

Why You Might Be Growing the Wrong Kind of Spiritual Fruit

The Holy Spirit in you will help you choose and do the right things and the Lord Himself will work the pattern of behavior into your character. You see, there is accidental fruit bearing and intentional fruit bearing. Accidental fruit bearing is exactly that, an accident. It's when my wife does something, and I accidentally don't make a big deal out of it. She accidentally experiences the fruit of patience from me. She tastes the fruit and it was good. The next time something happens, she really tastes my flesh. I may ask questions and shame her for not knowing the obvious. Now that fruit doesn't taste very good and neither one of us feel good after this interaction. But you see the fruit of patience was an accident to begin with.

Then there's intentional fruit. This is where you train yourself to listen and obey the Holy Spirit. That is exactly what farmers do—they have intentional fruit. You take a farmer who grows corn, for instance. He could just wait until corn happens to fall on his hundred acres. He could hope nature would do all the work of fertilizing or watering. But the farmer who relies on accidental fruit is truly not a farmer. The intentional farmer is truly the only kind of farmer. So many of us are so far removed from the farm that even the basics of farming escape us.

First, the farmer decides what kind of seed he wants to plant; for instance, our corn farmer chooses corn, but he might just as well have chosen barley or wheat. Now, choosing a seed doesn't bring a crop, it takes a little thing called work to make that happen.

He gets up early day-after-day (changing of behavior). He plants, waters and fertilizes on a regular basis to get the

results. This means he not only changed his behavior say from sleeping to planting—he was consistent over a season. After a while the seed grew in an intentional manner. You only have to fly a plane over Kansas or some other agricultural area to see just how intentional farmers really are.

As in the natural, so it is in the spiritual. If we want to have spiritual first, it's better to be intentional. The Scripture describes this process of growing the fruit of the spirit. We can be the kind of Christians who have an occasional fruit for someone to eat or we can be someone who has intentional fruits.

You may know of a bitter, elderly person who complains constantly. They go to church, read their Bible, but don't have a friend in the world or a family member who enjoys their company. One day a Girl Scout comes by this elderly person's house selling cookies. This elderly person for whatever reason is behaving very graciously and is kind to the little girl and even gives her an extra dollar tip because she is such a good little Girl Scout.

Occasional fruit like this is unfortunately the norm. Dream with me a minute; you don't want to be that elderly person with barely any fruit to offer to others in the barren land we call earth. Imagine instead a life of fruitfulness, a life that each decade gets more fruitful than the decade before.
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