

The Fruit of Eternal Life
Romans 6:12-23
June 21, 2020

How many of you like fruit? We all remember a couple who liked fruit. How was it that day? Oh, they had seen the tree on which the fruit was going. They had been told about it. God wanted it to be a negative in their lives, a place they **wouldn't** go.

What makes a fruit, one you would want to eat? Have you gone to a place where you picked your own fruit? Yes, you pick and have to buy more than you thought you would but just being on that ladder, up in the branches, seeing that perfect looking fruit and yes, even sampling a few or more than a few, as you pick. So good looking, so tasty. Fresh, juicy, sweet or tart, it sure beats that fruit you have bought at the grocery store. Perfect, worth the drive, and the experience.

You can see yourself out there, picking your own fruit, excited about what is going to go on as you fill that bucket. Yet, what if unbeknown to you, there was something wrong with that fruit? What if the color and the taste of the fruit were not real? What if they were sprayed with color and taste enhancements? Would that make you feel differently than you did especially when like so many things, you see on the internet that the chemicals used on the fruit can have deleterious effects on your health?

What about that pick your own place you got to go to the next weekend. How did it compare with the one down the road. Yes, the fruit was good but it didn't have the same perfect look. There were a few little imperfections. It tasted good but it didn't have quite that initial tingling on the tongue that the other had. Yes, it was cheaper but knowing that it was safe to eat, even though the taste and the look didn't start out the same, knowing that it was still good looking fruit and surely better tasting than the store bought fruit, you could look forward to it being good for you and not something that may cause problems with your body later. Yes, that is the fruit for you. Next year, you will skip the other place, choosing instead this orchard to enjoy its fruit, knowing it will be good for you.

It is just fruit but what if that fruit meant death or life? That is the fruit Paul is writing of as he describes the fruit of a life of sin, looking at it, pleasing to the eye, good for food and even had the miraculous in its ability to make one wise, all be it, wise to the ways of the sinful world which is out there. He understood that there is a draw of the world that gives rise to our bodies, our flesh wanting something more, better than God and His promises. He knew that the draw from the world is great. He knew that while

you are in the midst of it, it seems so good, so exciting, what could be better than this, but he also knew that people don't want to ask the question: What will be the ultimate outcome of a life like this life? They don't think of the end of all this, and it will all come to an end, they don't think that what went on before is going to make a difference for their futures? That will be something that will haunt for the rest of your death.

Paul understood the draw of the world, and of sin that was in it. He knew what was out there. He also knew that the fruit of the new life, the life where, yes, there may not be the same kind of excitement but knowing how it all ends, what is that worth in the excitement to come. Delayed gratification, how hard it is now but oh how sweet it is when you finally make it to the end, especially when it really isn't the end but a new beginning that will never end, excitement and taste and sensual beauty as you could ever imagine.

Paul knew the other life was, even a life of slavery. There was is a difference though. Slavery to the world is a slavery where the next excitement, the next taste, the next experience will never be enough. It is a life where a person chases all this world has to offer and even with all it promises, there has to be that next exciting thing or next experience and taste for life which always leaves you looking for more, or greater or "better." It will never fully satisfy, there will always be that desire to want more, always chasing after the next glittery thing.

Paul is pointing out that the life he now lives that awaits those who are slaves to righteousness have something awaiting them that can't compare. There is no guilt with this free gift. There is no working, to get something more because you understand that what awaits is something that can't be met by anything in this world and in the end, life awaits, eternal life and not death. Can't you imagine looking back at how, if it weren't for a God who loved you so much, you could have chosen that other end, really because of our first parents and our original beginning, the other end was already chosen for you?

Paul makes the point clear, we have been set free from the slavery of sin and have become slaves as it were, slaves of righteousness, of that righteous light that shines the truth on the lives of all people. We have that light to live until that day when this is gone and we are with our Savior, our friend, Jesus forever.

What more could be said and yet, guess what, we are living life in this sin tainted world with all its draws, with fruit that even though we know is not for us, it still tempts us to fall into a life of sin. If it weren't for the Holy Spirit living in each of us, we would be sunk, stuck deep in the mire of sin, but praise be to Jesus for the light of His life for us.

We are under grace. Oh, how the devil and our old Adam keeps bringing up all that Jesus did it all for us surely can't be enough. How easy is it to just put your big toe into that other world, a world is right there, just the touch of a button, just the click of that enter key that takes you into a world of so many promises for the flesh but it all seeks to pull you away from Jesus.

It is so easy to see what it offers **now** without even thinking about the future. Lets face it. The Lord has given us so much in this life and there is so much right at our fingertips. Maybe it would have been better if the Lord put us in the middle of the jungle where each day was a struggle just to live, where there weren't a lot of choices, where even a little thing would mean so much. We are spoiled with a country, a life, desired by so many, yet with all we have, within reach, there is that fruit that entices, even today after these thousands of years, that entices us to chase after all that glitters and shines.

Paul said we as humans have natural limitations. God isn't limited. He can provide all there could ever be, ever wanted. We can see the future, even heaven is clouded in questions. What will it mean that we will live eternally? What could life be like without pain, without hunger, a life where each day will be the best, never a dull day, never a fruit that will harm you but will truly be good for food and to make one wise, not for an earthly wisdom but a heavenly, spiritual wisdom that comes from God.

We should know what awaits us but we are surrounded by this world. Our flesh is constantly on the hunt to have it satisfied, NOW. Living in this nation, so much of our fleshly desires can be fulfilled at least until the next desire so easily. We don't have to worry when we step out of our houses that we may have to lose our lives for the faith we have been blessed with as not something we have to work hard for with the sweat of our brow or the anxiety of not knowing if we have done enough or have stepped on a crack and we have now just lost our luck with God.

This isn't the striving for something more as the flesh desires, needs, requires. The striving was done by Jesus who for the joy set before Him came to this earth to live the life to where the fruit He supplies, is the best fruit in the end, the fruit that leads to sanctification. It leads to our being made holy by Jesus who lived the perfect, holy, Life but then took on the sin of the world on the cross and completed payment, the payment that the Triune God demanded. He had to come into this world and live His life knowing what it was going to cost Him so that He could provide for us the fruit of eternal life.

He knew what He was getting Himself into. He knew it would not be easy especially coming from heaven. He knew what it was all about, knowing what we know but knowing also He had the Words of eternal life that included Him living out those

Words, looking to the harvest where all who believe because of the faith given by the Holy Spirit would have something He knew, an eternal life that is so great, He was willing to sacrifice His life for us so we, by the power of the Holy Spirit could to be able to live life to Him.

Can you imagine His joy when faith enters us and we don't reject what He has done for us but take the gift He gives as a great gift in a box but with even more in the box that we can see now. In it is something even greater than the big box of life we have been given but is only seen now as a small box with promises hidden inside.

The thing we need to think about is the fact how God has come through for the whole world, not with something that didn't cost Him anything but it cost Him His Son. Think about it, would He go all the way to sacrifice His Son if it wouldn't result in something great, greater than anything we could experience here on this sin filled earth?

No, I know Him better than that. He comes through, time and time again for those He loves. He loved us enough to go to that cross for us. He loves us enough to come and live in us, redeemed and yet still sinners, capable of rejecting Him and turning to the beautiful looking and tasting fruit of this world, of the flesh.

Yes, that fruit is all around us but we have been made aware and have been provided a different fruit. It may have all the glitz and glamor that entices but this fruit is solid food for our eternal life.

Yes, even as Christians, we know of the enticements of the world around us and yes, we have failed to live the life the Lord has for us. He brings us back though, continually working by His Holy Spirit to be that one to put the brakes on our flesh and guide us to look past the all that glitters but isn't gold.

How many times did Adam and Eve think about what they had done to themselves and to the world. Oh, they knew if they hadn't taken from that tree everyone else would have but to think it was their sin that started it all, must have weighed on them from the start as they lost two sons, one to another son and the other to the world.

We have been given the fruit that leads to sanctification which in the end leads to a wondrous and flavorful eternal life. Why should we throw it all away to be slaves of sin that leads to eternal separation from the triune God that loves us. Yes, we are slaves but slaves to the one who provides all we will ever need and in the end desire. Great fruit provided for our lives. Lets live it in Him.