

Flavorful Fruit - January 11, 2022

One of the guilt-free pleasures of life is eating a beautiful piece of fruit. This can be true especially when you are instructed by your doctor, or your scales, that it is time to eat more natural, whole foods and less processed, rich treats. For example, think about a gorgeous shiny apple, fresh from the supermarket. But beware! It can be lovely to look at but mealy and flavorless on the inside. Blech! The apples have been in storage too long, shined up with wax to look good on the outside.

How appropriate for the Lord to use the analogy of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. The fruit of His love is full of flavor and nourishes those around us.

Food is central to existence. It is the fuel that we need for our bodies to function. If what we consume has no nutritional value but is full of additives and flavor enhancers, our hunger may be satisfied, but only for a moment. Very soon we will be searching for the next snack or meal, and our bodies will eventually die from disease and malnutrition.

One of the benefits of living in this technological age is the simplicity to access the scriptures! So, after reading Galatians 5 in several different translations, Pastor Zack's encouragement for us to inspect the fruit in our lives hit home. The following is from The Passion Translation:

“16 Let me emphasize this: As you yield to the dynamic life and power of the Holy Spirit, you will abandon the cravings of your self-life.[g] 17 When your self-life craves the things that offend the Holy Spirit you hinder him from living free within you! And the Holy Spirit's intense cravings hinder your self-life from dominating you! So then, the two incompatible and conflicting forces within you are your self-life of the flesh and the new creation life of the Spirit.[h] 18 But when you yield to the life of the Spirit,[i] you will no longer be living under the law, but soaring above it!”

It boils down to selfishness vs. agape love. Religious works vs. true relationship with Jesus. Let's get honest about the flavor of our lives. We can't do this in our own strength or on our timeline!

Growing nutritious food takes time and effort. Growing in Jesus takes time and intentionality. Philippians 1:6 in the Amplified Bible says:

6 I am convinced and confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will [continue to] perfect and complete it until the day of Christ Jesus [the time of His return].

May our lives be full of the flavor of God's love in all of its expressions: joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Your Sister in Jesus,

Liz