



## *Chalmette Church of Christ*

*December 21, 2008*

### *“The Fruit of the Spirit”*

In God's infinite wisdom and love He gave mankind a diet that would be conducive to man's well-being and good health. Fruit is the most palatable of the basic food groups. It satisfies man's desire for sweetness. In the Genesis account we read, And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it (Gen. 2:16-17).

Despite the prohibition against eating of the fruit of one particular tree, all of the other trees were edible and for the enjoyment of man. Can you imagine how beautiful and lusciously delicious each fruit was? Fruit became a basic staple in the diet of man. Under the Levitical law, "Israel was to treat the fruits of horticulture with the most careful regard as a gift of God, and sanctify the enjoyment of them by a thank-offering." The most common fruits mentioned in the Bible are grapes, figs, and pomegranates. God promised the children of Israel much fruit once they possessed the land of Canaan.

Wherefore ye shall do my statutes and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety (Lev. 25:18-19).

Joshua made clear that the Lord kept His promise (Jos. 5:12). We should not be surprised to note that fruit in the Bible is often used metaphorically, both in a positive and negative way. Jesus said: Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them (Mat. 7:17-20). Furthermore, Jesus mandated that those in Him bear fruit. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (John 5:2). One way the child of God produces fruit is by

winning souls. "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise" (Pro. 11:30). Paul desired to have fruit or converts among those at Rome (Rom. 1:13).

Another way in which we produce fruit is through our lives (attitude, example, works, et al.). In Galatians 1:22-23, we read of various Christian qualities and attributes identified as the fruit of the Spirit: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23).

The spirit is the Holy Spirit—third member of the Godhead. Boles wrote: The chief work that the Holy Spirit has with Christians is to develop them into the likeness of Christ; the primary objective of the Holy Spirit dwelling in Christians is to reproduce in men the beauty and glory of the personality of Christ. We shall observe later how the Holy Spirit both indwells and develops the child of God into the likeness of Christ. First, let us notice the Spirit's fruit.

#### **The Fruit of the Spirit**

**The fruit of the Spirit is love.** Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). This love, which is to be produced in the heart of a Christian, is different from anything this world knows. Jesus said He was giving a new commandment. How was it new? After all, man had always been commanded to love (Deu. 6:5). The love commanded by Christ was *agape* love. It is a love that puts the interest of another ahead of his own. This is the kind of love God has for man. "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). The love Christ has for us, and in turn we are to have toward others is:

1. Selfless. Nothing is so empty as a self-centered life, yet nothing is so centered as a self emptied life. Jesus displayed this kind of love during His earthly sojourn, for it was part of His divine nature (Phi. 2:6-7). Do you maintain a selfless love at home, in the church, or in the workplace?

Jesus demonstrated sacrificial love when He died for the church (Eph. 5:25). Thusly, husbands and wives are to die to self, so that lovingly each one may serve the other (1 Cor. 7:4). Marriage has been described as a story where the hero and the heroine both die in the first chapter.

2. Steadfast. *Agape* love was demonstrated by Jesus despite the hatred of His enemies toward Him or the betrayal of His dearest friends. Even though the disciples forsook Him, Jesus loved them to the end (John 13:1). What is a real friend? One who comes in when the rest of the world goes out. A person who will stick by you through the good and the bad is a loving friend. The Proverbs writer said, "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Pro. 18:24). We know this friend to be Jesus Christ. Do you easily give up on people? Not if you love them steadfastly.

3. Serving. Jesus was willing to serve at the lowliest task. In John 13, He, the Son of God, washed the disciples feet. After all, Jesus clearly stated His mission when He said,

And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (Mat. 20:27-28).

True Christianity does not serve others to be seen but, rather, seeks to meet the needs of others, even above one's own needs.

**The fruit of the Spirit is joy.** Biblical joy is not to be confused with happiness. Happiness deals with outward circumstances, joy comes from within. While we may not be happy all the time, we are to be joyful. Joy is eternal (1 The. 5:16). To understand the difference in happiness and joy consider the following:

Happiness is like cosmetics—Joy is like character. Happiness deals with the outside—Joy deals with the inside. Happiness meets surface needs—Joy meets the deepest needs. Happiness, like a thermometer, registers conditions—Joy regulates conditions. Happiness evaporates during suffering—Joy intensifies during suffering. The Hebrew writer recorded, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb. 12:2).

It is so strange to think our Lord could experience joy through such an intensely agonizing death as crucifixion. Jesus did not enjoy the pain He endured on the cross, none of us would. What would hurt you and me also hurt Jesus. Remember He was humanity as well as deity. Yet, Jesus could have joy by looking beyond the cross as He contemplated the salvation of lost souls through His shed blood.

In His sermon on the mount, our Lord said, "Blessed are

they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Mat. 5:4). Jesus is speaking of those who lament their sins but who obtain forgiveness. David wrote that true joy comes when one is right with God. He said, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit" (Psa. 51:12). There is absolutely no reason why a New Testament Christian should be sour and dour, when he considers his sins have been washed away and eternal life can be claimed on the final day. Paul stated, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom we also have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1-2).

(To be continued next week)

Sarah Russell was chosen as student of the year for Joseph Davies Elementary and Ashleigh Towle was nominated for student of the year at Andrew Jackson Elementary. Congratulations to both of them!

Merry Christmas from Mark, Tina, Jessica, Katelyn, and Mary Jo Lane!

### WORKS WE SUPPORT

Gospel Broadcast Network

House to House Heart to Heart

Two students at the Memphis School of Preaching

Curry Montague— Budapest

Morrne Stephanus- In Africa

Roger Scully- Morgan City Church of Christ

## Kid's Korner

**See if you can answer the following questions:**

Answers from last week:

1. One of his brothers and some men from Judah
2. Cupbearer for the king
3. Wept and mourned, Prayed, Fasted
4. Artaxerxes
5. Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest

Nehemiah

1. What did Sanballat, Tobia and Gesham accuse Nehemiah of?
2. What was the name of the high priest who set to work with his fellow priests and rebuilt the Sheep Gate?
3. While half of the men worked on the wall, what did the other half do?
4. How did Nehemiah respond when Sanballat and Geshem sent letters to Nehemiah asking him to meet them?



### *Cleaning Schedule*

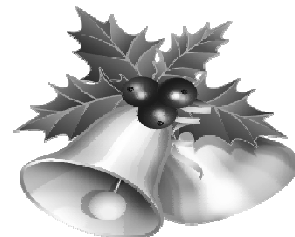
*Month of December— Looking for volunteers. Please sign up if available.*

### *Upcoming Events*

December 21- Singing and Fellowship Meal

December 26- Ladies Game Night

Happy Holidays!



# Prayer List

**Mary Jo Lance**  
Malcolm Vasquez  
Muriel Jones  
**Joe Riley**  
**Alice Riley**  
Maggie Fletcher  
Bill Burchett  
Buck Hall  
**Sherry Towle**  
Bob Spurlin  
Catherine Grant  
Kathleen Grant Dunn  
Sonny Adams  
**Betty Grisham**  
Paul Roberts  
Melinda London



\*All of our brethren scattered across the United States

\* Our men and women who are serving in the military:

- Ryan Neal
- Wayne Schulz

**Chalmette Church of Christ**  
200 De La Ronde  
Chalmette, LA 70043  
504-279-9438

## Services of The Church Sunday

Bible Classes 9:00 am  
AM Worship 10:00 am  
PM Worship 6:00 pm

## Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 pm

## Elders

Mark Lance 504-250-8492

J. V. Russell 504-277-0251

Charles Whitley 504-277-4717

## Evangelist

**Mark Lance 504- 250-8492**

**gospelpr@cox.net**

## Deacons

Scott Russell 504-232-4120

Wayne Schulz 504-392-3999

Butch Snyder 504-682-0051

Mike Swanner 504-271-2465

**[www.chalmettechurchofchrist.org](http://www.chalmettechurchofchrist.org)**

Chalmette Church of Christ  
Post Office Box 1165  
Chalmette, LA 70044

## Grass Cutting

### Schedule

Wayne Schulz– Month of December

