

A FRUITFUL ATTITUDE

Int.

1. Aim: To explain the fruit of the spirit in our attitudes.
2. In Galatians 5:22-23 Paul writes: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."
 - a. This "fruit of the Spirit" that Paul is writing about is what all Christians should be striving to attain.
 - b. The "fruit of the Spirit" is produced by allowing the Holy Spirit to control One's life through the Word (Bible). This is after we become a Christian. Contrasted to WORKS OF THE FLESH!
3. When these characteristics are seen in us then Christ lives in us. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal 2:20).
4. A Christian life is the fruit which the Spirit produces if we submit our wills to the will of God through earnest study and practice of His holy word.
5. Today we want to look at the attitude that is required of the Christian in regard to: (1) Fellow Man (2) Myself (3) and the results that these attitudes will bring to our lives.

Discussion

I. A FRUITFUL ATTITUDE TOWARD MY FELLOW MAN (4 characteristics)

- A. A fruitful attitude toward my fellow man includes an attitude of love.
1. This is the agape love that caused God to send His Son for our salvation. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:16
 2. This is not a mere emotion.
 3. This is the love that doesn't depend on the worthiness of it's object. It constantly seeks the best for others, friend or foe.
 4. Love is the basis of all godly traits and is emphasized by being placed first.
 - a. God is love, Christ is his great demonstration of love.
 - b. When Christ dwells in our hearts we will also be people who practice love.
 - c. The other parts of the fruit of the Spirit can never flourish nor mature without love (1 Cor 13).
 5. John 13:35 "By this shall that ye are my disciples, if ye also love one another."

The badge or sign of disciples is loving one another.

 - a. Military men are known by their uniforms
 - b. Sports teams are known by their colors & symbols
 - c. The sign that people can notice that we are Christians is because of the love we have for one another.
 - d. Song : "WE ARE ONE IN THE SPIRIT" "They'll know we are Christians by our love"....
 - e. A fruitful attitude toward my fellow man includes an attitude of love.

- B. A fruitful attitude toward my fellow man includes an attitude of **longsuffering**.
1. This word means literally "long-tempered" not short tempered.
 2. This is the passive and patient endurance of sufferings and trials.
 3. This is an attitude of being slow to anger and vengeance toward enemies, as God is toward us - 2 Pet 3:9
 4. God is longsuffering. - Ex. 34:6 "...the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."
 5. Christ showed longsuffering on the cross. "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots" (Lk 23:34).
 6. As Christians we are to be godly or godlike and this includes longsuffering for our fellow man.
 7. Col. 3:12 "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering:"
 8. Longsuffering comes from a heart of love. It is loving our fellow man in spite of their weaknesses and failures.
 9. Love is patient - 1 Cor. 13:4 "Charity suffereth long."
- C. A fruitful attitude toward my fellow man includes an attitude of **kindness** (**Gentleness**)
1. This is a gentle and benevolent disposition toward others. The attitude that should control thought, word and deed in the Christian. A kindness that forces me to tell you when you are in sin, and that forces you to tell me when I am in sin.

2. God and His Son are our examples. "And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph 4:32).
 3. Kindness does not forbid strongly standing for the Truth and opposing error. Christ was perfectly kind, yet never shrank from exposing error.
 - a. Remember the money changers at the temple who were physically driven out by our Savior? John 2
 - b. Remember Paul who was an inspired man publicly named men who were in error. "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Tim 1:19,20).
 4. Gentleness makes for peace.
 - a. You never resent people being kind to you
 - b. You never say unkind things about people for being gentle with you in their association.
- D. A fruitful attitude toward my fellow man includes an attitude of **goodness**.
1. This goes beyond passive endurance or benevolent disposition.
 2. This is the active principle of doing good things for others. "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).
 3. To be like our Lord we must be "zealous of good works" - Tit 2:14

II. A FRUITFUL ATTITUDE IN MYSELF (2 characteristics)

- A. A fruitful attitude in myself includes an attitude of meekness.
1. This is the word that the ancients used to describe a wild horse that had been tamed to the bit and bridle. Still had strength but now was gentle.
 2. But meekness is power or strength under control
 3. Moses was strong, yet controlled. "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" Numbers 12:3
 4. The Lord was the perfect example of meekness. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt 11:29).
- B. A fruitful attitude in myself includes an attitude of temperance (self-control)
1. This is a necessary attitude to be able to practice all of the others
 2. This term literally means to hold oneself in.
 3. At the root of self-control is the daily self-denial to which the Lord called all who would be His disciples. "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk 9:23).
 4. Self-control will keep us free from the moral corruption all about us. "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor 9:27).

III. WHAT A FRUITFUL ATTITUDE TOWARD MAN AND IN MYSELF WILL BRING TO OUR LIVES (3 characteristics)

- A. A fruitful attitude will bring an attitude of **joy** to our lives.
1. This is the spiritual delight and exuberance we have in Christ.
 2. This is the natural product of gratitude to God and His Son for the remission of our sins!!!
 3. The apostles were beaten and forbidden to preach, but they "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer" (Acts 5:41).
 4. Paul rejoiced and urged the Philippians to rejoice even while he was in prison. "Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all" (Phil 2:17).
 5. In life, we quickly see that the happy people are the "givers" not the "getters."
- B. A fruitful attitude will bring an attitude of **peace** to our lives.
1. This is the absence of strife and division.
 2. God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the cross, and the Gospel are all concerned with peace.
 - a. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder and his name shall be called wonderful counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa 9:6).
 - b. "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Eph 6:15).
 - c. "Now the God of peace be with you all" (Rom 15:33).
 3. It is our privilege to know peace "which passeth all understanding" (Phil 4:7).

4. When we have the correct attitudes of life we will be at peace with God, with our fellow man, and have peace in the church.

C. A fruitful attitude will bring an attitude of **faithfulness** to our lives.

1. This is loyalty, dependability and reliability.
2. This is faith working through love. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal 5:6).
3. God requires one thing, FAITHFULNESS.
4. A study of Hebrews 11, will give one a great understanding of faithfulness.
Complete submission to the will of God. NO-ONE CAN BE SAVED WITHOUT COMPLETE SUBMISSION AND OBEDIENCE TO ALL THE WILL OF GOD.

CONCLUSION

1. Paul emphasized the beauty and universally recognized worth of these 9 traits by stating that there is no law against them.
2. Only these attitudes will produce the life that God expects us to live.
 - a. A fruitful attitude toward my fellow man includes: love - longsuffering - kindness and goodness
 - b. A fruitful attitude in myself includes: meekness -- temperance (or self control)
 - c. These attitudes will bring to our lives: Joy -- Peace - and faithfulness
3. Do you have these attitudes in your life?