



A PUBLICATION OF

REFORMATION PLATFORM

FRUITFULNESS:

**GOD'S DEMAND AND THE CHRISTIAN'S
RESPONSE**



A GUIDE TO YIELDING TO THE SPIRIT-
CONTROLLED LIFE TO BECOME ALL GOD MADE YOU
TO BE.

FRUITFULNESS: GOD'S DEMAND & THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSE

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FRUITFULNESS: GOD'S DEMAND & THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSE
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INTRODUCTION

THE LEVEL OF A MAN'S FRUITFULNESS IS THE LEVEL OF HIS USEFULNESS

Opening Hymn: Stand up, Stand up for Jesus.

Stand up! stand up for Jesus!
Ye soldiers of the cross;
Lift high His royal banner,
It must not suffer loss:

*From vict'ry unto vict'ry
His army shall He lead,
Till every foe is vanquished
And Christ is Lord indeed.*

Stand up for Jesus
Ye soldiers of the cross;
Lift high His royal banner,
It must not, it must not suffer loss.

Stand up! stand up for Jesus!
The trumpet call obey;
Forth to the mighty conflict
In this His glorious day.
Ye that are men, now serve Him
Against unnumbered foes;
Let courage rise with danger.
And strength to strength oppose.

Stand up! stand up for Jesus!
Stand in His strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you;
Ye dare not trust your own.
Put on the Gospel armor,
And, watching unto prayer,
Where duty calls, or danger,
Be never wanting there.

Stand up! stand up for Jesus!
The strife will not be long:
This day the noise of battle,
The next the victor's song;
To him that overcometh
A crown of life shall be;
He, with the King of glory,
Shall reign eternally.

“But he that received the seed in the good ground is he that hears the word, and understands it, who also bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.” Matt.13:23 KJ2

While bearing fruit is not really popular with men and the very concept of *'fruitfulness'* itself in the present church demoted to and mixed with the world's definition and perception of fruitfulness; **fruitfulness is the only evidence that we are godly** (Matt.3:8 TVB, AMP; Matt.7:16, 20, 21-23) and it is the only qualification for divine attention as far as usefulness to God and being fit for His purpose and kingdom is concerned (1Sam.13:14).

In this present age, where *tapping anointing* and *appearing anointed* have been the mark for divine approval among men, the Holy Spirit, the Anointing Himself, intends to show us a better way.

By 'fruitfulness', we simply mean yielding to the lordship, leadership and rulership of God the Holy Spirit (Gal.5:16, 25 AMPC), so that as long as we remain under His influence and control, as He sits upon the throne room of our hearts, we may begin to bear His fruit (Ps.1:1-3, Ps.92:13-14), to the end that we might become like Jesus Christ in all things (Eph.4:15), at all times (1Jn.2:6 TLB) and in every place (1Pet.2:21); to the end that we can become fit for God's use and aligned with His eternal purpose (2Tim.2:21, 2Tim.1:9).

Unlike the current religious/worldly concept of fruitfulness which is primarily getting a baby or steadily getting big contracts such that your standard of living increases and you can now afford all what you have been

desiring; as good as having a baby or being blessed financially is, this is totally strange and opposite to God's view of fruitfulness.

About Jesus, God said:

“This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased, hear Him.”
(Matt.17:5)

Also, about David, He said:

“...I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, who shall fulfill all my will.” (Acts 13:22 KJ2)

We all agree completely that nobody has ever or will ever be anointed like Jesus Christ. To Him, God gave the Holy Spirit without measure. And yet, in Jesus, I see the perfect blend between having absolute power and absolute surrender to God's will- whatever that will is. (Jn.6:38)

It takes the fruit of the Spirit to successfully and safely handle the gifts...without the fruits, like all the other men, the gifts will corrupt you for:
“...the Holy olive oil must not be poured upon man's flesh.”
Ex.30:32

Men are not reckoned with in heaven because they are *'powerful men of God with great anointing'*...men are reckoned with in heaven because, regardless of how powerful they are, regardless of how influential over other men they are, they are equally, under God's ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY (Jn.5:30, Jn.15:4-5); thus, they become worthy and able to bear the power of God safely for a very long time and enter into the class of holy men whom the devil cannot catch.

To be fruitful is to become useful and usable...it is to become like David, a man after God's heart, who will do all His will! In this day and age when ignorant men fast and pray just so that God will sprinkle trickles of spiritual power over them, if you will be serious to pursue that which matters most in the heart of God, if you will run after becoming like Jesus as the Holy Spirit leads and rules and even overrules your life, I declare to you plainly, that the anointing that men fast and pray for will pursue you and overtake you (Deut.28:1-2)!

God is in need of usable men- not powerful men; for once has God spoken and twice have I heard it, that power belongs to God. (Ps.62:11)

So what will you do today? It is impossible for you to fulfill your life's purpose without being under the lordship, leadership and rulership of the Holy Spirit.

Yet, for most who lead or are seemingly spiritual today, all evidence point to the fact that they are strangers to the reality of the lordship, leadership and rulership of the Holy Spirit even though they are professionals at operating in the anointing...

But Jesus didn't say *'by their gifts you will know them'*...instead, He said, **“By their fruits you shall know them”** or as the NLT 1st edition aptly puts it: **“Yes, the way to identify a tree or a person is by the kind of fruit that is produced.”** Matthew 7: 20 NLT

Never forget, you will never be more useful to God per time beyond how fruitful you are. If the Holy Spirit keeps struggling with you as He attempts to walk with you and work in you, after a while, He will allow you to have your own way since He will never strive with any man...(Gen. 6:3)

Do not come into the world, merely to waste away. God cannot use you more than how much you are willing to let Him take control, direct and rule over your life (Jn.8:29).

The clock is ticking.

What shall your response be?

Closing hymn: just as I am, thine own to be

Just as I am, Thine own to be,
Friend of the young, who lovest me,
To consecrate myself to Thee,
O Jesus Christ, I come.

In the glad morning of my day,
My life to give, my vows to pay,
With no reserve and no delay,
With all my heart I come.

I would live ever in the light,
I would work ever for the right,
I would serve Thee with all my might;
Therefore, to Thee I come.

Just as I am, young, strong and free,
To be the best that I can be
For truth, and righteousness, and Thee,
Lord of my life, I come.

LESSON ONE

EVERY UNFRUITFUL BRANCH WILL BE CUT OFF

Opening Hymn: More holiness Give Me

More holiness give me,
More sweetness within,
More patience in suff'ring,
More sorrow for sin,
More faith in my Savior,
More sense of His care,
More joy in His service,
More freedom in prayer.
Come, my Savior, and help me,
Comfort, strengthen and keep me;
Thou each moment wilt save me,
Thou art saving me now.

More gratitude give me,
More trust in the Lord,
More zeal for His glory,
More hope in His Word,
More tears for His sorrows,
More pain at His grief,
More meekness in trial,
More praise for relief.

More victory give me,
More strength to o'ercome,
More freedom from earth-stains,
More quest for the throne,
More fit for the kingdom,
More useful I'd be,
More blessed and holy,
More, Savior, like Thee.

"Every branch in me that bears not fruit he takes away: and every branch that bears fruit, he prunes it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

Jn.15:2

"Every branch in me that bears not fruit he takes away..."

Unfruitfulness may not necessarily be termed as lack of fruit...it is equally the same thing as lack of the expected type of fruit, which is the same thing as barrenness! (Heb.6:7-8)

In the same way, hypocrisy, self righteousness, spiritual pride, unforgiveness, bitterness and so on, are actually fruits, [wild grapes, if we want to be more specific- see, Isa.5:2, 4]; yet, it is as good as if the Christian whose life produces these wrong and evil fruits is actually barren as far as the Lord Jesus is concerned.

"Every branch in me that bears not fruit he takes away..."

The reality about our Christian life is this: we are expected to be fruitful, once we are born again. Once we take root downwards, the Lord expects that we will bear fruits upwards (Isa.37:31, Col.2:6-7 AMP).

Actually, the '*fruit meet for repentance*' [or the evidences of genuine salvation and a true change of life] is the root that must first go down before we can bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit upwards. (See again, *****Col.2:6-7 AMP**, Ps.1:3, Ps.92:13, Jer.17:8)

When this is not done, we are in danger of being cut off [or being forcefully ejected from the fold] by the Lord God Himself, for "**...he beareth not the sword in vain...**"(Rom. 13:4)

This is the matter today...so many fruitless so-called believers...no fruit that is meet for repentance, no fruits of the Holy Spirit...a totally barren and useless life as far as the purpose of God for humanity is concerned! (Tit.1:16, 2Tim.3:8)

Yet, it is only he who take root downwards that can ever hope to bear fruits upwards...When we must still keep struggling with you to take God seriously or to abandon the works of the flesh, or to yield to the sanctifying

effects of personal consecration; how can you ever take root downwards, seeing that **"...you have no root in yourself"** (see Mk.4:17)? Even your current conviction in Christ, alas, is it not borrowed? Do you not believe in Christ, only because some other people do?

Roots, apart from being the major instrument used in sourcing for food and water in the tree, also serves as an anchor that 'ties down' the tree such that regardless of the storm, it will never be uprooted. (Matt.7:24-25, Ps.125:1)

In the same way, until you personally make up your own mind to walk with God (Ps.27:8, Ps.63:1-2), by bringing forth fruits that is meet for repentance (Matt.3:8 AMP, Isa.1:16-17) and take out time to personally (Ps.27:8, Phil.2:12) and constantly (Hosea 6:3, Col.1:9-10) deepen the roots of your conviction in Christ (Jn.20:31, 2Tim.1:12), you will never begin to bud, not to talk of producing fruits. (Jn.15:8, 16)

***This is because personal, obedient response to the instructions and commands of the Lord Jesus Christ (Jn.8:31 AMP) and constant yielding to the lordship (Rom.8:5), nudging (Rom.8:1 KJV), direction and guidance (Gal.5:16, 18) of the Holy Spirit is what produces a spiritual life.

Too many professing Christians are comfortable with the current arrangement in the body of Christ where they do not have to be responsible for anything in their lives. They merely concern themselves with church attendance, paying of tithes and offerings, shallow involvement in service groups when their jobs permit them and so on...

As such, this kind of a seeming spiritual life, impersonal and unreal, cannot produce any long lasting, or life changing Christian testimony that will be an asset to heaven (Phil.2:19-23) or a terror to hell! (Acts19:15)

Fruit that is meet for repentance...

[I.e. Proofs of genuine repentance instead of mere profession and outward show of religion]

1. The Testimony of a changed life. 2Cor.5:17

- a. A new attitude toward sin. (Deut.7:26, 1Jn.3:4-10 AMPC)
- b. A new perspective towards the world. (1Jn.5:19, James 4:4, 1Jn.2:15-17)
- c. New desires, (Heb.10:7, Jn.6:38)
- d. New Family and Friends (Eph.2:19, 1Jn.3:1-2)

e. A new relationship with God (Eph.2:3-6,)

2. Inward assurance of salvation. 1Jn.4:16-21, Eph.3:17-19

a. No more self condemnation. (Rom.8:1-2)

b. No more self-efforts (Gal.2:16, Acts 13:38-39)

c. No more self righteousness (Phil.3:9, Gal.3:10-12)

d. No more hypocrisy (compare Jer.17:5 & Isa.44:20 with Ps.51:6, **2Cor.13:5**)

3. Humble obedience to and complete dependence upon the Holy Spirit. Gal.5:16, 18, 25 AMP;

4. Steady and consistent Christian growth, as seen in:

a. A close, discipleship relationship with the Lord Jesus and His Human disciples (Matt.9:9 AMP, Lk.14:33, Matt.28:19-20 AMP, TVB, Acts 16:1-5)

b. Addiction (Josh.1:8, Ps.1:2) to the Word of God (Ps.119:9-11, Job 22:22), to meditation (Ps.119:97, Col.3:16), to prayer (1Pet.5:7, Phil.4:6-7) and to practice (James 1:21-25, Lk.11:27-28) of the Word of God.

c. Steady, Consistent and Practical change of life in every area (2Cor.5:15, 17) [in music, dressing, types of films, fashion, drinks etc.]

d. Emergence [or budding] of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal.5:22-23)

"Every branch in me that bears not fruit he takes away..."

This fearful warning is troubling...that it came out of the mouth of the Lord Jesus makes it doubly terrifying.

From His warning here, certain things are very clear:

a. That it is possible to be properly and genuinely saved and yet, one refuses to go on or make serious effort towards spiritual growth and maturity. (Heb.5:11-14; Heb.6:1)

b. Fruitfulness is not a matter of choice, instead it is a divine expectation (Isa.5:4, Lk.13:6-7) and a divine command. (Jn.15:8, 16; Isa.37:31)

c. That it is possible to begin with the Lord, and yet, despite all the efforts of the Holy Spirit, one could resist His works by refusing to bring forth fruit, with constancy and perseverance, until one becomes unfruitful. (Gen.6:3, 1Cor.3:1-3, Rom.8:6-8)

d. That the Lord has put the responsibility of being fruitful in the hands of each believer (Jn.15:4-6, Jn.8:31, 1Jn.2:6). While all the grace of God

(Isa.5:1-4), the constant help and comfort of the Holy Spirit (Jn.14:26 AMP) and the intercessory ministry of the Lord Jesus (1Jn.2:1) is freely and abundantly made available to the Christian, he alone has the responsibility to ensure that he is fruitful. (Jn.15:4-6)

e. That it is impossible to be barren and unfruitful and yet still remain a genuine Christian and an active part of the body of Christ. (Jn.15:2 & 6; compare with Gal.5:19-21 and 1Cor.6:9-10)

f. That what follows a life of consistent unfruitfulness and spiritual barrenness is removal from the body of Christ by the Lord Himself-both from here on earth and hereafter...(Jn.15:2, 6; **Matt.7:15-23, Heb.6:7-8)

g. That it is possible to remain barren and unfruitful in the visible church and even be promoted in it, while the Lord has rejected and removed one from His own body. (Matt.7:21-23, Lk.13:23-28; Titus 1:16, 2Tim.3:5)

Closing hymn: Just as I am without one plea

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot;
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt;
Fightings within, and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind;
Yes, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;

Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

LESSON TWO

THE DIVINE EXPECTATION FOR FRUITFULNESS

Opening Hymn: More holiness give me

More holiness give me,
More sweetness within,
More patience in suff'ring,
More sorrow for sin,
More faith in my Savior,
More sense of His care,
More joy in His service,
More freedom in prayer.
Come, my Savior, and help me,
Comfort, strengthen and keep me;
Thou each moment wilt save me,
Thou art saving me now.

More gratitude give me,
More trust in the Lord,
More zeal for His glory,
More hope in His Word,
More tears for His sorrows,
More pain at His grief,
More meekness in trial,
More praise for relief.

More victory give me,
More strength to o'ercome,
More freedom from earth-stains,
More quest for the throne,
More fit for the kingdom,
More useful I'd be,
More blessed and holy,
More, Savior, like Thee.

"He spoke also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in His vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the vinedresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down, why cumberest thou the ground?"

And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and fertilize it: And if it bears fruit, well: and if not, then after that you shall cut it down." Lk.13:6-9

"A certain man had a fig tree planted in His vineyard..."

Perhaps the very first point the Holy Spirit wants to highlight from this passage is this: **"...a fig tree planted in His vineyard..."** [compare Isa.5:7]

This is very important...

Where this fig tree is planted is in the very vineyard of the Lord...it was not planted on the road or on any neutral ground...Unlike many, who are planted on the wayside, or in thorns or in stony grounds (Mk.4:3-7), this fig tree was actually planted on the very best portion of fertile land-(see Isa.5:1-4) and within a well kept and well nurtured vineyard.

While environmental factors were primarily responsible for the stunted growth of the seeds planted by the wayside, on stony grounds and amidst thorns, the Lord insists that where He planted you is in the very midst of His own vineyard...not only is the portion of ground where this vineyard is located fertile [since the location is in the very presence of God, see Ps.92:13-14]; the very seed implanted in you is the best that God made (1Pet.1:23)!

"...My well-beloved has a vineyard on a very fruitful hill...and he dug it, and gathered out its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine..."
Isa.5:1, 2

"Yet I planted you a noble vine, wholly a right seed..." Jer.2:21

"I planted you like a choice vine from the very best seed..." GNB

Thus, having been planted in the very fertile vineyard of God and of an incorruptible seed, it is completely right, and expected of God, who made all the conditions for fruitfulness possible, to demand for fruits.

"A certain man had a fig tree planted in His vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon..."

"...and he came and sought fruit thereon..."

You might have wondered, when would the Lord come to seek fruit on the tree? Or in better words, when does the Lord come to seek fruit from our lives?

The answer is plain: at every fruit bearing [or harvest] season.

"While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest...shall not cease."

Gen.8:22

Since the Lord has planted the seed of His word in our lives, at every point in time when the seed should have germinated and should have begun to bear fruit, the Lord will come to see how progressive His word has become in our lives.

Now, how many times has the Lord been coming to examine you, seeking fruit, based on what He has implanted and invested in you over time, and yet you do not even know?

"A certain man had a fig tree planted in His vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none..."

Brethren, a very very sober question is this: Are you bearing fruit that is commensurate with the amount of the word of God that you have been exposed to? (Col.3:16)

Can you count how many fruits your life has produced as the word of God steadily comes to you?

Are you even fruitful at all? [2Cor.13:5]

"...and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none..."

"And he said unto them, ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." Lk.16:15

I plead with you in the name of the Lord, don't attempt to justify yourself in this matter...if the Lord said when He came, seeking fruit, He found none, will you believe Him?

Could He be saying He found no fruit while you are saying you found fruits in the same life where the Lord found nothing? Would you call bitter, worthless, wild, fleshy, sinful and worldly manifestations 'fruits' (Gal.5:19-21, 1Cor.6:9-10)? Can you enjoy a bitter orange or would you like a rotten mango as dessert after your lunch?

In the same way, should we consider the fruits of the flesh that you keep producing even after you are now speaking in tongues as what is pleasing to God? (1Cor.3:1-4) Have you forgotten that **"...they that are in the flesh cannot please God?"**

"I planted you like a choice vine from the very best seed. But look at what you have become! You are like a rotten, worthless vine." Jer.2:21
GNB

"And already the axe [of God's judgment] is swinging toward the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." Matt.3:10 AMP

"For soil that drinks the rain which often falls on it and produces crops useful to those for whose benefit it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God; but if it persistently produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned." Heb.6:7-8 AMP

"What more could have been done for my vineyard than what I have already done for it? When I waited for it to produce good grapes, why did it produce only sour, wild grapes?" Isa.5:4 GW

"For their vine is from the vine of Sodom, and from the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of poison, their clusters, bitter." Deut.32:32 AMP, see also MESSAGE.

As we can see from the aforementioned scriptures, God considers bitter, poisonous, wild, alien, rotten and worthless fruits equivalent to barrenness or no fruit at all since it is useless and harmful.

Thus, when the Lord came to seek for fruits and found none, what He is saying to us is that He found nothing that is useful to God's kingdom or that which is beneficial to fellow men...He found nothing that threatens or terrifies hell (Phil.2:19-22; Acts 19:11-16)!

Yet, He found aplenty, fruits of Sodom...fruits produced in and from a rebellious life, even when one is carrying the Bible...while most of our so called Christian lives are devoid of anything helpful, holy or edifying, as the Lord has come again to seek out fruits from your own life, will He still find habits and character traits that are injurious, poisonous and a cause of stumbling to the lives of others who are struggling to please God but are still looking up to you?

"A certain man had a fig tree planted in His vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the vinedresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none..."

"...Then said he unto the vinedresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none..."

For how long must the Lord come before you will be serious with your life or before you will realize that you are in danger of being cut off? Can you continue like this, producing fruits of worldliness (James 4:4, 1Jn.4:5), fruits of the flesh (Rom.8:6-8, Gal.5:9-21), fruits of sin (Rom.7:5, Deut.32:32), yea, fruits of Satan himself (Jn.8:44, 1Jn.3:8 AMP) and still remain a genuine Christian?

All men need to do is come a bit closer to your life, and all the charade you call Christianity will come crashing down...(Isa.29:13 AMPC, GNB; Isa.58:1-5 TLB, BM, TVB)!

No fruit that is meet for repentance can be seen, talk less of the fruits of the Holy Spirit!

"...Behold, these three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none..."

He has come to you for at least three years...how continually patient do you think He will be (Rom.2:4-11**AMP)? Do you think He has no plan or purpose when He saved you (2Tim.1:9, Rom.8:28-30)? Does any sensible person invest His resources on a business that will eventually become unprofitable?

Salvation is a free gift- yes, but for the receiver (Eph.2:8-9, Rom.4;25)! Salvation through Jesus Christ is the costliest, most expensive sacrificial investment ever undertaken by either God or man (see Rom.8:32, compare 1Jn.2:2 with Ps.49:6-9 TLB)!

Does any sensible person ever buys something he does not need? Will the Only Wise God redeem you without a reason (2Pet.3:9)? Will He clean you up, separate you from the contaminating and corrupting influence of the world system (Jn.17:14-17), from the delusions and deceits of the flesh (Tit.2:14, Rom.6:6-7), from the power (Rom.5:12-21), guilt (2Cor.5:17, 1Jn.4:16, 18-19), and consequences of sin (Gal.3:13, 1Jn.4:10) and from the dominion and oppression of Satan (Col.1:12-13, Lk.10:19) and it will all be for nothing (Rom.11:36, Eph.1:4-5, 11)?

Such that you could take eight years before the first evidences of Christian fruit could even start budding? Yet, all the while, you are a stumbling block to unbelievers from coming into the faith (Matt.23:13, Lk.17:1-2) and younger believers? If you are God, would you continue to invest in such a worthless life or wouldn't you rather cut it down so as to save cost and stop wasting resources?

Do you even know how costly it is to keep you alive, protected and progressing despite your rebellion, barrenness and fruitlessness? For you, it may be called 'free gift, mercy or grace" for God it is the number of angels, the number of spiritual battles won and the amount of resources allocated for your well being! Keeping each human being alive is a very costly business- even if you don't know (Heb.1:3b AMP, AMPC)!

"...Behold, these three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down, why cumberest it the ground?"

"...Look here! I have been looking for fruit on this fig tree every year for the past three years, but there have been no figs. Cut it down! It is just using up the nutrients in the soil for nothing!" T4T

"...Look at this tree. For three years, I've come hoping to find some fresh figs, but what do I find? Nothing. So just go ahead and cut it down. Why waste the space with a fruitless tree?" TVB

The urgent need for fruitfulness...

"In the early dawn the next morning, as He was coming back to the city, He was hungry. And as He saw one single leafy fig tree above the roadside, He went to it but He found nothing but leaves on it [seeing that in the fig tree the fruit appears at the same time as the leaves]. And He said to it, Never again shall fruit grow on you! And the fig tree withered up at once." Matthew 21:18-20 AMPC

"In the early dawn the next morning, as He was coming back to the city, He was hungry..."

Even in this new day and age, the Lord is hungry...He is hungry for a man, a man whose life He is pleased with and through whom He can bring help, deliverance and divine blessings to a lot of people...

But even if the Lord is hungry, He is not so desperate that He will now start picking food from the trash can...that He is in need of a man doesn't mean any or every man is usable. The word of God in 2Tim.2:19-21 is very clear. The Lord has a standard on the type of life He can eat from. If He must use a man, what He looks for first of all is fruits...

"...And as He saw one single leafy fig tree above the roadside, He went to it..."

That which draws His attention is fruits...

This is why the story of this fig tree [as it is true of many lives] is particularly tragic.

What drew Jesus, who was hungry to it is the promise of refreshment as He tastes of the fruit thereof. Jesus knew all things, so He knew that that tree was barren but He still went looking for fruit on it because it was pretending to be fruitful when it was actually barren. The entire purpose of this event is so that the Lord can teach us a lesson, unto whom the ends of the world has come... (Matt 13:49)

“...He went to it but He found nothing but leaves on it [seeing that in the fig tree the fruit appears at the same time as the leaves]...”

All the Master saw on this tree are just leaves...just leaves in the season when LEAVES & FRUITS are meant to be on it! This is the reason why it was cursed.

If you see a leafy fruit tree on a very sunny day when you are hungry and thirsty, naturally you will be delighted since it promises shade, fruits and cool breeze...just imagine what happens when you get to it and there is no fruit, no cool breeze- even the shade will be somewhat uncomfortable since the three [shade, fruit and breeze must go hand-in-hand].

In the same way, if all that the Lord and men can see about your life is the external leaves of religious life- church attendance, seeming commitment to church departments, payment of tithes and offerings and so on but your spiritual life is actually devoid of fruits...every other thing else will be a waste.

When Jesus drew close to that fruit tree, all He was seeking on it was fruits.

Even as you are praying and asking the Lord to notice you today, what do you really think He is seeking diligently in your life, if not fruits?

“You did not choose me; I chose you. And I gave you this work: to go and make fruit. I want this fruit to continue in your life. Then the Father will give you anything you ask for in My name.” Jn.15:16 ERV

“...And He said to it, Never again shall fruit grow on you! And the fig tree withered up at once.”

Some of us may wonder, *‘But why did the Lord curse that poor tree? Just because it has no fruit?’* So, I ask you, what is the purpose of a fruit tree that consistently remains barren or fruitless? The Bible gives us a good answer:

“For the earth which drinks in the rain that comes often upon it, and brings forth plants fit for them by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God. But that which bears thorns and briars is worthless, and is near unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.” Heb.6:7-8 KJ2

“Every branch in me that bears not fruit He takes away...if a man abides not in me, he is cast off as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”
Jn.15:2a, 6 KJ2.

The Damnable Portrait of the Unfruitful.

[explain with Jude 1:12]

1. Hidden Reefs (Lk.17:1-2 AMP, 2Tim.2:16-18)
2. Clouds Without water (Prov.25:14 TLB, Eph.4:14a)
3. Autumn trees without fruit (Heb.5:11-12, Titus 1:16)
4. Twice dead, plucked up by the roots (Col.2:6-7, Isa.37:31)
6. Raging waves of the sea (Gen.49:3-4a, James 1:6-8)
7. Wandering stars (Gen.4:12, 14; Hosea 9:17)

LESSON THREE

WHY FRUITFULNESS IS INDISPENSABLE

a. Labouring with God in accordance with His pattern is impossible without being fruitful [for the yoke-fellow must be of the same nature (Jn.3:6, Gen.5:1-3), he must have the same vision (Gen.13:14-17) and go in the same direction (Amos 3:3) as his other yoke fellow.]

b. Without FRUITFULNESS, we cannot escape causing others to stumble. Lk.17:1 AMPC, Rom.2:24.

c. The UNFRUITFUL is not fit for divine use [he will only damage the lives of others (Jer.23:11, 13-17; Matt.15:14, 2Chron.12:1), rebel against God (1Kgs.12:25-33) and ruin his own soul (Matt.16:26 AMP, 1Chron.10:13-14)...]

d. Spiritual authority cannot be exercised by the UNFRUITFUL. He isn't a threat to the Kingdom of Satan- and they know (Acts 19:13-16) [yet, he can exercise spiritual power- even as a backslider- see Judg.16:1-3, 1Cor.13:1-3; compare 1Kgs.11:1-11 with Eccl.2:8-9].

Spiritual Authority is the spiritual & legal right to rule and to issue decrees (Lk.10:19, Jn.20:21) and the ability to enforce compliance (Job 22:28, Matt.16:19). **Spiritual power** is merely a derivative of spiritual authority; therefore, authority is higher than power.

When one comes under the authority and control of the Holy Spirit [by letting Him produce His fruits in us], His authority and power comes upon us (see 2Cor.10:6).

e. The UNFRUITFUL, seeing that he remains in the flesh (Rom.8:6-8) and still a captive to its will and passions (Eph.4:22), is never really free from the manipulations or oppressions of the enemy (Jn.8:34, Rom.6:16).

[They only need to press a button in him and he will respond exactly as they want.]

f. The UNFRUITFUL will not enter into the kingdom- he will be lost on the way (Matt.23:13, Jn.15:2, 6; Lk.13:25)! [for he doesn't have the FRUITS required for the long, hard and hazardous journey (Gal.5:24, Jn.14:6 AUV) ahead to the Celestial city (1Cor.6:9-10).]

g. Spiritual growth is impossible since spiritual progress is actually measured in fruits developed and practiced as a lifestyle (Matt.7:16,20 NLT) [and not necessarily in gifts developed or exhibited-1Cor.13:1-3].

LESSON FOUR

THE FRUIT THAT GOD LOOKS FOR...

The fruit that God looks for is the fruit of His Spirit (Gal.5:22-23).

“But the fruit of the [Holy]Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes]...when the Holy Spirit controls our lives He will produce this kind of fruit in us: we love others. We are joyful. We are peaceful. We are patient. We are kind. We are good. We are ones whom others can trust. We are gentle. We control our behaviour. There is no law that says people should not think and act in such ways.” Gal.5:22-23 AMPC, TLB, T4T.

Nine kinds of fruit—all of these should be **"in us and abound."** Let us question ourselves whether we have any of them.

The Holy Spirit doesn't seek to abide with us and in us for just no reason...beyond the present clamour of men desirous of spiritual power and doing everything possible so that they can be filled with the anointing, His primary reason for coming into our lives is not so that we can feel 'powerful'!

This is why Jesus said **“By their fruits we shall know them”**; before God and in the spirit realm, men are not known by how much anointing they have—instead, they are identified by how much they have become like Jesus, and how much control they have allowed the Holy Spirit of God to exercise over them! (1Cor.13:1-3, Rom.8:9 NLT1st, AMPC)

If He truly is living in you, since He is not barren, the Bible says the first work that His presence within accomplishes is to produce fruits...fruits that will abide.

1. LOVE

“But the fruit of the [Holy]Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes]...when the Holy Spirit controls our lives He will

produce this kind of fruit in us: we love others..." Gal.5:22-23 AMPC, TLB, T4T.

The first and greatest of such fruits is love (1Cor.12:31 AMP, 1Cor.13:13) and this is always where the Holy Spirit seeks to begin His work...(Phil.2:13, Matt.22:36-40).

Love is the selfless, sincere, intentional, genuine, tender and compassionate devotion to the well being and happiness of another person (Rom.13:8-10 AMP).

He that does not know, believe and experience the love of God for himself (1Jn.4:16 AMP) can never love his fellow man (1Jn.4:10-11 AMP). He that is not ready to obey the first two greatest commandments [a). Love the Lord your God with all your heart; b). love your neighbour as yourself; see-Matt.22:35-37 AMPC] can never experience the love of God (Jn.14:21 AMPC)!

Fellow Christian, have you allowed the Holy Spirit to bring forth the fruit of love in you (Gen.6:3, Isa.63:10, Eph.4:30)? This is a serious question!

I am not asking if you can talk of love, but, do you feel it? I do not say, is love upon your tongue? But, does love rule your heart (Col.3:14 CEV, MSG; Jn.14:34)? Do you love God as a child loves its father (1Jn.4:19)? Do you love the Savior from a sense of gratitude to Him who bought you with His blood (Eph.2:1-6, 1Pet.1:18-23)?

Do you feel the love of our gracious Comforter, the Holy Spirit who dwells in you, if you are, indeed, a child of God (2Cor.13:14b, Jn.14:15-17)?

What do you know about love to the Brethren (1Pet.1:22, 1Thes.3:12)? Do you love the Saints, as Brothers and Sisters in Christ whether they belong to your Church or not? Whether they please you or not?

Brethren, do you love God's poor (Prov.19:17, 2Cor.8:1-5)? Do you love God's persecuted and despised ones? Answer this question in your heart, I beg you!

What about love to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt.13:44-46; Heb.11:13-16)? Do you love the souls of men (Ps.49:7-9 TLB)? Can you sit

still and be satisfied with being saved, yourself, while your neighbors are being damned by the thousands (Matt.9:36-38)?

Are your eyes never wet with tears for the unrepentant souls on their way to hell (Matt.7:13-14)? Do the terrors of the Lord never get hold upon you, when you think of men plunging themselves into perdition?

"He that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?" (1Jn. 4:20) Do you have this fruit, then? If not, "every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away." (Jn. 15:2)

2. JOY

"But the fruit of the [Holy]Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes] is this: ...we are joyful."

Joy is spiritual excitement based on the assurance of hope (Titus 3:7, Titus 2:13) on the preciousness (2Pet.1:2-4) and certainty (Titus 1:2, 1Jn.2:25) of the great promises of the Lord Jesus to us as believers.

Joy is an inward happiness, that is independent of outward circumstances (Hab.3:17-19, James 1:2-3).

It is also the emotional excitement, gladness, delight over blessings received or expected for self and for others.

Does your Christianity ever give you joy (Acts 16:23, 25; Heb.10:34)? Is it mere matter of duty, a heavy chain for you to drag about like a convict, or is your Christianity a musical instrument for you to dance to the tune of?

Do you ever rejoice in Jesus Christ? Do you rejoice in the certainty, preciousness and beauty of His promises to you (Jer.15:16, Neh.8:8-12, Acts 16:16-25)?

Do you know what the *"joy of the Lord"* means? Does it ever give you joy to think that He is the same even when the fig tree does not blossom and the herd is cut off from the stall (Hab.3:17-19)?

Do you feel a joy in reading the promises of God's Word?

Do you have a joy in secret prayer—that joy which the world never gave you—and cannot take away from you?

Have you a secret joy, like a spring shut up, a fountain sealed which is only open to you and your Lord, because your fellowship is with Him and not with the rebellious sons of men?

Just like Charles Haddon Spurgeon said: "**He that never mourned because of sin has never repented** (James 4:8-9), **but he who has never rejoiced because of forgiveness cannot have seen the Cross!**" (Acts 16:29-34)

It is important that we ask you, have you allowed the Spirit to produce this fruit of joy in you (Gal.5:22 AMP, TLB)? May the Lord give it more and more to you! If you have never had it, then hear the sentence—"**Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away.**"

3. PEACE

"...when the Holy Spirit controls our lives He will produce this kind of fruit in us: ...we are peaceful..."

Peace is the state of quietness, rest, repose, harmony, order, assurance and confidence in the midst of turmoil and strife (Isa.32:17, Isa.26:3), produced by the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer; whom, having been reconciled with God (Rom.5:1-2, Eph.2:14), is assured that all things will eventually work for His good since he loves God and he is called according to divine purpose (Rom.8:28, Phil.4:6-7).

This peace that passes all understanding is produced by the Holy Spirit as He becomes Lord over the life of the Christian. Since God who knows all things, and is everywhere present and can do all things is the same person who greatly and intensely love him, why should he be troubled about anything he can gladly talk to God about?

It is the fruit the blessed feed upon in Heaven—peace with God (Rom.5:1), peace of conscience (2Cor.1:12 AMP), peace with one's fellow men (Acts 24:16)—"**the peace of God which passes all understanding.**(Phil.4:7)"

The peace which "**keeps the heart and mind through Jesus Christ.**"
"Great peace have they which love Your Law: and nothing shall offend

them” (Ps.119:165).“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom.5:1).

As Preacher’s Homilectics Commentary rightly puts it: *Peace is the holy calm breathed into the soul by a pardoning God. It is the gift of Christ, giving rest to the soul in the midst of external agitations.*

“It is a settled quiet of the heart, a deep, brooding mystery that ‘passeth all understanding,’ the stillness of eternity entering the spirit, the Sabbath of God. It is the calm, unruffled brow, the poised and even temper which Christian goodness wears.”

Dear brethren, some of us make so much noise about religion, and yet never have peace of conscience! This is what the religious never can obtain.

"We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle" of outward ordinances, and carnal, vainglorious, pompous religious ceremonies (Heb.13:10)

Of our altar, where the finished sacrifice is eaten as a peace offering, they cannot eat. (Rom.10:1-4 AMPC)

They find no peace after all their church services, prayer and deliverance ministrations... Poor slaves of sin, they go through life in perpetual turmoil, skeptically hoping in unbelief that the next moment is their ‘breakthrough’!

Hoping once they have acquired their next accumulation, they will finally have peace and contentment!

When finally they go down to their graves, it is in as much bondage as they lived—in the dreadful torments of worry and doubt...with no certain assurance of where they will end up—no delightful prospect of waking up in the likeness of Christ! They have no sense of the truth of that glorious passage...(1Cor.15:19)

As Spurgeon said:

“He who knows no peace with God has good need to tremble” ()n.3:18 AMPC, Mk.16:16).***

4. LONG-SUFFERING [PATIENCE]

“...when the Holy Spirit controls our lives He will produce this kind of fruit in us:...we are patient...”

Long-suffering is patient endurance; it is to bear long with the frailties, offenses, injuries, and provocations of others (Matt.5:38-48), without murmuring, repining, or resentment (1Pet.2:20 AMPC).

I fear there are many church-goers who have very little of this, a quality which may be viewed in many aspects.

There is patience, which bears God's chastising hand and does not turn against Him, but says, **"The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."**

This is long-suffering towards God— suffering long (Job 1:6-22).

Then there is long-suffering towards man—bearing persecution without apostasy (Matt.5:44). Bearing slander and reproach without revenge (Matt.5:11-12, Rom.12:12)—bearing the errors and mistakes of mankind with tender compassion (Col.3:13, Eph.4:2, 32).

The heart that is at peace with God will have patience with men...thus, he is able to **“...bear all things...”** (1Cor.13:7).

The Believer should have much of this.

Some of us, may be naturally quick or hot-tempered. Divine Grace must overcome angry passions. It is not enough for you to say, *"I cannot help it."*

The fruit of the Spirit is long-suffering—you must help it!

If there is no change in your temper, there is no change in you at all—you still have need to be converted (Eph.4:26, Matt.18:21-22).

If the Grace of God does not help you, in a measure, to keep under that temper which will be there, but which you must restrain, you have need to go to God and ask Him to make sound work in you, or there is no work of Grace there as of yet. We must have longsuffering—or we may be found fruitless—and then woe unto us.

5. KINDNESS [GENTLENESS]

“But the fruit of the [Holy]Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes]...when the Holy Spirit controls our lives He will produce this kind of fruit in us: ...We are kind...” Gal.5:22-23 AMPC, TLB, T4T.

Kindness is primarily thoughts, words and actions based on and mixed with empathy (Ps.103:13-14, Col.3:12-13), compassion (Matt.9:36, Matt.15:32) and a zeal to help others and do things for them for their benefit and at the expense of the doer (Acts 20:34, 1Jn.3:17).

The Christian is a man of kindness. He recognizes his kindness with his fellow men. He wishes to treat them as his own family. He has compassion for those who are suffering. He endeavors to make his manners kind and courteous.

He knows that there is a natural offense in the Cross to carnal men. He does not wish, therefore, to make any offense of his own. (2Cor.6:3)

He desires in his own life not to be morose, suspicious, harsh, proud or domineering, but he seeks to imitate his Master, who said of Himself, **"Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."**

The Believer in Christ should be gentle towards all men with whom he comes in contact. This is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and, I may add, a fruit of the Spirit in which many so called Christians are terribly deficient.

If you have it not, you have not this fruit of the Spirit—and what says the text, **"Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away!"**

6. GOODNESS

“But the fruit of the [Holy]Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes]...when the Holy Spirit controls our lives He will produce this kind of fruit in us: ...We are good...” Gal.5:22-23 AMPC, TLB, T4T.

Goodness is benevolence, that is, the disposition to do good. It is goodwill and being charitable. It is the love of mankind, accompanied with a desire to promote their happiness.

It is also generosity—not merely kindness of manner—but being bounty of heart. It is the state of being good, kind, virtuous, benevolent, generous, and God-like in life and conduct.

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.” Acts 10:38

If you are truly filled with and controlled by the Holy Spirit, you will only ever constantly go about doing good...you will constantly seek for opportunities with which to do good to men (Lk.6:35, 1Thes.5:15), especially those of the household of faith (Gal.6:10, Matt.25:40).

The kind of Christianity where you are constantly fighting neighbours, where people are glad that you are not around, the kind of Christianity that has not changed your habits and general outlook of life, even after six, seven years that you have been reading the Bible cannot save you. It will damn you (Titus 1:16).

In further explaining what goodness is, we can use the example of when the Lord said to Moses, “**...I will make all my goodness pass before you...**”; during this same encounter, God passed before Moses and proclaims: “**The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty.**” Ex.34:6-7 RSV

Thus, all these qualities: *mercy, grace, love, faithfulness, forgiveness, righteousness and justice* is what it means for the Lord to be good. It is these same combination at work in us as a lifestyle that causes the fruit of goodness to be evident to all who comes our way.

If you have not this fruit of the Spirit in some measure I beseech you to remember the solemn words of the text, “**Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away.**”

7. FAITHFULNESS

Faithfulness means being trustworthy, reliable and dependable (Matt.24:45-47).

If the Holy Spirit truly rules over, controls and directs your life, He will produce as a fruit, faithfulness, in your life. His work in this area can be broken into the following categories—faithfulness to God, faithfulness to conscience, faithfulness to the truth and faithfulness to our fellow man.

a. Faithfulness to God. Matt.25:21, Rev.2:10.

b. Faithfulness to conscience. 1Tim.1:19 & Jn.3:20-21 Compare with 1Tim.4:2

c. Faithfulness to the truth. 1Tim.3:9, 2Cor.2:17

d. Faithfulness to our fellow man. Phil.2:20-22

8. MEEKNESS [HUMILITY]

Meekness is not only humility in man's outward behaviour alone, nor is it just humility in his relations with his fellow man or his mere natural disposition.

Rather, it is an inwrought grace of the soul, and the expressions of it are primarily toward God. It is an attitude of spirit where we accept God's dealing with us as good and we do not dispute or resist (Job 1:8-22).

Thus, this fruit is more of brokenness of spirit and contrition of heart [which encompasses all the other graces such as humility, gentleness and meekness] (Isa.66:1-2, Isa.57:15, **Ps.51:17**).

As Christians, we must be as harmless as a dove. In our Master's service and battles, we must be bold as a lion (Prov.28:1), but for ourselves and for our own causes, tender, gentle, shunning debate, loving quietness, ready to take a rebuke rather than to administer one—feeling ourselves to be weak and frail.

Moses was the meekest of men, often provoked, but only once speaking unadvisedly with his lips. It is marvelous how he bore with the people! They were the most provoking people in the world, except for ourselves—but yet, like as a nurse is tender with a sick child—even so was he with a foolish people.

When you are truly broken [which is really an evidence of the Holy Spirit's conquest of your soul and the daily crucifixion of the flesh; see (Ps.51:17, Ps.34:18, Matt.5:3)], you will definitely be humble before all men and your general disposition will be one of humility—for when a man is truly yielded to God, he sees God the way He really is (Job 42:1-6), he sees himself the way he really is (Isa.6:5) and he equally sees his fellow man the way he really is (Gal.5:14)...

9. TEMPERANCE [SELF CONTROL]

Temperance or self control, is now generally used in respect to meats and drinks, but which has a far wider significance, though it includes that.

The man who indulges the appetites of the flesh and cannot control himself as to eating and drinking need not even pretend to be a Christian (Phil.3:19, 1Pet.4:3). He has first to prove that he is equal to a beast before he may pretend to be a child of God (Prov.23:1-2)!

He has first to show that he is a man before he may claim to be a Christian. Those who indulge in drunkenness shall drink of the wine of God's wrath before long, and then how bitter will their sweet wines be to them!

How will that which has been sweet to the throat be as poison in the heart forever and ever! If we have not that kind of temperance, evidently we can know nothing about true religion.

But there must be an equal self control in all other things, a self control in your dress , in your expenditure, in your temper and, indeed, in every act (1Cor.9:25-27).

There is a moderation to be observed , a narrow road to be followed which the tutored eye of the spiritual man can see and which it is a fruit of the Spirit for the spiritual foot to tread. God grant that we may have these fruits.

Beloved in the Lord, I am persuaded that no Truth of God needs to be pressed more upon my own soul and yours than this— **that the presence of these manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit is the only test of our being in Christ.** (Matt.7:20)

It is so easy for us to wrap ourselves up in the idea that attention to religious ceremonies is the test, but it is not so, for, **"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees,"** who were the most religious people of their day, **"you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven."** (Matt.5:20)

I know it is easy to think, *"Well, I don't drink, neither do I fornicate. I am no rogue. I do not do this or that."* This is not the matter! Remember that the judgment will not be about those things which you do not do, but about positive things.

How does Jesus Christ put that judgment matter? **"I was hungry and you gave me no meat. I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink. I was a stranger and you took Me not in. Naked, and you clothed Me not. Sick, and in prison, and you visited Me not."** The absence of these manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit was that which condemned the lost.

"Every tree," says the Lord, **"that bears no fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire."** He does not say, *"Every tree that bears bitter fruit, or sour grapes,"* but **"Every tree that brings forth no fruit."**

Fruitless church goers, tremble! I may not speak so as to make this Truth of God penetrate as I wish it should into your inmost souls, but I pray the eternal Spirit to make it like fire in the bones of every deceived man and woman! (Jer. 20:9)

If my Lord shall come to you, my Hearer, day after day, as He once came to the fig tree, and should find leaves upon you and no fruit, I tell you He will say, **"let no fruit be on you forever,"** and you shall wither away. What is His own parable The master of the vineyard said to the husbandman, **"Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none: cut it down; why cumbersome it the ground?"**

LESSON SIX

OPPOSITES OF THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

[Evidence of the absence of the lordship, rulership and leadership of the Holy Spirit in the life of the 'professing Christian']
Rom.8:9 TLB

May the Lord help us to pray over our lives like St. Augustine constantly prayed for himself: "Lord, deliver me from that evil man, myself."

Seeing that we have no worse enemy than the flesh, and that if we put all the other enemies of godliness together [I.e. Sin, the world and Satan], they cannot really defeat us until the evil, hidden man within, Mr.Flesh, the old me or you, opens the gate from inside us...this is the reason why we must pay a very close attention to the fruits of the flesh, which, naturally are the opposites of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Just as the Holy Spirit is not barren [since if He is active in a life, that life will produce fruits], in the same way, the flesh is not idle! Where he is given freedom and allowed to prosper, he will produce several fruits of sin in order to make his presence known!

When we resist the work and control of the Holy Spirit within us, these are the things our lives will produce:

1. HATRED 1Jn.2:9-11, 1Jn.3:14-15
2. DEPRESSION [worldly sorrow] 2Cor.7:10 [note NTSK & Dake notes]
3. UNREST [perpetual restlessness within] Isa.48:22
4. IMPATIENCE Judg.14:1-3,
5. UNKINDNESS. Titus 3:2-3
6. WICKEDNESS. Rom.1:29-31

7. UNFAITHFULNESS. Prov.25:19

8. PRIDE. Prov.16:5

9. INCONTINENCE [lack of self control] 2Tim.3:3

LESSON SIX

FRUITFULNESS: THE BASIS FOR IDENTIFICATION

[Spirituality or godliness has often been mistaken for the presence of gifts, but the Lord Jesus corrected this impression when He said fruitfulness is actually the basis for identification. **Matt.7:14-20.**

1. Aaron [divinely ordained chief priest]
2. Balaam [divinely inspired prophet]
3. Samson [supernatural strength, judge of israel]
4. Solomon [divinely gifted with wisdom, ended up an immoral and adulterous person]
5. Judas Iscariot [apostle of Christ, given power over devils and all kinds of diseases; ended up a betrayer and died by suicide]

LESSON SEVEN

THE SUPREMACY & SUPERIORITY OF FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT OVER GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

1Cor.13:1-3, 8, 13.

i. Superiority over vocal gifts-1Cor.13:1 [speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues and prophecy] “**...And though I have the gift of prophecy...**”

ii. Superiority over power gifts- 1Cor.3:2 [Faith, the gifts of healing, the working of miracles] “**...And though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains...**”

iii. Superiority over revelation gifts- 1Cor.13:2 [word of wisdom, word of knowledge & discerning of spirits] “**...and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge...**”

LESSON EIGHT

THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY FRUITFULNESS

Heb.6:9

THE BLESSING TO BE FRUITFUL..

Blessing is the convergence of God's mercy, favour and grace upon a person's life; these makes it possible for him to achieve the unachievable and do the impossible.

God's mercy is that divine attribute which makes Him treat us better than we deserve, overlook our failings and weaknesses and in great condescension and compassion, lift us up beyond our failures, weaknesses and faults and make us exactly that which He wants us to be.

God's favour are the privileges, advantages and opportunities that He reserves for His own select people; and these privileges are not readily available to the rest of mankind.

God's grace is His help and assistance, when we need it, where we need it and to the extent we need it. It is God working in us both to will and to do His own good pleasure. It is being able to do all things because of Jesus Christ who infuses in us the inner strength needed.

When God blessed man to "...**Be fruitful...**"; all He did by speaking this blessing into Adam's life is simply to empower Him to prosper in that which the Lord has spoken into His destiny.

Since blessing is actually the convergence of God's mercy, favour and grace upon a person's life; it is therefore correct to say, blessing is divine empowerment to prosper according to God's purpose and promise.

THE COMMAND TO BE FRUITFUL...

God, having made all necessary provisions for man's fruitfulness, He then commanded him, "Be fruitful..."; it is important to know that what we are really talking about here is not how Adam became fruitful...instead, we are merely drawing examples from his life and his time in order to see the command we are given in Christ about fruitfulness; which command the Lord is still expecting us to obey today!

THE RESULTS OF FRUITFULNESS

- 1. "...MULTIPLY..." [MULTIPLICATION]**
- 2. "...REPLENISH THE EARTH..." [REPLENISHMENT]**
- 3. "...SUBDUE IT..." [SUBJUGATION]**
- 4. "...HAVE DOMINION..." [DOMINION]**

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