

# FRUIT



In His great wisdom, God created a wide variety of fruit. They come in a number of shapes, sizes, colors and flavors. All fruit have important benefits such as vitamins and fiber which helps to keep us healthy.

Producing fruit is a sign that a tree is healthy since it takes much effort for a tree to produce fruit. A sick tree cannot produce much fruit or very healthy fruit.

What can we learn from God's creation of fruit?

Just as there are many types of fruit in many sizes, shapes, colors and flavors, there are also many types of people in the world. If we were all the same type of person, we could not survive. For example, if we were all teachers, who would be the students; if we were all doctors, who would grow our food? In His great wisdom, God made us all a little different from each other. The Bible teaches us in Romans 12:4-6, "Just as each of us has one body with many members (parts) and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body (the Christian Church) and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts according to the grace given us." In other words, just as there are many parts to our bodies and each are needed for a different job, there are many kinds

of people and each is needed to do the work God gave them the ability to do.

Just as God created the many different types of fruit, He also created many different nations of people. People come in different colors and sizes but they are all the same - they are all God's creation and are loved by Him exactly the same. The Bible teaches us in Romans 15:7, "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you in order to bring praise to God." The Bible also says in Galatians 3:26, 28 "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus ... There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

In the church there are also many types of people. Each may have different gifts but, working together, they help the church grow and spread the gospel. Working together the many types of people keep the church healthy. The Bible teaches us in Romans 12:6-8, "We have different gifts according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let

him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully." As you can see, just as there are many types of fruit, each with a different use, there are many types of people in the church, each also with a different use. Each has a special gift that, combined with the gifts of the others in the church, work together for the glory of God.

When a tree produces good fruit, it is healthy. When a tree produces no fruit or bad fruit, it is unhealthy. The fruit is a good clue about the health of the tree. When it comes to people, God wants us all to be healthy in our faith and to produce good "fruit" which are visible signs of the faith we have. We can only be healthy if we believe in the teachings of the Bible exactly as it is written. We become unhealthy when we add to the Bible's teachings, take things away from the Bible's teachings or believe in false religions. Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior, the only true Son of God the Father and who, with

God the Holy Spirit created us, brings us to faith and keeps us in faith, loves and protects us and gives us eternal life.

What good fruit does God want us to produce? The Bible teaches us in Galatians 5:22-23, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." Because we are given the gift of faith and forgiveness of our sins, we should be grateful and desire to live according to the Bible's teachings. We should try to fight our sinful ways and try to do the things the Bible tells us to do. This is the fruit God wants us to produce. We are not earning our salvation - that is the gift of God. We are only trying to do as our Lord and Savior asks because He has done so much for us. That is the good fruit the Bible talks about.

When a person rejects Jesus or sins on purpose, it shows that his faith is unhealthy and his actions produce bad fruit. You would not want to buy and eat bad fruit. God wants us to produce only good fruit. Unless a person believes that Jesus is their Savior, he

or she cannot produce God-pleasing fruit as Jesus tells us in John 15:4-5, "Remain in me and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

It is very important to remember that only Jesus can give us the gift of forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Producing fruit (the things we do) does not earn our salvation - it is what we do because we are grateful to God. The good or bad fruit we produce comes from believing in Jesus or not believing in Him and obeying the Bible's teachings or not obeying them.

We do not all produce the same type or amount of fruits of faith and we should not think that we are better or worse than anyone else because of this. We can only produce the fruits of faith that God makes us able to produce. Believing in Jesus is the most important fruit of faith there is and all other fruits of

faith are not as important. One person may be healthy and travel all over the world spreading the gospel. Another person may be sick and bed ridden all their life and never travel but he or she believes in Jesus and prays for the church and the world. Each one is producing good fruit that is pleasing to God. As in the parable of the master giving His servants money to use while He is away (Matthew chapter 25), some will produce much and others less. Both are loved by the master and are rewarded by Him upon His return even though they did not produce the same amount.

We have a wonderful and loving God who does not expect us to all be the same or produce the same. He made us all different and helps us produce different types and amounts of the fruits of faith.

