5/27/20 Devotional

Let us hear God’s word from the letter of Galatians regarding the fruit of the Spirit.

*“By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.”* Galatians 5:22-25

This coming Sunday is Pentecost. Pentecost commemorates and celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples in Jerusalem and the birth of the Christian Church. This event occurred 50 days following Easter.

The Holy Spirit brings Spiritual fruit to believers through faith. Reflect for a moment upon the fruit listed in these verses. Each one is of paramount importance. No fruit is trivial or mundane. Rather, each fruit is extraordinary in and of itself.

How do we know what the work of the Holy Spirit is? How do we know if the Holy Spirit is alive and active in our own life and witness? The proof is in the fruit of the Spirit. If you see manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit in your life, then you can be confident that the Holy Spirit is at work in and through you. Each of the fruit listed is essential for life. Each of the fruit is indispensable for living the life God created us to live. Think about your own life. Can you think of times or situations, when you exhibited some or all of these Spiritual fruit? Then give God the glory. They are essential for a fulfilling life, a happy life, a meaningful life.

Since these Spiritual fruit are indicators of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit, they are not qualities which we must discover and slowly develop in ourselves. They are different from God given talents and abilities. They are not qualities which we can create or produce by our own initiative. They are gifts. They are manifestations of God’s grace. We receive them through faith. God uses these gifts in the lives of believers to enhance our witness, to advance the Kingdom of God, to fulfill his will in our lives and in the world.

God sent the Holy Spirit to us to guide and empower our lives. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. Can you think of times in which you felt guided by the Holy Spirit? Such times are evidence of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. For example, do you ever feel like it all depends on you? Do you ever feel like the weight of responsibility is on your shoulders alone? This is the time we need to be alert to the coming and manifestation of God’s Holy Spirit. God’s Spirit comes to bring strength and power to our lives. When we feel powerless and discouraged, that’s when God ignites the power of His Spirit within and among us.

One example is God’s peace. Recall Jesus’ words: *“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, I do not give as the world gives, do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”* Peace is one of the eight fruits of the Spirit which the Apostle Paul enumerates in the letter of Galatians. Have you ever felt anxious, maybe for a moment, or perhaps for a period of time, and then you suddenly experienced an inner calm or tranquility? This is evidence of the work of God’s Spirit in your life. The Holy Spirit empowers and encourages, that is, it inspires or engenders courage in our hearts. The Holy Spirit produces those qualities which we need to cope with and endure in stressful situations.

Some biblical interpreters claim that the list of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians is exhaustive, and others claim it is suggestive of the kind of work which the Holy Spirit produces in our lives through faith. What do you think?

Let us praise God for the gift of His Spirit.

May God’s grace be with you,

Rev. Alan W. Deuel