

Fruit of the Spirit

by A.W. Tozer

The Holy Spirit brings power to produce moral ends in our lives, including love, joy, longsuffering, peace, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and temperance.

Duration: 28:42

Scripture: John 14:16

Topics: "Fruits Of The Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of love in a world filled with hatred and hostility. He believes that love is the one thing missing from the world and that God is love. The preacher explains that God solves the problem of transferring love to the human heart by sending the Holy Spirit to shed abroad the love of God in our hearts. He also discusses the joy of the Lord and how it can defeat any adversity. The preacher concludes by emphasizing the need for the Spirit of God to transform and change a person's character.

Transcript

For the promise of the Father, which saith he, for John truly baptised with water, ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence, but ye shall. When the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me. In Galatians 5, but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance.

And against such is no law. Now, this is the same Holy Spirit through the lips, first of the Saviour, and then of the Inspired, talking about the same thing. The Lord said, the Comforter will come.

And then he said, ye shall receive power. And then Paul said, that when this power is in the Church, that it will produce certain fruit. Now, as you know, honey means in the Scripture.

It has two meanings anywhere in English. It has the meaning of authority. The President has power.

The President might be barely able to raise his pen to sign a paper, but he could yet have authority to declare war. He could barely sign his name, but he would have authority, that is power to declare war. Then it means ability.

And when Jesus said, ye shall receive power, that is what he meant, not authority. But ye shall receive power, power to produce ends. Now, these ends, Paul, are moral ends.

They are the ends after which the Church of Christ, in her better moments, seeks. And they are the moral ends. Christ died and rose again.

The moral ends to which the Holy Spirit works here on earth, it is to produce in the human character love, joy, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Now, these things are the qualities that are found in the Holy Spirit. You know how it is that the light from the sky above in the daytime, the sunlight, it comes down as a sort of gold light, a little on the gold side, and yet with a whiteness that isn't golden, but it's the normal light we're familiar with all over the world.

Like a prism, a piece of glass shaped in a certain way, and pass that light through it, you will find that that is not all, that it is not one light, but that it is many lights, up and down the prismatic scale. Prismatic scale, I think it's also called. So that we start way up in light that is so, ways that are so short you can't see them, and go down the scale to lights, to ways that are so long you can't see them.

There are about seven colors that we can see. They are the colors of sunlight. God calls himself light, and calls himself the sunlight, and it's said that Jesus Christ is the son of righteousness, and God is likened to the sun, and God is the sun and the shield.

And the Holy Spirit being God, being the spirit of the father and the son of light, we sing about it, Holy Spirit, light divine, shine upon this heart of mine. We follow the scriptural figures of speech. So the Holy Spirit is light, and yet while the Holy Spirit is warm, he comes into the human breast, he is broken up.

You can see that the character of the Christian, broken up into intersections, into colors, so to speak, as light passing through a prism. The qualities that the Holy Spirit would bring are these. Love and joy, and long-suffering in gentleness and goodness, and faith and meekness and temperance.

Let us look at them one at a time. I suppose I ought to preach seven sermons on these, or nine, but I'll try to condense it. And now my brethren, you know and I know that love is the one thing that is missing from the world.

You can't pick up a newspaper, you can't hear the radio, you can't hear a debate, a political debate, you can't hear a debate on education, you can scarcely hear anything unless you hear antagonisms and hostilities and hatred. The world is filled with hatred, and God is love. Now how to transfer from the God who is love into the bosom of the man who is hate, the quality that is love in God, and let it shine there, and produce love-light in the human heart.

This is the problem God set for himself. But it's a problem that God, being the Almighty and the All-Wise, can and does solve. He sends a source of love to the human bosom.

The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. I sat here tonight and listened to this duet, down in the valley among the sweet lilies, one of his footprints I see, haste I to follow thee, saviour and lover, how the wind twists. Wondering to myself how we Christians could be as we are, so cold, so bothered, our brows so furrowed.

We ought to be men and women in love. We ought to be men and women with love. Now I am not one of those who enter into the intimacies of the love of men and women, and I'm embarrassed when I hear a man get to talking about intimate things.

Let me say this, that everybody knows, everybody knows that the person that is in love is a transformer. The poor, crazy, debased world sings about it in cooing, sultry voice. But they're right in this, that when a human being is in love, the moon shines brighter, and the world looks better, the rainbow rises to sing, for I'm in love.

Well now, let's get as quickly as we can to that higher, holier thing we call love. And I was wondering how it could be that we could be self-collected as we are self-possessed when we ought to be men and women in love. The love of God in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

And we love God, and then we love things, for God speaks to me as if a Christian, if he was filled with the Spirit, would not only love God supremely, but he'd love everything that God, for God's dear sake. Everybody knows that when you have children in the home, you love the little things that children do. You know that.

You know that the little toy, I learned to play with toys and teddy bears, and all sorts of little games. When the boys were growing up, the dolls certainly, I'd never have bought it to cuddle, but if you love somebody, and you used to bring them out to the house, they smelled good, the powder, the baby smell they have around, everything that belongs to somebody. Now it seems to me that when he, you shall receive power to love God, and to love everybody, for God's dear sake.

And then draw on from that, because people talk about that so much, and don't have it, but the joy of the Lord. I'd like to say again, and I hope you consider to be repeating myself too much. You're sitting on a purse, swinging back and forward, like a parrot, and saying the same thing.

And still believe, and I'm getting more convinced, that the reason that Evangelical Christianity, it has so many hand saws, and shows, and films, and funny gadgets, and celebrated men and women, tear them up, is that they don't have the joy of the Lord. A happy man doesn't need very much else, do you know it? A man doesn't need very much else. I heard a colored preacher say over the radio one day, he said, you can't defeat a happy man, and the man who has the joy of God in his heart, can't be defeated.

And he can't be either, brother. He's got something there that is bubbling. Now, we don't have it, so we try to create it.

And I think that God in his heaven is probably more kinder about all this than I am. But I think that even God must get awfully sick of what he sees. All the little cowbells that try to be happy, when we're simply missing the fountain of happiness that ought to spring from it.

When the well of joy isn't flowing, then we try to paint the pump in order to get the little crack, jingle bells on the old pump handle. But it doesn't bring the water up. Joy.

And then there's peace power. Peace of God in the human breast. God's people are not a peaceful people.

That is, they're not peaceful. I find so many people with crow's feet here, do they call? I guess crow's feet around the eyes, but these little crows here in the middle of the brow. Why? Because we're not, we're troubled.

We're troubled. The world's troubled. We're troubled by business.

Troubled by... And the word of God says that the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the life is peace. That there is... We habitually sing about things we don't have. We habitually sing about peace, peace, wonderful peace, and we sing it with our knuckles tight and our brows drawn, worried about what it'll be twenty minutes after we're out of the church.

It's because we've gotten ourselves into peace instead of having the peace there. And then there's longsuffering. Suffering is a disposition to bear injuries.

Uh, patiently. They're not of the injuries that comes by the bruises, injuries that are inflicted by the injustice of other people. People that are to blame, certainly, but he's to blame, but he's to blame.

And that's what gives you the suffering. Longsuffering. Now the opposite of longsuffering, of course, is impatience.

Impatience. Gentleness. The opposite of gentleness is harshness and severity.

Now how am I, how are we Americans, men and women that are yin on the yellow light, how are we that are ready to put a nickel in the slot and pull the handle down if you don't get anything, kick the thing, wonderful Americans, don't you? You know how we are. We, they say, that is one who is impatient. One slot in the revolving door.

It just has to make, just one side of the door goes on the end and he's impatient. Well now that's literally so. Now pellets.

Impatience. And it's that that brings on all our physical troubles and our nervous troubles. And the spirit of God gives longsuffering.

The difference is he doesn't say cultivate longsuffering. He says that the fruit of the spirit is longsuffering. The whole thing you must cultivate.

And I've tried to be faithful about that. And I've tried to point out that there are certain gifts and certain virtues, but there are some that come like fruit. And the tree doesn't cultivate the fruit.

The farmer does, but the tree doesn't. Let's do a little imagery. Let's take the vine.

The husband cultivates the vine, but the vine doesn't cultivate itself. The vine doesn't read books on how to control your temper. The vine doesn't read books on how to be patient under stress.

The viney books don't cultivate anything. The vine simply holds still and bears fruit. The sap, the juices of God and nature working in the vine produce the quality of the grape.

And Lord, I think you will learn by reading books it's something the spirit of God puts in your heart. And then there is gentleness. Now the opposite, of course, is harshness.

Gentleness is an indisposition to injuring the body. It's viciousness. It's the opposite of severity.

And how are we going to have it in this terrible day? How are we going to have it? I don't know any way to cultivate it. It is by the blessed Holy Ghost. And there is goodness.

Now the opposite, of course, of the goodness itself is two things. It's virtue and kindness. And the opposite would be, to us, harsh, unkind, and cruel.

So the spirit of God brings that which is morally good. He brings that which is pure and clean and honest. And he brings that which is useful, utilitarian to the moral life, which is useful to the heart.

Goodness, gentleness, and the Holy Ghost brings faithfulness. Do you know why? If we Christians were filled with the Holy Spirit, there wouldn't be much backsliding. Why is there backsliding? It's because people can't keep their mind made up to serve God.

They're argued into serving God by a rapid-talking speaker somewhere, or by somebody that attaches himself to their hearts and hangs right on until they say, Yes, I accept Jesus. You can argue a man into the kingdom of hell, you can argue him out of it. And if the Spirit of God doesn't open the door and illuminate the man and lead him in, you can lead him out.

But the Spirit of the Lord God comes and gives faithfulness, gives faithfulness to Christ, steadfastness and loyalty, equality within the bosom there. And you'll find it isn't there unless it's implanted by the Holy Spirit. You see, you and I are completely dependent upon God's Holy Spirit.

We have nothing that he didn't give us. He has been gone from the earth since about 33 A.D., and he's not been back. He's at the right hand of Toriel's throne, and he and his visible human presence has not been here.

He said, I will send another comforter with me, and he'll take the things of mine and show them unto you. And there hasn't been an advance in the church the Spirit didn't bring. There hasn't been a revival the Spirit didn't bring.

There hasn't been a success on the mission field the Holy Spirit didn't bring. There hasn't been a man converted the Holy Spirit didn't convert him. There hasn't been a Christian blessed the Holy Spirit didn't bless him.

There hasn't been a prayer answered the Holy Spirit didn't do it. There hasn't been a Christian kept the Holy Spirit didn't keep it. We are dependent upon the Holy Spirit.

And I recommend, as I said two or three Sundays ago, that we ought to go home and go to our beneaths and spend at least 15 minutes apologizing to God Almighty. We ought to apologize. Our teachers have led us astray.

Our teachers have told us that he will not speak of himself, and therefore we ought not to speak of him. Do they not know that when the Scripture says the Spirit will not speak of himself, it means he will not speak on his own? It doesn't mean he will not speak about himself. For if the Holy Spirit inspired the Scripture, did the Holy Spirit inspire the Bible? Yes.

Well, if the Holy Spirit inspired the Bible, is there something in the Bible about the Holy Spirit, yes or no? Yes. If there's something in the Bible about the Holy Spirit who wrote the Bible, then did the Holy Spirit speak about himself, yes or no? He did. He did speak about himself.

And so when it says he shall not speak of himself, our teachers say, hush, hush, hush, hush, don't talk about the Holy Spirit because he will, he does not talk about himself. The fact is he does talk about himself. And when he is filled with the Spirit, the Spirit inspired Paul to say that.

And everything that can be known about the Holy Spirit has to teach. And everything that can be known about Jesus, the Holy Spirit has to teach. And everything that can be known about the Father teaches.

And everything that can be known about theology, the Holy Spirit teaches. The old German writer used to say that the heart is the best. And a heart filled with the Spirit, with the Spirit illuminating the heart, you can always have more life.

It's really taught by men. And I believe in being taught by men. I'm teaching a class and giving 45-minute lectures on biblical doctrines tonight down here in this church.

And I believe in it. But my brother, if it's an either or, it isn't, but if it were an either, I must learn the long, hard process of learning doctrine, or I must be illuminated by the Holy Spirit. I don't mean give me the man whose heart.

Then he'll learn in ten years in the school. So the Holy Spirit is the theologian. He teaches us the faithfulness of the Holy Spirit.

And then there is meekness, which, of course, is the opposite of arrogance. Meekness is softness of manner. The day in which we live is not much of it.

Breathlessness. Sometimes I turn the radio off. They're breathless.

Certain youth programs particularly. They arrive running. Yes, sir.

And they bounce along at a speed that no Christian ever ought to. They break through this sound barrier with a... But oh, brother, softness of manner. The Holy Ghost brings softness of manner.

I saw Dr. A.B. Simpson, that he was the most gracious man. The most gracious man he ever knew. Now, somebody says, listen to this.

A man like you, talk about graciousness and softness of manner. Well, everything is relative, ladies and gentlemen. And you have to judge about what you had to start with.

And if God in my heart... You know what I could do? I could cut the throat of a congregation in three minutes' time and use nothing but my tongue. You know that? I had an old uncle, Uncle Buck. And Uncle Buck, he would come.

But he had a brain. He used to go into the law court and refuse a lawyer and stand up there, his own attorney, and plead his own case and win. And he was an ignorant farmer from Pennsylvania that I suppose never went through the eighth grade.

Where did Uncle Buck come from? Mean, sharp-tongued, that I can even beat him. The triumph of the grace of God, brother. So don't you use me as an example on the other side.

I'm an example on the side of meekness. There's softness of manner. Judging by what I had to start with.

Now there are some of you, blessed, toeless and toothless. You don't have to have much help from the Lord on that one thing because you're born soft. But some of us weren't.

And if it wasn't for the grace of God, we'd be un... German construction. We couldn't live with this at all. The fact that anybody can live with me is the grace of God.

My associate. Intemperance. Temperance, the opposite of intemperance.

Strong and masterful and controlling self. Be filled with the spirit, you shall receive power. Power to produce moral ends.

Power to... by God. And those powers are that in a loveless heart there should be oceans of love. In a joyless heart there should be fountains of love.

There should be silver lakes of peace. That to the impatient man should come long-suffering. To the clear man should come gentleness.

To the unclean man should come goodness. To the instable man should come... To the arrogant, proud man should come meekness. To the intemperate man should come... If that's what we mean, I ask, who can rise and criticize? Who can get up and say, Told you he's a fanatic.

Who can get up and say, Church is extreme. Is it extreme to say that a man ought to be loving and joyful and peaceful and long-suffering, goodness and faithfulness, faithful and meek and full of temperance? Is that fanaticism? If it is, oh Lord send more fanaticism. We haven't got half enough yet.

Who is there, I say, that dares accuse us of fanaticism? Who dares say that we're awful when we say that the qualities that belong in God can be transferred by a mighty baptism of the Spirit to them and that man's character can be changed? I'll tell you this story and then I'll close for tonight. There was a man named David. They said that there was a floor that was hollowed out where he prayed.

The walls were stained with his hot breath while he prayed. This great giant of a man, his roommate, had picked him up and started to throw him down a winding. He got himself up in his room and said, Don't ever bother me.

Let me stay for four hours. At the end of 24 hours, he had a terrible, light of God on his face. And he became pathetic.

Now that's what I mean. You tell me that's fanaticism. You tell me you can show me dispensationally that can't happen.

I laugh at you. The Holy Ghost can He can take the red head off an Irishman and the hot temper out of his blood. He can turn that temper to right.

The Holy Ghost can siphon off the poison out of the spirit of an angry Dutchman. He's a good, solid, stable man of God and we've got a lot of them around. The mighty Holy Ghost can take you or dispensational or dispositional troubles, whatever mess you've been in in the past.

You transform you and change you and make you a holy man inside. Anybody that says that, he doesn't know what he's talking. I don't apologize.

I preach. I believe that we should everyone be filled with the Holy Ghost. That he's in us more or less.

We pray, make us hungry. I'll know it's a couple with thy church, Lord. We're not hungry.

We have the thing because we have the text that tells about it. We have the doctrine and think we have the object because we can describe it. We think we've eaten when we're dying of malnutrition.

We think we're full when we're about to cave in from emptying. Oh God, what are our appetites? What are our appetites? We pray. Drive us, we pray thee, like the road by the water.

Until we're dehydrated and our tongues are hanging out. Until we run to the water brook, cry a drink, a drink. Oh God, upset us, disturb us, perturb us, worry us, make us anxious until we're through with ourselves.

Until we open our hearts like the sun in the rain. Until we open our vessels as the widow's vessels were opened at the top and were filled with oil. Oh oil of God, come and fill us.

And make us so hungry we can't live until we're filled. This we pray in Jesus' holy name.

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