

Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The TREE OF LIFE weekly teaching summary from THE WEEK ENDING: October 03 1999

Tree of Life 10/03/99

The Fruit of the Spirit Part 2.

The Fruit of the Spirit

We have now completed a study on the manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit in Gal 5:22; "But the fruit or the production of the Holy Spirit keeps on being virtue-love, joy, peace, patience, graciousness, goodness, and faithfulness.

Graciousness

The fifth part of the fruit of the Spirit is the Greek word "**chrestotes**" which means kindness, graciousness, generosity, benevolent and sensitivity to others. This is the believer's recognition of all that God has freely given, Rom 5:8; 8:32; 2Pe 1:3; 1Co 2:9.

It is the basis of gratitude to God Who has given His Unique Son for us and, having given Him, now freely gives us all things, Rom 8:32, Jam 1:17, Joh 3:27. Being gracious means that the believer never forgets where they have come from and they are always grateful and thankful to God for where they're going, Eph 2:11-13. The grace-oriented believer also expresses gratitude to the Father, Col 1:12, and because of this, is very gracious toward others. They profoundly appreciate that there is no condemnation in Christ Jesus, Rom 8:1; 1Jo 3:20-21, and as such they do not condemn others, they do not judge, criticize or malign others. They are quick to edify, slow to anger. The grace-oriented believer recognizes that sins were not imputed to the believer, but rather the Righteousness of God and of Christ was.

Toward the unsaved, these believers have the ministry of reconciliation, 2Co 5:18-21. To those believers who have failed, these believers have a ministry of restoration as taught in Gal 6. Grace-orientation interacts with

the believer's personal sense of identity and destiny. Grace-orientation is a powerful problem-solving device guarding the believer's soul against legalism, asceticism, self-condemnation, a poor self-image, ingratitude, bitterness, anxiety, insecurity and judgmentalism, Gal 2:20-21; 1Co 15:10; 1Co 4:1-3; Mat 7:1. Grace has tolerance, though because of doctrinal-orientation it does not tolerate evil in its own life. We saw grace orientation when we looked at the story of the prostitute in Luk 7:36-50, grace versus legalism. The woman caught in adultery Joh 7:53-8:11 was another example. Here in John 8:11 we see The One who never knew sin, and the one who a few minutes before, had been engaged in it. The One who had the right to condemn, and the one who had deserved to be condemned. There the bridge of grace built between the two of them. Just like He built between all of us and Himself when we came to know Him! As a principle of graciousness and grace orientation we saw that people are not things. They were not created as mere things by God, and that He does not regard them as things. Yet we often treat other people as things, whenever we try to use them for some end of our own, or fail to listen to them. Our Lord said in Mat 7:12 **"Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."** So, in dealing with others, and developing impersonal unconditional love and patience and living in grace orientation toward others, never forget the guilt that the Lord has delivered you from. The areas in our life that produce guilt are there to remind us of our inability to meet the demands of God and to be gracious and operate in grace orientation. The first group of people that the Lord said preach the Gospel to were those in Jerusalem. The very same ones who later shouted **"crucify Him, crucify Him."**

Goodness

The sixth part of the fruit of the Spirit is now mentioned the Greek noun **"agathosune"** which means to be generous, virtuous and to produce divine good. There are three types of good in history. Human good which is the production of evil. Moral good, which is the observance of the laws of divine establishment. Divine good which is the production of the growing or mature believer. Divine good is an absolute concept related to God, and His perfect standards, it is permanent and absolute. Human good is a relative concept related to mankind, it is temporary, relative and corruptible, because of the sin nature, Mat 23:5. Believers, can perform divine good because God has given us the means of doing so by the filling of the Holy Spirit and the perception of Bible doctrine. There are four keys to the production of divine good.

1. Status quo. This means being in the directive will of God.
2. Momentum. This means that Bible doctrine is important in everything.
3. Attainment. This is advance to spiritual maturity.
4. Impact. This is the function of the mature believer as an invisible hero in

the Church Age.

It is part of God's plan for you to produce divine good.

Some principles;

- 1.The production of divine good is related to logistical grace, 2Co 9:8.
- 2.The production of divine good is related to the function perception, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine, Tit 2:7.
- 3.The production of divine good is related to supergrace status, 2Ti 3:16-17.
- 4.The production of divine good is an issue in the angelic conflict, Rom 12:21.
- 5.The production of divine good is related to surpassing grace status, 2Co 5:10.
- 6.The production of divine good is related to the believer's honor, 2Ti 2:21.
- 7.Divine good is both verbal and mental, 2Th 2:16-17.

Since human good and human works are excluded from salvation, it follows that human good and human works are excluded from the plan of God for the believer. He provides the filling of the Holy Spirit, our portfolio of invisible assets, problem solving devices, promises from the Word of God, and the doctrine which motivates us to perform the good deed. Human good is defined by the individual on the basis of personal standards. What may be good to me, may not be good to you. This is not true of divine standards, which are based solely on what the Word of God says. A human act of good may be motivated by sinfulness, arrogance, in which case the good has lost its good. Rom 7:21, Mat 6:1. Human good is not necessary for a relationship with God, when you understand this, then you understand something that over 90% of Christians do not understand today. This is why the tree of the knowledge of "good" and evil was prohibited. The average believer today thinks that God is depending on them to be good and to do good, that is not, repeat, not the Christian way of life.

Sin and human good = Evil. Grace and doctrine = Divine good.

Faithfulness

The seventh manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit is translated faithfulness which is the Greek word "**pistis**" and it refers here more than just doctrine.

- 1.It denotes the trust that one has in another. This of course refers to our trust in God and His word, Bible doctrine.
- 2.As a virtue and a result of the production of the Spirit it also refers to being faithful, trustworthy, reliable, and steadfast.
- 3.Confidence, assurance, conviction belief and doctrine.

Since this is another divine characteristic that is being reproduced in the believer by the Holy Spirit, we need to understand what divine faithfulness

is so that we can identify that which the Holy Spirit will accomplish within us. Every believer starts with the same amount of faith but none of us end up that way. It all depends on the operation of the filling of the Spirit in our lives. Everyone has the same chance from the start of salvation. We all start out with an equal amount of faith and with equal privilege and equal opportunity, 2PE 1:1-4. So when we look at all of these manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit, we are looking at the ability we have to partake of the divine nature, the nature of God.

First of all, we begin with the principle that there is only one person who is and will ever be totally faithful to you and that of course is God. He can only be faithful to you because of His perfect character. Divine faithfulness is God's grace expression to the believer using His perfect character as the basis for expression. Faithfulness hinges on the essence of God. Because God is perfect, fair, and stable to Himself, He will be all these things to you as well. LAM 3:22-23. God is faithful to us because of the doctrine of propitiation which says God the Father is satisfied with the sacrificial ministry of our Lord on the cross. His faithfulness, therefore, does not depend upon your spiritual status or mine. Divine faithfulness manifests itself in many different areas. Discipline to the reversionist and blessing to the adult believer. So, in reality, what is faithfulness? It is a loyal attitude to someone in your life who you love, respect, admire, or recognize their authority. God's faithfulness is also manifested in His perfect plan, 1Co 1:9. God's faithfulness is also manifested in logistical grace provision and Supergrace blessing, 1Th 5:24. This is why we should never worry about the basic necessities to sustain our life. God will provide everything we will ever need. Remember, it was harder for God to find a way to save us than it is for God to bless us in time. God's perfect faithfulness to you in eternity past inevitably leads to His perfect faithfulness to you in time. There is also God's faithfulness in testing, 1Co 10:13, 2Co 4:17, Rom 8:18. He will not allow us to be tested or tempted beyond our capacity and capability to pass the test or to say no to the temptation. 1CO 10:13, Rom 8:18, 2CO 4:17.

So, you are tested in all stages of spiritual growth but never beyond your capacity. God is even faithful to the apostate believer, 2Ti 2:13 God is also faithful in what He withholds just like in what He gives. He is faithful in sending sorrow as well as in giving joy. So God is not only faithful in stopping affliction but in sending it as well, Psa 89:33. Perhaps the greatest illustration is the faithfulness of God to you. Think of how faithful God has been to you over the years. Think of how many times you got yourself into a jam and the grace and faithfulness of God pulled you out. Think of how many times your were worried about the future and the grace and faithfulness of God still came through.

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