

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

By Robert Applegate

Jesus Christ said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." The fruit to which he referred is the fruit of the Spirit, which Paul later enumerated as follows: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

The word fruit suggests several courses of thought. One is effortlessness. A tree or vine does not labor to produce fruit. It simply absorbs sunshine through its leaves, draws up moisture and other needed elements through its roots, and lets the fruit grow. Similarly, Spirit does not labor to produce its fruit; nor does the man of Spirit labor. By his upward vision toward God, he maintains contact with the Source of his spiritual nourishment and he allows the fruit of the Spirit to be formed within and produced through him.

A fruit tree, or a vine that produces edible fruit must be pruned if it is to produce plentifully. It does not fight this process, but it lets the farmer cut off the branches that are useless, so that its precious substance may not be wasted needlessly. The remaining branches then produce fruit in larger measure. Similarly, the man of truth finds many activities and things that are useless removed from him so that what is useful may be conserved and made more fruitful. If he is wise, he does not resist this cleansing process. He lets go gladly whatever is of no value though the experience may be painful (as the process of pruning would be to a tree if it had consciousness). He declares with Jesus Christ, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." He allows himself to be cleansed of nonessentials, and he discovers that the process enriches and blesses him beyond his expectations.

Fruit suggests plentifullness, for the fruit of the Spirit is always abundant. "God giveth not the Spirit by measure," John wrote; and Jesus declared, "He that abideth in me, ... the same bringeth forth much fruit." Those that are touched by the Spirit do things in a big way. If they are builders, they build structures that remain. If they are teachers, they teach with authority and power (as Peter did when he spoke to and converted three thousand people in one day). If they are healers, they spread the joyous blessings of health and restoration wherever they go, as Jesus healed all who were brought unto Him. They that are alive to the Spirit do great things because they are great persons. They have the qualities of the Spirit in large measure. Their love is all-encompassing and sublime; their joy is unquenchable; their peace is deep and abiding. They that submit willingly to the pruning, purifying, and purging action of the Spirit bring forth much fruit.

Another promise that is made concerning the fruit of the Spirit is that it is permanent. Jesus said, "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." That which comes to anyone as the result of this understanding of God can never be lost or taken from him. He demonstrates the fruit of the activity of the Holy Spirit which he had received into his awareness. He who has become aware of Joy never loses his joy. He who has become conscious of Love possesses love eternally. He who is

aware of Life has eternal life. In every instance, he who has received and holds (or possesses in his consciousness) a fruit of the Spirit finds that his fruit remains. Thus Jesus said, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal. The reaping is done simply by looking, and the harvest is a consciousness of eternal values.

Paul, after enumerating the fruit of the Spirit, adds, "Against such there is no law." This is predominantly true of the first fruit, which is love. The other fruit (joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance), follow and are found in the presence of love. But love is the foremost fruit of the Spirit, and is supremely to be desired. Love is the fulfilling of the law. Love covers a multitude of errors. The law of retribution (the law of karma), is nullified by love. This is a marvelous fact; for the law is a hard taskmaster. If anyone had to wait until he had paid the exact balance for all his shortcomings, and had received the exact equivalent for all the harm that he had done through many lives, he would justly despair of ever attaining a consciousness of God, or of entering the kingdom of heaven. But the Love of God draws all unto itself and remits past mistakes so that he who turns to Him consciously is verily born anew. He need but accept this love which forgives. Thus, Jesus said of the woman who anointed His feet, "Her sins, which are many are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." She and Jesus (in His washing of the disciples' feet), have given us examples of the love that nullifies the law.

"If anyone thinks that he would prefer the law to the free gift of the Spirit, he should bear in mind Jesus' words to the Pharisees, "Ye are like unto whitened sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

Two other points may be noted about the fruit of the Spirit: it is useful, and it satisfies. A plane tree is decorative and its shade is pleasant, but it is not useful unless it is cut down and made into lumber. A fruit tree, however, sustains and provides for those who gather its fruit. It is not only useful in its native state, but it is essential to life itself. Its primary attribute is that it satisfies hunger. Similarly, the fruit of the Spirit is useful and essential for the maintenance of life in a human being.

If attaining a consciousness of God is the one purpose of this existence, it follows that the only useful practices are those which aid a man toward this end. He must let his own light shine; and he must let the fruit of the Spirit be manifested through him. If he does this, he will give his best service to his fellowmen. They will see the desirability of bearing this fruit in themselves, and they will, of their own accord, set out to learn how to let it be formed in them. Hence, the fruit of the Spirit (manifested through any individual), is the one thing that makes him truly useful to his neighbors. On the other hand, he that is useless, or who refuses to bear the fruit of the Spirit, is trampled under the feet of men. The fruit of the Spirit sustains, invigorates, and refreshes not only him who consciously harvests it; but the whole world benefits and is blessed by his exhibit of it.

Just as physical fruit satisfies physical hunger, so the fruit of the Spirit satisfies the hunger in the heart of man. This hunger has been intensified because man has turned away from God, and the resultant sense of separation from his Maker causes him to hunger for food more satisfying than any the world can supply. Only by turning back to the Source, and by regaining a consciousness of oneness with God, his Good, can he be filled.

The chief error man commits is that of turning toward the world for the fulfillment of all his desires. He seeks love in the world and reaps lust. He seeks joy in the world and reaps a simulated pleasure. He seeks peace in the world and reaps an uneasy and artificial security. And so it is for all the other fruit of the Spirit. However, an abiding inner conviction urges man toward That which can satisfy and which can be found when he looks in the right direction.

Isaiah heard the voice of God saying unto him, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live."

The soul's hunger is satisfied only with the fruit of the Spirit. This was discovered by the Psalmist who sang, "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."

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AWAKE, THOU THAT SLEEPEST

By Alden Truesdell

All of us have known or have heard of some person who did nothing but take the lines of least resistance all his life, but who suddenly and unexpectedly sprang up with a zeal and energy that startled everybody, near and far. This unusual rejuvenation became the subject for criticism and ridicule. Perhaps the general comment ran something like this, "Imagine a common, ordinary caterpillar trying to be a butterfly." But a butterfly he will be, just as it is the divine destiny for the worm-like larva to transform into a beautiful winged creature. It makes no difference how reactionary the caterpillar feels about the situation, or how he might organize to combat the transformation. When his time comes, he must be a butterfly.

You will recall how the newly anointed Jesus Christ was the target for vituperation when He stood in the synagogue on His first visit to Nazareth after He had been baptized by John in the river Jordan. "And he came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

"And he closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Then He made a few comments that kindled a fury in the hearts of His listeners that never abated. It followed Him wherever He went, and its scathing

abuse heaped upon His innocent head until it manifested finally as a crown of cruel thorns.

Is not this Joseph's son? Is not this just a common carpenter with whom we have associated for years? Do not we know his whole family? his sisters? his brothers? And they arose and escorted Him out of their city to the brow of the hill upon which their city was built, and they tried to cast Him down headlong. But He disappeared from their midst by the power of the Almighty God He had come to represent.

The first Adam is a living soul. The second Adam is a quickening spirit. Just as a caterpillar in its negative state is begetting power to become a butterfly, so man a living soul, is generating power to become a quickening spirit. The object is not to teach the caterpillar to fly. Transformation of the crawling creature into a resplendent winged, animated thing is the whole object of its existence.

While in due season a caterpillar instinctively unfolds into a butterfly, man can delay his return to the Father's house. He can choose whether or not he wishes to accept the heavenly estate. If he loves the world, he can remain in bondage to the world for as long as he pleases. But if he chooses to turn to the Father, then he must understand that all the thoughts, feelings, and possessions which have seemed to sustain the living soul must be directed toward the Father exclusively. A new mode of life ensues; it is sometimes described as the New Dispensation, or, the spiritual life. To remember he is a quickening spirit, to know that he is a son of God, a child of the King, is the most glorious aspect of living as a human being. For this purpose he came into the world. And though for a time he might prefer to remain in the caterpillar state, he cannot escape the carefree existence that is his divine prerogative as son of God. "To as many as believed gave He power to become sons of God."

Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up. It is for this that the human soul longs. And the seeming helplessness surrounding that longing makes for the sadness and general feeling of inferiority that pervades all humankind.

The encouraging word comes, "Be of good cheer"; "I am with you"; "Let the weak say, I am strong." All a man need do is agree with the hope of glory that is within him. When he does, he will accept and rejoice in the saving power of divinity implanted in his consciousness from the foundation of the world.

Why not rejoice in such a glorious destiny? Why not believe in it and claim it? Does it matter what friends or relatives say? It is better to follow the light of Spirit within than to fulfill the negative descriptives of envious men.

Rise up, O man! The sleeping giant within stirs! Let it have its way with you, and you will surprise not only those around you, but you will astonish yourself. The kingdom of God is within you. You shall have treasure in heaven. You shall have life abundant. You shall be strong and wise and do mighty exploits. You shall have protection and provision. You shall be given a new hope, and the joy of the Lord which is strength. All this, and more shall be yours when you awake to perceive and accept true spiritual values above the paltry things of this world.

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DO YOU WANT TO BE RICH?

By Nell Truesdell

The request made most frequently by the "new" truth student is one concerning improvement of his financial status. "I should like instructions on money problems. How can I get out of debt?"

The teacher is hard put to answer such an inquiry diplomatically for he knows that a student seldom takes kindly to the simple instruction he must give. He knows that it will be resisted as though it were a plague, and he knows the average student will persist in looking into the world in the firm belief that the world holds the key to that which would answer his heart's cry.

What is this instruction? It can be given in one word: Tithe! Tithe honestly and with a will to cooperate with the law of prosperity. No argument can repudiate the automatic increase of money or goods of this world, with added measure of health and happiness thrown in, for him who keeps this law. No intellectual reasoning can contradict the outcome of the practice. Its law performs systematically and fulfills every wish of the heart if it is regularly and methodically applied to all money that comes into hand. Half-hearted exercise of the law, cunning and deceptive observance, and other "shady" self-indulgence will not trick the law into giving more than is due. For awhile such practices seem not to affect the total measure of prosperity, but eventually the toll is taken and the humiliation, frustration, and defeat that ensues is unbearable.

Some students parry with this question, "To whom should I tithe?" Only one answer is logical. Tithe to the ministry that is giving you benefits, that is open to your demands for service in so many ways - instruction, prayer, communion in spirit, fellowship, in truth. When you want spiritual cooperation in order that your life continue in a smooth, orderly way, and you ask your spiritual practitioner to continue in prayer for your benefit, and then do not contribute to his ministry, you do err. It is the same as demanding that a lawyer prepare a brief for your defense, or going to a department store to get your clothing needs supplied, and then neglecting (or refusing) to pay what you justly owe for services and goods received.

When you request prayers, or expect oral or written instruction, you are making a demand. Your minister works gladly in your behalf, but if you do not keep your part of the contract, you withhold from yourself the benefits that would flow toward you because you were being remembered in spirit.

God's law is more exact than man's. If you give, you receive. The giving comes first. By it you open a channel in your own consciousness for the good you long to have flow toward you. The consecrated man of God makes no demand upon you. But the law of justice does. The easy way to coordinate with that law is to put aside your tithe and then give it with your blessing to that minister or ministry that serves you in spirit and gives you values you cannot purchase at any price in the world.

The consistent tither never has to make frantic demands for help. He chats with his minister during regular visits to his office, he attends services and classes (or, if he corresponds, he does so often), he prays for the good of

his relatives and friends and all mankind, and he is blessed from day to day with sure blessings. They come in unexpected ways. Life is tranquil and rich. Debts recede as a consciousness of substance increases. Foolish spending of money ceases, for wisdom replaces spasmodic and wild purchases that waste the funds at hand. Health and joy become so habitual that they are almost taken for granted. The goodness of life is poured out in full and satisfying measure, in ways that do not tax the capacities, nor do they deplete the vital energies.

Do you tithe? If not, begin and continue to tithe. Tithe for years before you attempt to quibble about its benefits. Make it such a habit that the larger the sum you have to tithe the more heartily you engage in the practice. Never let your desire pinch this gift or hold a part of it back. The loss that follows will stagger you.

If I told you of methods of visualizing and decreeing bounty, and did not tell you to tithe, I should betray you into a false prosperity that would ensnare you in time.

If I opened the very treasure of heaven, and gave you limitless wealth, and you did not tithe, it would be the cruelest gesture I could make toward you. Without a prepared consciousness to value abundance of good, you would be buried alive under a mountain of opulence, and you would have no way of release from its burden. It would offer neither food nor drink to you, and your life would become intolerable. Lusts after trivialities would consume you with a burning passion that would sear your very soul. The damage would be irreparable. Like Job, your children and your possessions would be swept away and you would be desolate, with little reserve strength to pull yourself back to normalcy.

But if I tell you to give a tenth of your money to the works of God, and you obey, you will find new paths open before you into a realm of plenty that is boundless. Rich givings, in balanced measure, will drop upon you in countless ways. Your faculties will open to a vast unconquered field that is yours for the taking. Your interior wealth of soul will be your well-spring of ceaseless supply.

To give of his goods God-ward, is one of man's rarest privileges. It is at once the test and the secret of true riches.

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Alphabet of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of the Month

OCTOBER 1949

1. ABIDE in Me.

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3. BEFORE they call I will answer.

4. CAUSE me to know the way.

5. I am the DOOR.

6. ENTER in at the strait gate.

7. God will be FAVORABLE unto him.

8. The Lord will GIVE GRACE and GLORY.

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10. I will restore HEALTH unto thee.

11. You faith IS INCREASED.

12. Ye are JUSTIFIED in the Name of the Lord JESUS.

13. He is Lord of Lords, and KING of KINGS.

14. LOOK up, and LIFT up your heads.

15. MY MEDITATION of Him shall be sweet.

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17. Love thy NEIGHBOR.

18. I have willingly OFFERED all ... unto Thee.

19. He maketh me to lie down in green PASTURES.

20. The Word of God is QUICK and powerful.

21. The times of REFRESHING shall come.

22. Thy health SHALL SPRING forth SPEEDILY.

*

24. I will THERE TALK with THEE.

25. You have an UNCTION from the Holy One.

26. The right hand of the Lord doeth VALIANTLY.

27. O the depth of the WISDOM of God!

28. Though he were dead, YET shall he live.

29. It is good to be ZEALOUSLY affected in a good thing.

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31. Be ye glad and rejoice.

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"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

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SPIRITICITY is the working Power of the Spiritual Principle,
As electricity is the working power of the electrical principle.