

FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (GALATIANS 5:22,23) 07/06/14
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ATCHISON, KS PASTOR LEE HENDON

I HAD JUST MOVED INTO MY NEW HOUSE ON IRONBRIDGE PL IN EULESS, TX. BEAUTIFUL NEW HOUSE IN A NEW SUBDIVISION OUTSIDE F.W. TX. I DID NOT HAVE ANY TREES IN MY YARD BUT THE HOUSE ACROSS THE CUL-DE-SAC FROM ME, WOW, IT HAD 6 HUGE RED OAKS! AT LEAST 75-100 YEARS OLD I'D SAY. ONE DAY WHEN I CAME HOME FROM WORK, MY NEIGHBOR HAD CUT DOWN 5 OF THEM & WAS STARTING ON THE 6TH ONE. I COULD NOT BELIEVE MY EYES, YES I AM A TREE HUGGER - SO I RACED OVER THERE TO ASK, "WHY ARE YOU CUTTING DOWN THOSE GORGEOUS RED OAKS?"

PETE REPLIED, "***THEY DON'T BEAR FRUIT.***"

I EXCLAIMED, "PEOPLE LOVE THOSE HUGE RED OAKS!"

HE SAID, "***GONNA PLANT ME SOME FRUIT TREES.***" END OF CONVERSATION - THAT WAS WHAT HE DID - PLANTED FRUIT TREES.

PETE WAS A FAIRLY RECENT IMMIGRANT FROM THE MIDDLE EAST. *MAN, THEY TAKE FRUIT TREES SERIOUSLY*, I THOUGHT TO MYSELF. THE SCARCITY OF FERTILE LAND DEMANDS IT OVER THERE. THEN I READ WHAT ST. PAUL SAID ABOUT BEARING FRUIT. WOW! LIFE BY THE SPIRIT BEARS FRUIT - **SHADE TREES BEWARE!** WHAT KIND OF TREE ARE YOU - ***SHADE TREE OR FRUIT TREE?*** YOU CAN TELL, YOU KNOW, BY THE FRUIT ***OR NOT*** ON THE BRANCHES.

WE CONTINUE ON THE QUEST - HOW WOULD WE KNOW & WHAT WOULD IT TAKE FOR US TO BE **SET ON FIRE** BY THE HOLY SPIRIT? HOW WOULD WE EVEN KNOW THE DIFFERENCE? WE HAVE DISCOVERED THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS & WE WOULD MANIFEST THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. WHEN WE HAVE BEEN BORN OF THE SPIRIT & THE WIND WE WILL SURELY **BEAR FRUIT** OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. JESUS SAID, "YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN, BORN OF THE WIND & THE SPIRIT." YEP, WE EACH BELONG IN THE FRUIT ORCHARD OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BEARING HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT ALL OVER THE PLACE. INDEED, WE DO NOT KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT IF WE ARE NOT BEARING HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT: **LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOOD-NESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS & SELF-CONTROL**. PAUL STATED THERE ARE NO LAWS AGAINST BEARING THIS FRUIT - IF THIS FRUIT WAS ALL THERE WAS - THERE WOULD BE NO NEED FOR RELIGIOUS OR SECULAR LAWS AT ALL! WANT TO KNOW HOW TO EMPTY OUT ALL THE JAILS - BEAR FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT! WHO IS GOING TO PASS A LAW AGAINST TOO MUCH LOVE, JOY, PEACE, ETC? NO ONE! NO SUCH THING AS TOO MUCH OF THESE.

WE ARE TO BEAR HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT FREELY & ABUNDANTLY FOR THE NOURISHMENT OF THE CHURCH & THE WORLD. YOU & ME, WE ARE THE FRUIT BEARERS. WANT TO KNOW HOW TO BE SET ON FIRE BY THE HOLY SPIRIT - BEAR HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT! THE UNCHURCHED, DECHURCHED, SEEKERS WILL FLOCK TO OUR CHURCH BECAUSE THEY HUNGER FOR THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT - WHY WE HOLD BACK? THE REAL TEST OF A CHRISTIAN'S WALK WITH GOD IS IN THE FRUIT BEARING. THERE IS TO BE AN ABUNDANCE OF FRUIT 'ROUND HERE!

1ST OF ALL, FRUIT IS ALWAYS **VISIBLE**. DOES NOT DO ANY-ONE ANY GOOD AT ALL FOR US TO PROTEST THAT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS **IN OUR**

HEARTS. UNH-UNH, BABY, YOU GOTTA BEWARE OF **INVISIBLE** FRUIT BEARING. NO SUCH THING! WHEN FRUIT IS RIPE & LUSCIOUS YOU KNOW IT & YOU JUST GOTTA GET YOU SOME - CAUSE YOU CAN SEE IT - OTHERS CAN SEE IT!

IN MARK 11:12, “WHEN JESUS CAME FROM BETHANY HE WAS HUNGRY. SEEING IN THE DISTANCE A FIG TREE IN LEAF (FIG TREES BEAR FRUIT JUST PRIOR TO LEAFING OUT) SO HE WENT TO SEE IF HE COULD FIND ANYTHING ON IT. HE FOUND NOTHING BUT LEAVES & SAID TO IT, ‘MAY NO ONE EVER EAT FRUIT FROM YOU AGAIN.’ BY THE NEXT MORN, THE FIG TREE HAD WITHERED AWAY TO ITS ROOTS.” DO YOU GET IT? WELL, WHEN A FRUIT TREE IS PREVENTED, STOPPED FROM BEARING FRUIT - WHY IT IS DEAD AS FAR AS ITS PURPOSE. DOES NOT MATTER THE EXCUSES OR WHAT IT DID IN THE PAST - DEAD TO ITS ROOT. CUT IT DOWN - HARSHLY PUT - BUT THE SAME IS TRUE FOR US. WHEN THE MASTER PASSES BY WE ARE TO BE BEARING HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT - THE WORLD HUNGERS FOR THE FRUIT ONLY WE CAN BEAR!

WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES INTO OUR LIVES WE WILL BEAR **VISIBLE** FRUIT IN OUR LIVES. JESUS DOES NOT UNDERSTAND IT - EXPECT IT - TO BE ANY OTHER WAY. WE MUST NOT BE **SPIRIT-UAL TEASES** - YOU KNOW, LOOK LIKE, TALK LIKE CHRISTIANS BUT BEAR NO HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT IN OUR LIVING - “NO **SHADE TREE** CHRISTIANS” JESUS WOULD SAY. HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT IS EVIDENT & VISIBLE FOR ALL TO SEE. CHRISTIANS GET LAZE IN THE SHADE - WANT TO LIE DOWN IN THE SHADE - WANT TO PULL UP AN EASY CHAIR & REST. THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR **SHADE TREE CHRISTIANS**. WE GET EXCITED & PRODUCTIVE, SET ON FIRE, WHEN WE BEAR FRUIT! FRUIT IS **VISIBLE** FOR ALL TO SEE - HOW ELSE CAN IT BENEFIT ANYONE!?!

2ND FRUIT BEARING IS FOR THE **BENEFIT OF OTHERS** NOT FOR THE FRUIT TREE (OURSELVES). HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT BEARING IS MEANT FOR SOMEONE ELSE’S NOURISHMENT & ENJOYMENT - NOT OUR OWN. FRUIT THAT EXISTS FOR ITSELF - JUST SITTING ON THE SHELF - GETS ROTTEN - STINKS UP THE PLACE - MUST BE THROWN OUT W/ THE TRASH. AN APPLE, OR PEACH EXIST SO THAT SOMEONE CAN TAKE A BIT OUT OF IT & SAY, “**MMM-GOOD!**” HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT IS FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS.

I HAD THIS NEIGHBOR IN IRVING, TX, MR. WHITE WHO WAS 81. THING OF IT WAS HE COULD BARELY GET AROUND - HIS LEGS HAD JUST ABOUT GIVEN OUT ON HIM. ACROSS THE STREET FROM US THERE WAS A HOUSE THAT APPEARED TO BE ABANDONED & THE GRASS, STICKERS & WEEDS GREW TO ALMOST WAIST HIGH. IT WAS VERY NOTICEABLE THAT SOMEONE SHOULD DO SOMETHING & **MOW THAT YARD!** I THOUGHT ABOUT DOING IT MYSELF. BUT THINKING ABOUT IT IS NOT THE SAME AS BEARING FRUIT & DOING IT. EARLY ONE MORNING & INTO THE TEXAS HOT HEAT MR. WHITE STARTED MOWING THAT YARD - MOW A LITTLE & THEN REST ON A CHAIR OUT IN THE YARD UNTIL FINALLY THE DEED WAS DONE. HE PUT ME TO SHAME & I QUICKLY TOLD HIM I WOULD MOW IT THE NEXT TIME & I DID. MR. WHITE BORE GOOD FRUIT & SOMEONE ELSE BENEFITED FROM IT. COULD NOT HELP HIMSELF. WE EITHER SCATTER STICKERS OR STRAWBERRIES - OTHER PEOPLE EITHER GET HURT OR DELIGHT IN OUR FRUIT BEARING. HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT BEARING IS MOST SATISFYING WHEN WE GET NOTHING AT ALL FROM IT.

FINALLY, THE INTERESTING THING ABOUT FRUIT BEARING IS YOU CANNOT MAKE A PLANT BEAR FRUIT - TO BEAR FRUIT COMES FROM YIELDING TO ITS NATURE. HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT BEARING COMES FROM YIELDING TO THE FLOW & FORCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN US - THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTIVATES OUR FRUIT BEARING. WE GLORIFY THE HOLY SPIRIT WHEN WE BEAR MUCH FRUIT. WE ARE TO YIELD TO THE CREATIVE FORCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES. A FRUIT TREE YIELDS FRUIT OF ITS KIND AN APPLE TREE APPLES, A PEAR TREE PEARS, ETC. - IT JUST CANNOT HELP ITSELF. THE JUICES FLOWING IN ITS TRUNK & BRANCHES JUST CAUSE THE FRUIT TO BURST FORTH - GROW - MULTIPLY.

WE CANNOT FROM OUR OWN SELF-WILL & DETERMINATION DECIDE TO START BEARING HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT. WE BEAR HOLY SPIRIT FRUIT BY YIELDING TO THE MOVEMENT, POWER & PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES. WE ARE NOT TO FOCUS ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FRUIT BUT ON THE PRESENCE & POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES - THEN WE BEAR HIS FRUIT OF LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFUL-NESS, GENTLENESS & SELF-CONTROL - BECAUSE WE JUST CAN'T HELP BUT DO SO!
COME BY HERE, HOLY SPIRIT, COME BY HERE!