Lesson 8

A NEW FRUIT

(A Change in My Attitudes & Actions)

How do you know the difference between an apple tree and an oak tree? Basically, one will produce apples and the other will produce acorns. An orange tree is distinguished from an elm tree in that it bears oranges. A banana tree produces a harvest of bananas and a grape vine yields grapes. It is obvious that a tree or vine is known by its fruit. So it is with the Christian. According to Jesus Christ, a saved person is distinguished from an unsaved person by his fruit. He said: "...By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20).

Before you were saved, God says your life produced bad fruit that would lead only to death (Romans 7:5). Now that you are joined to Jesus Christ (by faith in Him), you can "bring forth fruit unto God" (Romans 7:4). You also can now serve God in a new way -- by the power of the Holy Spirit who is in you! (Romans 7:6). God did not save you because of any "good works" you did for Him (Ephesians 2:8-9), but He did save you so that you would do "good works" for Him (Ephesians 2:10).

In this lesson, you will learn about the good new fruit that God wants to grow out of your life.

HOW DO I PRODUCE FRUIT!

Read John 15:1-5 and answer these questions:

1. The Lord Jesus Christ describes Himself as the "vine" and Christians as the "branches." What must Christians do to produce fruit? (John 15:4)

___

(Note: To "abide" in Christ means to remain close to Him in your daily life. Just as a branch receives necessary water and nutrients through the vine, so you receive spiritual strength and God's blessings by remaining in close fellowship with Jesus your Savior.)

2. What can you accomplish for God without abiding in Christ? (John 15:5)_____

3. You will have answers to prayer and be a fruitful Christian if you abide in Christ.

What must also abide in you? (John 15:7) __

4. When your life produces much fruit, who is glorified (honored)? (John 15:8)

_____

5. If you are a fruitful and obedient Christian, what will your life be completely full of?
(John 15:11) _____

6. Any fruit that Jesus produces through your life will not be temporary, but eternal. What phrase shows that your fruit will endure forever? (John 15:16)

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WHAT FRUIT SHOULD BE INSIDE MY LIFE?

Read Galatians 5:22-23 and notice the fruit that the Holy Spirit produces on the inside of a Christian. Write the fruit (in verses 22 or 23) next to the statement below:

1. When I am tempted to worry, the Spirit can produce the fruit of _____

2. When others treat me badly, the Spirit can help me to treat them with

_____

3. Rather than being selfish and hateful, the Spirit gives me the fruit of _____
4. Though times may be difficult, and life's pressures build up, the Spirit gives me the
ability to be __

5. Though others may sadly complain about situations and circumstances, the Spirit reminds me of God's goodness and gives me the fruit of _____

WHAT FRUIT SHOULD BE OUTSIDE OF MY LIFE?

God not only wants to produce fruit in your life, but He wants to produce fruit through your life. He wants you to be a blessing to others. When Jesus saved you, He gave you

eternal life. He wants to give this same gift to others also (I John 2:2; I Timothy 2:4, 6). God's plan for bringing people to salvation is to use Christians (this includes you) to tell them the good news ("gospel") that Jesus saves! (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8).

1. What did Andrew do immediately after he began following Jesus? (John 1:40-42)

2. What did Philip do when he found Christ and started following Him? (John 1:45)

3. When Nathanael doubted, what was Philip's answer? (John 1:46b)

4. What did the woman of Samaria do when she realized she had actually met the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ? (John 4:28-29)

5. When the people of Samaria came to Jesus because of the woman's testimony, what did Jesus tell his disciples to look at? (John 4:35)

(Note: The "harvest fields" that Jesus referred to were the large number of Samaritan people who were walking out of their city to meet Him.)

6. What is the result of "gathering fruit unto eternal life" (John 4:36)_____

7. Other than by your words, how will others know you belong to Jesus? (John 13:35)

8. Why must we tell people that Jesus is the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE?

(John 14:6)

SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU

Follow this helpful advice to be a fruitful witness for Jesus Christ:

1. Never be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16).

2. Keep your message focused on Christ and what He did on the cross to pay for our sins (John 3:30; I Corinthians 1:23). [Emphasize His death as a substitute payment for sinners - I Corinthians 15:3-4.]

3. Make it personal (Acts 22:3ff). Be willing to share what Christ did for you. This is your testimony about what you have "witnessed" in your life. Witnessing is the most effective means of sharing the Gospel.

Suggestion: Try to remember the events that led to your salvation. Then write out your testimony and memorize it so you can be ready to tell it to others. You can use this outline to write your testimony -

Before I trusted Christ (What I was)
How I trusted Christ (What I realized)
Since I trusted Christ (What He has done in my life)

4. Always be ready to share the Gospel (I Peter 3:15).

The following are some Scripture verses you should memorize and be ready to tell to others:

a. All men are sinners (Romans 3:10; 3:23; Isaiah 53:6).
b. There is a penalty (price) for sin (Romans 6:23; Revelation 21:8).
c. Man cannot save himself (Ephesians 2:8, 9).
d. Christ paid the penalty for sinners (Romans 5:8; I Corinthians 15:3-4; I Peter 3:18).
e. God now offers a free gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23b; Ephesians 2:8-9).
f. By trusting in (accepting) Christ, a person will be saved from hell (John 1:12; 3:16; Romans 10:13; Revelation 3:20).
g. We can be sure of eternal life (I John 5:11-13; John 5:24; 10:27-30).