

IDENTITY SERIES#3: 'THE FRUIT'

BEAR THE FRUIT: Cultivating Christlike Character

Key Verse: **Galatians 5:22-26**

There is an old saying that we know a tree by its fruits. An apple tree gives apples. A pear tree gives pears. We cannot expect pears from an apple tree and apples from a pear tree. We may be able to cross breed them and create a new fruit neither pear nor apple. But we cannot get from something what it does not contain within its essence.

Understanding our identity in Christ is critical to a fruitful walk with the Lord. At the point of salvation, we have a new life in Christ. We are a new creation. We have the seeds of God's potentials in us. We are meant to reflect God's character in and through what we say and do!

As a new creation in Christ, we are now born of a new seed which will in turn produce a new 'fruit' as described in Galatians 5:22-23. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

This fruit is the by-product of who we are in Christ!

Discussion Questions:

1. Read Galatians 5:22-24 and *name the 9 Fruit of the Spirit and discuss verse 24* "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" – ***What does the Bible say about us as God's people (people belonging to God and being now born of God) and how this can apply to us on daily basis.***

2. Read verse 25-26 and discuss about 'The Climate For The Fruit of the Spirit'

Certain climates are conducive to only certain fruit growing. In Queensland, we are able to grow certain crops and fruits such as bananas easier and better than some parts of Victoria where the climates are different. Certain fruits only grow in the certain kinds of climates and under certain conditions. Likewise, "Fruit of the Spirit" grow in only certain climates and under certain conditions.

How would you describe the climate and conditions conducive to the growth of the fruit of the Spirit?

[For leaders: the climate of the Word, prayer, praise, worship, fellowship with God's people, serving together. Also, it might mean pulling out some weeds so the sown seed can take root and grow. Be done with boasting, challenging one another, and envying – die to these.]

3. It's said that "We know a tree by its fruits. An apple tree gives apples. A pear tree gives pears. We cannot expect pears from an apple tree and apples from a pear tree."

In your opinion, what does the statement above mean? Where does the law of sowing and reaping come into play? Read Hosea 8:7

[For leaders: You always reap: what you sow, later than you sow, more than you sow. If you plant a lemon tree, you don't get papayas. So don't sow what is fleshly and expect to reap what is Spiritual. Sow a little bit of the fleshly and reap a whole lot – and later!]