

## Bear Good Fruit

"You heard before about this hope in the true message of the Good News that has come to you. In all the world this Good News is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has in you since you first heard it and came to truly know God's grace." ~ Colossians 1:5b-6~

It's really easy to skim-read the opening of Paul's letters to the various congregations. He seems to always start with the usual "we thank God whenever we think about you" and launches into the areas that specific community is thriving and where they could use some work. This verse and a half out of Colossians is one such section. But it's imperative that we don't miss the message here:

As believers, we are called to bear good fruit.

Paul wrote to the church at Colossae saying that, when the people there first heard about Yeshua and believed in Him, they began to grow in their walks with the Lord and produce fruit. This is one of the areas that particular community excelled in. This demonstrates the high calling on our lives as believers: from the moment we believe, we cannot be the same. We cannot live a life according to our old desires. For those who have believed in the Lord their whole lives and can't remember a time when they didn't believe, this may seem confusing. But the point remains the same. All of us are called to live set apart – purified – in recognition of our redemption. We were bought with a price, and that should change everything.

Pause: How have you seen your life change since accepting Yeshua as your Savior? If you've been a believer for as long as you can remember, in what ways has living a life surrendered to the Lord impacted the way you live? Be honest with yourself. If you feel like nothing has really changed, think about that and write why you think that is below.

If our lives are supposed to look so different, what do we need to be looking for? In other words: how then, should we live?

## Read Galatians 5:22-26.

This passage makes it pretty clear that every aspect of our lives is affected by knowing and serving Yeshua. These attributes of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control encompass every area of our being. They are all-inclusive, meaning they require the submission of our thoughts, actions, words, and emotions to the God we are seeking to serve. Walking these out is the deepest form of submission and servitude. Living this way is a high calling, and we cannot accomplish it without our Helper, our Guider, and our Power - the Holy Spirit/Ruach haKodesh (*read John 14:26, John 16:13, and Acts 1:8*).

The manifestation of the fruits of the spirit in our lives are evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the presence of the Holy Spirit is the evidence of a life surrendered to God because of the sacrifice of His Son. We see evidence of this in *Acts 2*: take a moment to read that chapter now. We see here Peter rebuke the crowds in Jerusalem for discounting the work of the Spirit. In verse 37, the people were ashamed and asked what they should do. Peter responded with "*Repent, and let each of you be immersed in the name of Messiah Yeshua for the removal of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Ruach haKodesh*" (*Acts 2:38*). The evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence was an entire community coming together, lives changed and unified.

Over the coming weeks, we're going to explore each of the fruits of Spirit in detail. But for now, take some time to focus on two from the list that you feel the Lord has really grown and strengthened in you. Then, choose two that you feel convicted to develop as you walk more fully in the Spirit. Spend time praying about them and let the Lord lead you here. Your answer may look wildly different from someone else's. Let God guide you in this, and be encouraged that you are taking great steps to walk by the Spirit. Worship: Here are some songs you can meditate on while you pray about what God has for you next.

- ~ Tree by Justin Rizzo
- ~ Throne Room by Kim Walker-Smith
- ~ Build Your Kingdom Here by Rend Collective Experiment