

(Colossians) the Fruit of the Gospel

by Brian Brodersen

The gospel produces a change of thinking, a change of direction, and a change of character, resulting in repentance, holiness, righteousness, and love.

Duration: 49:50

Scripture: Matthew 13:23, Matthew 22:37-39, John 1:29, Colossians 1:3-6

Topics: "Gospel Transformation", "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of relating to others according to God's standards. He asks if listeners are truly loving God and His people, and if they have a desire to see others come to know the Lord. The speaker explains that when the gospel falls upon good soil, it bears fruit in the form of transformed relationships and lives. He encourages listeners to examine their hearts and see if they have truly received the gospel, as evidenced by repentance, holiness, and righteousness. The speaker concludes by highlighting the power of the gospel to bring about change and transformation in people's lives.

Transcript

Let's turn together to Colossians chapter one today. Colossians chapter one. Today we're gonna be concentrating on verse six of chapter one.

I'd like to begin by reading to you verses three through six. "We give thanks to God and the Father "of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, "since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus "and of your love for all the saints, "because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, "of which you heard before "in the word of the truth of the gospel, "which has come to you as it has also in all the world "and is bringing forth fruit, "as it is also among you since the day you heard "and knew the grace of God in truth." Today we want to concentrate on Paul's statement here concerning the gospel bringing forth fruit. We want to talk today about the fruit of the gospel.

The gospel has within it the power to produce fruit in our lives. The very gospel itself is the power of God to salvation. And so as the gospel comes to us, it comes to us like a seed being planted.

And Jesus gave an illustration about the word of God coming. And he used a seed to refer to the word of God. He said, a sower went out and sowed seed in the famous parable of the sower.

And then when he gives the interpretation, he says, the seed is the word of God. And so the word of God is like a seed. The word of God comes and is planted within us.

And as that word of God falls upon good soil, it brings forth much fruit. And that's what we want to talk about. We want to talk about the fruits of the gospel.

What are the things that proceed from the reception of the gospel? You know, many times and in many lives, it's simply been the gospel in its most simple form, coming to people and resulting in drastic transformation. There've been times when people have just heard a scripture read and without any explanation of it, without any application or without any invitation being given, it's just the reading of the word of God or the hearing of the word of God on their part that has resulted in the new birth and in fruit being born. I think a great example of that is found in the case of a man who heard Charles Spurgeon repeating a scripture verse over and over again.

There was a man who was doing some repair work on a building called the Crystal Palace. And Charles Spurgeon was going to be speaking at the Crystal Palace a few days later. And so he had gone over to this large meeting place to test the acoustics and to just kind of find, you know, what would be the best place in the building for the pulpit to be situated so he could address the many thousands of people that would be in attendance.

And as he walked around this large building, he walked around quoting scripture and reciting one verse in particular, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." And as he was walking around reciting this verse at high volume, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world," this man who was doing the repair work, hearing the word of God simply stated, was brought under conviction about his sin, realized at that moment that Jesus came to take away his sin and opened his heart to Christ and became a new man. Just heard the word and responded to it." And that's really what the Bible teaches about the gospel, that the gospel is in itself the power of God to salvation. And as it comes to us, it comes to us and it impacts us.

It has an effect on us. There are certain results that naturally proceed from a reception of the gospel. And so those are the things that we're going to be touching on in our study here now.

The first thing that happens to us upon our reception of the gospel, the first fruit that's manifested is that of repentance. In Luke chapter three, verse eight, John the Baptist is speaking and he says to the people, he said, bring forth fruits that indicate repentance. So the first fruit of reception of the gospel is the fruit of repentance.

Now, the very Greek words that make up our English word repentance really define for us what the word actually means. Many people are confused about what the word repent means. Many people confuse repentance with a Catholic term, penance.

Penance means to be sorry over something. And so many times when repentance is spoken of, people have the idea that we're talking about being sorry over something. But repentance and penance are two entirely different words.

Repentance comes from a Greek word, penance comes from a Latin word. Repentance comes from the Greek word metanoia, which is actually two words that make up one in the Greek. Meta meaning change and noia meaning mind.

Mind, noia is the Greek word for mind. So metanoia means a change of mind or a change of thinking. And that's what happens upon reception of the gospel.

First of all, we experience a change in our thinking. We begin to think differently than we previously had been thinking. I begin to start thinking seriously about God.

I hadn't been doing that before. My thoughts of God, if any at all, were not serious thoughts, maybe an occasional thought here and there, maybe wondering occasionally about whether he existed or not, and if he did, what he might be like. But when the gospel comes to us, it produces repentance, it produces a change of thinking.

We begin to think more seriously about God. We begin to ask ourselves questions about God that we wouldn't normally ask, like, what does God require of me? How is it that I might come to find favor with God and things like that? We begin to think differently about our behavior. We begin to think that the way we're living isn't right, when previously we had no thoughts concerning that at all.

You see, this is what happens when a person comes under the influence of the gospel. People who were perfectly content living one way suddenly begin to think about the way they're living and are concluding that this isn't right, I shouldn't be living this way. And they start to think differently about how they ought to be living.

They start to see that there's a standard that God requires of them. And so this is what happens initially when the gospel comes to a person. There is repentance that takes place.

There is a change in the mind that really results also in a change of direction. A change of thinking results in a change of direction because the Bible tells us that as a man thinks in his heart, so he is. In other words, you will behave according to your thinking.

If your thinking is wrong, then your behavior will be wrong. If your thinking is right, then your behavior will be right. So as a man thinks, so he is.

As we have a change in our thinking, automatically our lives begin to change also. So we're going away from God. All of us are going in the wrong direction by nature.

We're born into this world onto the wrong path, so to speak. We're born into this world going in the wrong direction and we continue to go in that direction until we come under the influence of the gospel. And as the gospel begins to influence our lives, we then have a change of thinking that results in a change of direction.

By nature, we're going away from God. The Bible says that all we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way.

So you see, this is where we're going naturally. We're going away from God. We've gone astray from him.

We're going in our own way. As we come under the influence of the gospel, we turn to God and we begin to walk in his path. So this is the first fruit of the gospel.

This is how a person can know for sure that they have come under the influence of the gospel of Christ. A change of thinking has taken place. A change of thinking that results in a change of direction.

Secondly, the gospel produces holiness. According to Romans 6, verse 22, there Paul says that you have your fruit unto holiness. So there's a change of thinking leading to a change of direction, leading to a change in our very character, a change deep within us.

Holiness can also be defined as godliness because God is holy. The Lord said, be holy because I am holy. And so holiness is a reference to having godly character, being like the Lord, experiencing and manifesting in your life the nature of God.

Now there's a difference between holiness and godliness and another term, righteousness, which we'll get to in a moment. But whenever you're talking about holiness or godliness, you're talking about a character that is like the Lord's character. So that's what happens to us as we come under the influence of the gospel.

The gospel affects us in the deepest part of our being and we begin to show forth the attributes of God in his moral nature. There's a holiness that results from the influence of the gospel upon us. In other words, to put it very simply, there's a change that takes place in our lives as we come under the influence of the gospel.

That's the fruit that Paul is talking about when he's writing to the Colossians. He's saying that there's a change that's taken place and it's an obvious change. This change has come to you now that the gospel has come to you.

It's so important for us to understand that because there are some that claim to have come under the influence of the gospel, but yet have never experienced any change in their life. But you see, the gospel will always bring forth fruit. It will inevitably bring forth fruit if it is truly received.

So that's a way I can determine whether or not I've truly received the gospel. Has there been a change that's taken place in my life, beginning with my thinking process and then moving into the way I live, the way I behave? Is there a holiness that is being cultivated and developed in my life? Because the Bible says that we have as believers our fruit unto holiness. So God likeness, godly character is beginning to develop in us.

We begin to have love for the things that God loves and we have a hatred for the things that God hates. We have a desire to be like the Lord. We have a desire to please the Lord in all that we're doing.

Those are the marks of holiness. And then we're told in Philippians 1.11 that the fruit of the gospel is righteousness. Righteousness is another fruit of the gospel.

Now, righteousness differs from holiness and godliness in that righteousness refers in this context to how we live with our neighbor, how we relate to our fellow man, how we treat other people. Quite often in the Bible, you find the distinction being made and these two things even being put together. You find godliness and righteousness or ungodliness and unrighteousness.

In Romans 1, Paul tells us that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. So there's two different things being spoken about. Ungodliness pertains to things that we do that are contrary to God.

Unrighteousness pertains to things that we do that are contrary to how we're to relate to one another as people. And so righteousness has to do with relationships, how we relate to each other. And Paul tells us

here in Philippians 1.11 that the fruit of the gospel coming to us is righteousness.

We, as a result of the gospel effecting us, we begin to live with our neighbor righteously. We begin to relate to other people in the right way, in the way that God wants us to relate to them and deal with them. This is the impact that the gospel has.

The gospel has the power to change you to the extent that every relationship that is broken or damaged or in some way wrong can be healed, can be mended, can be put right by the power of the spirit. There are those today who say that when it comes to relationships and dealing with people, we need to go to other sources outside of what God provides for us through his spirit and his word. And this is commonly what is being said by certain people today, that if you want to have answers to questions dealing with spirituality, if you want to know about prayer, if you want to know about, oh, let's say, you know, heaven, if you want to know about spiritual matters, mystical kinds of things, things about, you know, the next life, then you ought to consult the Bible, go to a pastor, you know, that's the advice that is given because, you know, they deal with spiritual matters.

But on the other hand, if you need to know something about how to live life here, then you need to go to the experts on relationships and living together with other people. And that expertise is not found in the Bible, they say, but that expertise is found among the behavioral scientists. That expertise is found among the psychologists.

And that's where you need to go for instruction on how to live. But you see, the Bible doesn't teach that. The Bible teaches that the gospel works in us in such a way that it results in righteousness.

It's the gospel and the teaching of the scriptures that tell us how to live with other people, how to relate to other people, how to treat other people, how to get along with and how to live in the most right relationship, the relationship that God has laid down for us in the scripture. And that's exactly what takes place when a person comes under the influence of the gospel, although they might be separated from all people, they just are incapable of relating, incapable of getting along with anybody. God does such a work in them that they're transformed.

And they're able to now relate properly to other people. I've talked to many people who couldn't have any kind of a real meaningful relationship with anybody. They were so messed up inside.

And yet when they came to Christ and the Lord began his work in them through the gospel, it's resulted in relationships being mended and healed and brought together and wonderful things happening. Husbands that had been unable to relate properly to their wives, cold and indifferent and insensitive and uncaring, unloving, selfish, all those things, transformation has taken place. And now by the testimony of their wife, I couldn't have a better husband.

How did he get this way? He met Jesus. The Lord did it. And in all kinds of relationships, we see that this is the fruit of the gospel.

When the gospel comes into someone's life, it brings great change. I know a man many years ago, I was talking to him and I was curious as to why he had such a burden for Jewish people. He's had an ongoing ministry for years to the Jewish people, wanting to bring to them the knowledge of the Messiah.

And on one occasion, I was curious as to, you know, what caused this interest. And I thought maybe he was Jewish himself and that's what motivated him. So I asked him, I said, you know, are you Jewish? And

he said, no.

And I said, then why this burden for the Jewish people? Why this ministry among them? Why is this where you spend most of your time? And why is this the area that you put forth most of your effort in? And he said this, he said, before I was a Christian, I was anti-Semitic. I was very hostile toward the Jewish people. And yet when I came to know Christ, he melted my heart and he gave me a passion and a compassion for Jewish people.

You see, that's what happens when a person comes under the influence of the gospel. You know, there are many people that have been very prejudiced and they've been very outspoken about it and they've had no qualms about referring to people of other races with, you know, in derogatory terms and, you know, been very bigoted and so forth. And then coming under the influence of the gospel, it's just the effect of the gospel upon them, it transforms them.

They go through a change of thinking. They were thinking one way about these people and then suddenly they come under the conviction of the spirit, they realize that they're sinners themselves, that these people are also just people, they're sinners like them, God loves them. And, you know, seen this many times where people who could not possibly relate to other people because of racial differences or, you know, whatever the case might be, the Lord just deals with all of that, just takes it all away, just heals it.

It's such a wonderful thing. This is the fruit of the gospel. This is what the gospel does in the lives of people.

In Galatians 5.22, we're told this, moving on, that the fruit of the spirit is love. And so this is the fruit of the gospel, it's repentance, it's holiness, it's righteousness. And then according to Paul in Galatians 5.22, the fruit of the spirit is love.

Now he goes on there to really give us a definition of the love that he's talking about. The fruit of the spirit is love. And then he defines love with joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Notice it doesn't say the fruits of the spirit, plural, but it says singular. So it seems that the fruit of the spirit is love, and then these other things are a definition of love. This is what happens when a person comes under the influence of the gospel.

They have a change of thinking, which leads to a change in their lifestyle. Holiness is produced, righteousness is developed, and love dominates the person's life now at this point. And again, so many people could stand and testify to the hatred that once filled their lives, the hostility, the animosity toward anybody and everybody.

But yet you look at them today and you find that, you know, they're just so lovely and so lovable. I have been shocked on many occasions talking to people that I've known for quite some time and seen the fruit of the gospel in their lives, and then to have them tell me their testimony. I have been utterly shocked.

No way, you couldn't have been like that before. But that's how thorough God is in his working upon us. That's how radically he transforms us.

And many times, you know, I've had opportunity to share my testimony and I've had people come to me and say the same thing. You know, most people assume that I was, you know, born with a Bible in my

hand or something. You know, after all, how could you be a pastor if you weren't and, you know, or the assumption, you know, that I've always been a Christian.

There were many years of my life that I wasn't a Christian. And one of the great things that I battled with as a non-Christian was hostility, animosity toward a lot of people and having a very violent temper and things of that nature. And yet the Lord just dealing with all of that.

You know, before I was a Christian, I had such an incredible problem with my temper. And I don't know really what the actual cause of it was other than just, you know, selfishness. I think that was probably the bottom line.

Whenever things didn't go my way, I would just become angry. And in my anger, I would become violent. And I had no real way of controlling that before I was a Christian.

I don't know that I even thought to control it. Maybe sometimes when I was suffering the consequences of it, I thought, oh, I wish I could control this, where I wouldn't have to pay for this thing I busted. You know, I wouldn't have to spend this time repairing this deal that I kicked in here because I was mad.

Or, you know, I wouldn't have to worry about this relationship that I ruined because of what I said to this person, you know, whatever. But I know this, that when I came to Christ, all of that was immediately dealt with. And I didn't have to go to anger management program.

I didn't have to get on an antidepressant to, you know, help my serotonin levels to balance out. You know, these are all the things that people are doing for anger management today, you know. The gospel of Christ, and you know, compared to some people I know, my violence and all that was fairly mild.

You know, people are much more vicious than I ever was. And yet you see them and you see what God has done in their lives. It's just a wonderful thing.

How did it happen? It happened because the gospel itself is the power of God unto salvation. And the gospel came, that seed of the word of God, the life of God. See, it's the life of God that's contained in the gospel.

And as the life of God is planted in the human heart, God's nature begins to bloom forth. And as we cultivate that, as we work on that, it blossoms ultimately into a glorious plant. Over and over again in the Old Testament, God refers to his people as his plants.

They are the planting of the Lord. They are the trees of the Lord. You know, and that's what we are.

We're a plant of God. We're told in James to receive the engrafted word or the implanted word with meekness, which is able to save our souls. So you see, God is planting his life in us through the gospel.

That's what the gospel is. It's the life of God, and it's planted in the human heart. And these are the results of it.

Repentance, holiness, righteousness, love. This is what takes place. Now, there are those who do not see the gospel in this light.

They do not think in these kinds of terms when they think about the gospel or when they give any kind of a definition of the results of the gospel. Paul is rejoicing here over the Colossians that they are bringing forth

fruit just as many others are worldwide who have come under the influence of the gospel. Now, this is the truth.

Wherever the gospel of Jesus Christ has gone, and I want to clarify that, the gospel of Jesus Christ, not a church, not a religious organization, not something that's claiming to present the gospel, but wherever the true gospel of Jesus Christ has gone throughout the world, it has always done this very same thing. It has always brought forth good fruit. Now, there are some who look at what they might refer to as the effects of Christianity, and they make reference to the rotten fruit of Christianity.

I was trying to find the quote this morning. I wasn't able to do it. But in the Humanist Manifesto, the Humanist Manifesto states as one of its goals to abolish from the face of the earth the rotten fruit of Christianity.

And so there are those who look at Christianity and say that it has had a negative impact on the world. And that's very, very popular today, especially in the academic circles. And of course, when you look into the whole politically correct mentality of the day, in essence, what they're trying to do is destroy any results of the gospel of Jesus Christ on our modern society.

And they would look upon Christianity as having a very negative impact, and they're going out of their way to try to reverse that. And so they look into the history of the church, and they point out the various crimes that were committed by the church, and the atrocities that were done under the leadership of so-called Christians, and the oppression that's taken place. They'll point out all these things.

But what they're doing is they're not really at all identifying the fruits of the gospel. What they're identifying are the fruits of misled, misguided people, most of them not being Christians at all. Now, honestly, there are some Christians who have done some stupid things historically.

But of course, you can't find any instruction for what they did in the Bible. Even men as renowned as Martin Luther for their faith have done some very stupid things. Martin Luther became frustrated against certain people, and he encouraged persecution of certain people that didn't conform to his theological ideas.

Very stupid, very wrong thing to do. But Martin Luther was not biblically inspired to do so. He wasn't driven to this by any exhortation from the New Testament.

This is where he was acting apart from any influence of God, and he was being motivated and driven by his human nature. And so to attribute all that he did to the influence of Christ upon him is foolish. I mean, let's face it, we're all, many of us are Christian people, and there's a lot that we do that we can attribute to the influence of Christ on our lives, but we certainly would not attribute everything we do to the influence of Christ, would we? Because there's much that we do that is inspired by ourselves and sometimes, unfortunately, even inspired by the devil.

Those are the facts. So to look at the history of the church and to say Christianity has failed and it's brought forth bad fruit and it's negatively impacted the world, this is a very distorted view of reality. And of course, they never want to compare the bad fruit of Christianity, so-called, with the bad fruit of other systems.

Isn't it interesting how we hear so much today about how people were persecuted in the name of religion? Oh, how many people perished in the name of religion? How many people died in the inquisitions and

things like that? The funny thing about that, it's not really that funny, but it's interesting. You know, the inquisition, you know who were actually the ones who were being the most persecuted in the inquisition? The inquisition was a persecution of Christians who rejected the authority of the Roman church. People like us, people who did not submit to the Pope and to the doctrines of Catholicism, they were the ones that the inquisition was primarily aimed at.

Those people who preceded the Protestant Reformation, those Bible believers back in those early days who wanted to live according to the scripture and not according to the dictates of the church, they were the ones who were suffering most under the inquisition. And there were others, of course, that were included in that, but you never hear about the Christians who are suffering. You hear about everybody else that was suffering, but the inquisition was mainly directed at believers in Jesus Christ who took the Bible as their sole authority instead of the church.

See, that's what the inquisition was all about, primarily. But then, of course, you have, you know, the various philosophical and political systems that have arisen, and you don't hear people talking so much about the atrocities that have been committed under these other philosophical systems or political systems. We don't hear so much about the destruction to human life that's been wrought under Marxist philosophy.

You know, you see in our country, professors in our universities who are proudly Marxist and they're bashing Christianity, and they're talking about how horrible it is and how it's, you know, deprived people and it's been intolerant and, you know, so on and so forth. Ask them, have you ever read the history of Joseph Stalin? Have you ever considered the millions and millions and millions of people that were executed under his regime because they did not conform to his Marxist philosophy? Or what about Adolf Hitler, for that matter? You know, some people, they try to equate Nazism with Christianity today. And, you know, oh, the religious right, you know, they're just like the Nazis in Germany.

Well, who were the people suffering at the hand of the Nazis? Well, we know the Jews did, of course. Six million of them perished. But you know who else did? The Bible-believing Christians suffered under the hands of Hitler also.

Anyone who took the name of Christ seriously was persecuted by Hitler and was put into concentration camps just like everybody else. Hitler's main goal was to destroy any influence of Christ upon anybody. The swastika is a sign of the broken cross.

And Hitler believed a philosopher who said this, if you can break the cross, you can destroy the Christian influence on the world. And that's what he was out to do. So how many multitudes of people perished under Hitler's anti-Christian philosophy? But, you know, those things are overlooked, and, you know, then people start equating Christianity with those things, and there's nothing in common whatsoever.

I will be the first to agree that church history is very unpleasant and very unfortunate, but I will also add that the things that happen in church history that are referred to as atrocities and so forth happened not by people who are Christians, for the most part, but by people who were masquerading as Christians. Let's face it, just because people are in a church doesn't mean they're Christians. We have supposed religious wars going on all over the world.

We have religious wars all over our world today. In England, you have this ongoing conflict between the IRA and the British government. Now, it's no longer being referred to so much in religious terms, but what

it was touted as earlier was a religious war, the Protestants against the Catholics.

But show me anywhere in the New Testament where it says go blow up your, you know, neighbor if you don't agree with them theologically. You know, so when people are doing things like this, to say that they're Christians is absurd. Just because they live, you know, maybe in a Christianized culture or something, they're not Christians.

Christians are described in the Bible, in the pages of the New Testament, and they bear the fruit of the gospel, which is everything we're talking about here today. It's repentance, it's holiness, it's right living with your fellow man, not blowing him up because you don't like his theology or whatever the case might be. And it's love toward other people.

So please don't get sucked up into it yourself. I hear even Christians a lot of times, you know, buying into some of what the politically correct people are saying. And you know, there's some kooky Christians today that are now, you know, out developing their own form of green peace, you know, ecological movement and all of that kind of stuff.

And, you know, they're saying, well, yes, you know, we Christians and our philosophy, because the Bible does say, you know, that man is to have dominion over all things. And, you know, yeah, we've been responsible for messing up the world. I'm sorry, but I won't take responsibility for that.

But I'll tell you what, before I was a Christian, I was messing up the world. I'd throw my beer cans out the window, never think twice about it. I'd go out of my way to mess up something.

If I could, I was just a troublemaker. You know, I'd see something nice and I'd go, that shouldn't be that nice, let me fix that. You know, I got put in jail for stuff like that.

But you know what, since I became a Christian, I've never done anything like that. When I used to go on surf trips as a non-Christian, I'd leave my campsite as dirty as possible when I left it. I didn't care, let those bums clean it up after me.

I don't care, I'm not doing that. But you know, I've never done that since I've been a Christian. So, you know, they're trying to lay all of this at the doorstep of the church, and oh, Christians have caused all the ecological woes in the world, and it's the, you know, the Protestant ethic that's caused the whole world to be trampled underfoot in the rain forest, you know.

And then you got these dumb Christians who are writing songs about the rain forest and stuff. You know, give me a break. That's so foolish, it's buying into the lie, the present lie.

I know that I never respected creation whatsoever until I became a Christian, and I realized, man, this is God's planet, he made it. And he called me to be a steward of it, and I don't have the right to mess it up. My fair share, I'm contributing like all of us are.

I mean, you know, I don't see any of these ecologists pedaling bicycles around, you know, they're all driving cars. You know, they put on their hairspray and use their deodorant and all those kinds of things. You know, it's such a double standard.

You know, especially the Hollywood people. You know, they've got all of, you know, they've got everything, they're marching, you know, for, you know, the rain forest and, you know, the spotted owl and

all of that stuff. And then you watch their lifestyles.

My goodness, what hypocrisy. You know, they're just wasting everywhere they go. It's making a mess, a mess of lives.

You know, that's not the fruit of the gospel. That's the fruit of humanism, the rotten fruit of humanism. You know, they say, oh, you know, we're being liberated.

We're in the process of being liberated from the bondage of the Judeo-Christian ethic and all of that. Oh, it's gonna be so glorious when we're totally set free. Oh, it's gonna be so wonderful.

Oh yeah, life is getting so much better, isn't it? Just getting so much more wonderful. Every year, each passing year, it just gets more glorious. You know, in a few years, we won't be able to go outside at all without bulletproof vest on, you know? Isn't that gonna be wonderful? You can't let your kids out nowadays.

Somebody will molest them, kill them. Oh, it's glorious, isn't it? This is the fruit of humanistic philosophy and thinking. This is the actual fruit of it.

But they say, oh, it's getting better. You know who's profiting by humanism and the new philosophy in our country? It's only one group that's profiting, and that's the sexually perverse. Get to have sex with whatever I want, nobody can tell me not to.

Oh, how wonderful, isn't that great? That's really what's behind all of this. So much of it is being driven by that. They say, liberate us from the bondage of the Judeo-Christian ethic, the intolerance and all these lies.

They're all lies, really. And it's sad that people without thinking embrace them. You know, let's talk about the fruit of the gospel on a social level.

You know that most hospitals in the world today exist because Christians founded them? Most educational institutions in the world today exist because Christians or Jews founded them? I mean, those are the facts, that's actual history. Our great universities in this country, they were all founded by Christian people to further education in order that the gospel might be spread throughout the world. The great universities in England, Oxford, Cambridge, these places, they were all established by believers.

And, you know, they talk about, you know, the bad fruit of the gospel. No, wherever the gospel has gone into a society, as people have been changed in their thinking, as the character of God has been developed in them, as they've learned how to live righteously and been filled with love for other people, it's only brought benefit to mankind. You know, if you go to India today, you'll find that the poverty is intense, the suffering is unbelievable, and the relief is very minimal.

Do you know why the relief is very minimal? Because within the Hinduistic system, there is not a built-in compassion for the suffering. Actually, within the Hinduistic system, there is a built-in indifference toward human suffering. Because Hinduism teaches that human suffering is a result of bad karma.

You see, if a person is suffering, according to Hindu theology, they're suffering for the sins they committed in a previous life. And if you were to come along and alleviate that suffering in any way, then you could end up with bad karma yourself. And so the suffering goes on in India.

You know who's bringing relief? Go to India today, you'll find that most of the relief organizations, most of those who are helping with orphans and helping with, you know, just those who are suffering from various maladies, leprosy and different things, it's Christian missionaries who are doing all of the work. They're the ones who are alleviating the misery. It's not the Hindu government.

It's not the Hindu religion. Because built into that system is an indifference toward human suffering. But built into the Christian faith is a compassion demonstrated by our Lord first, and then carried on by His people throughout all of history.

See, when you see where the gospel has gone in its purest form, and where you see true Christians have had an impact, society has become a much better place, not a much worse place. The gospel is bringing forth fruit among you as it is also in all the world, the Apostle Paul said. The final fruit of the gospel that we wanna look at is found in John 15.

And it's the fruit that goes beyond our lives here on earth. It's the eternal fruit. It's the fruit of souls brought into the kingdom.

Jesus said in John 15, one, I am the true vine and my father is the vine dresser. And then he said in verse four, abide in me and I in you as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches.

He who abides in me and I in him bears much fruit for without me, you can do nothing. Verse eight, by this, my father is glorified that you bear much fruit. So you will be my disciples.

And then verse 16, you did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain. Here, Jesus is talking so much about fruit. He says, I'm the vine, you are the branches.

I'm appointing you to go bear fruit. This is how the father will be glorified that you bear much fruit. What is he talking about? Well, he's talking about all the things that we've mentioned.

He's talking about the fruit of repentance, holiness, righteousness, love, but he's talking about something else also. He's talking about the impact that we have on the lives of others. On an individual level, he's talking about the impact that we have upon our world in general.

He said, I want you to go and bear much fruit. And whenever you see the gospel in its truest form, impacting individual lives, impacting the lives of people collectively, you see a wonderful influence begins to move upon society. You see people getting saved and lives being changed.

People no longer hating other people, murdering other people, people no longer divorcing and leaving their children to be raised by one parent or people no longer living under the bondage of drug addiction or alcohol addiction or addiction to whatever perversion. Those are the things that you see happening. And as you see them take place on an individual level, as people come to know Christ and you see this go on and on in a society, eventually what you have is a transformed society.

You see, that's the fruit of the gospel and that's the fruit that Jesus is talking about. He says, I've ordained you to bear much fruit. The Lord wants to produce a lot of fruit in your life so that you can go out and produce fruit yourself by impacting the lives of others.

Their lives will change. They will impact the lives of others. Their lives will change and so on.

It's a chain reaction the Lord wants to do. One life touching another life. Your life bearing fruit, people enjoying the fruit that your life is bearing, them coming under the influence of the gospel and they begin to bear fruit and so on and so forth all the way down the line.

That's how the Lord does His work. So the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed us to bear fruit. If the gospel has truly come to us, fruit will be the result.

And that's the way to really be able to conclude whether or not you've actually come under the influence of the gospel. Have you come under the influence of the gospel? Well, I don't know. Let me ask you this.

Have you repented? Has there been a change of thinking, a radical change of thinking about God, about sin? Has there been a change of direction in your life? Is there a holiness that's being produced in your life? Are you becoming more like God in your character internally? Is there a righteousness that is working itself out in your life? Are you relating to people properly now? Are you living with them according to God's standards? Are you relating to them the way the word of God says that you are too? Is there a love in your heart? Is there a love in your heart for God? Do you love the Lord truly? And do you love those who love the Lord? Do you love God's people? And do you have a compassion for those who do not know Jesus Christ? Do you have a desire to see people come to know the Lord? If you have those things, then as Paul said to the Colossians, the same thing is true with you. The gospel is bearing fruit among you. But if you lack those things, then what you must not conclude is that the gospel does not bear fruit.

What you must conclude is that you have not received it yet. You have not received it. The gospel, the seed has not fallen upon good soil because the promise is this.

When it falls upon good soil, it will bear fruit some 30, some 60, some a hundredfold. That's what Jesus said. Where are you today? Have you received the gospel? Is it bringing forth fruit in your life as it is also throughout the whole world? That's a question that you need to consider.

And if you find that you haven't truly received it because there isn't any real strong evidence for it, then all you need to do is just open your heart today and just say, Lord, I want to receive you. I want that life of yours planted in me. I want to bear fruit for you.

And if you mean it sincerely, the Lord will meet you right where you're at. He will come take up residence in your life and he will transform you. He will produce repentance, holiness, righteousness, love, and he will cause you to be his witness.

God help those who need to do that to do that today.

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