around, you glorify the One who has been good to you. Andrew Murray sums it up nicely, "It is when we give ourselves to be a blessing that we can specially count on the blessing of God. It is when we draw near to God as the friend of the poor and the perish that we may count on His friendliness." Every time you share goodness with another human being, you have also shared it with your Heavenly Father. Matthew 25:40 NIV tells us; "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me".

Yes, it takes work to be consistently good, because it is thoroughly against our sinful nature. While none of us have reached a place of displaying goodness all of the time, it should be our goal. Our witness about the love of Christ has no power if we do not display goodness to others. We are ambassadors for Christ and can't speak to others about the love of God if we do not display the love of God in our actions, regardless of how someone treats us. Goodness enables you to do good even to those who hate you (Luke 6:27). Goodness must be exhibited in spite of temptation or unfavorable influences. Even during those times when it is difficult to be good; when you are wronged or when you are discouraged, we must allow what we know is right to guide our reaction and our behavior. There are things we can do to become and remain good persons, obey the Bible, study the Word and hide the Word in our heart. We are not born as good people in the biblical sense, that's why we need the gospel, "*the good news*" which leads us to turn from living in sin with a sinful nature to living Christ-like as God wants us to live. When we study the Word we find that Jesus serves as our example of goodness and His Word is our guide and what is in our heart is what will be projected on the outside.

As you reflect upon the fruit of goodness, pattern yourself after the Samaritan in Luke 10:33-34 who came upon a man injured and lying on the side of the road, "as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ***If you adapt this same character or conduct, you will be blessed for blessing another as you live a life that has been filled with the fruit filling of.....Goodness!!***

HAVE YOU STARTED YOUR JOURNEY WITH CHRIST?

Our purpose in this article and daily scriptures is to encourage a heart-to-heart relationship with God. If you do not know God in a personal way, we invite you to make the first step today to receive God's love and the salvation that only Jesus Christ can give. Here are five steps you can take to receive salvation:

1. Recognize you are a sinner and need salvation. The Bible tells us "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).
2. Repent of your sins. Sin separates us from God. By confessing your sins and turning from them you are forgiven. The Bible says: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).
3. Believe in Jesus. God sent His Son to die so that He could pay for all our sins. The Bible says: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life: (John 3:16).
4. Receive His Salvation. Jesus Christ is a gift you must receive and welcome to live in your heart. He promises: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God: (John 1:12).
5. Confess your belief verbally. The Bible assures "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved: (Rom. 10:9).

You now have been born again! Tell some else your good news and connect yourself with a church home as soon as possible. God Bless and Keep You!

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