

Got Fresh Fruit Daily?



Galatians 5:13-26

VBS Sermon

If you have your bibles this morning as we conclude our morning worship, we are going to take just a few moments and look at the fruit of the spirit. Open to Galatians 5:13-26. If you're a guest this morning, welcome to Hardin Baptist Church. This is one of the most exciting weeks in the life of our church as we get to come together and literally have four to five hundred kids here each night during VBS. We're really excited about the opportunity of this church in this community gives us of teaching their children. This year, our theme is Got Fruit? The girls, Abbey and Shelley, our preschool and children's directors, gave me the opportunity to write our curriculum for vacation Bible school. After I had finished writing it and handed it to them. They looked at it and said, "Bro Ricky, it's a little over the heads of our preschoolers and children." So I gave them permission to do whatever they needed to do to make sure it was applicable for vacation Bible school students. When I handed them the material, I remember clearly the title of this study was going to be Fresh Fruit Daily. So you can imagine my surprise when they edited the material, came back to a staff meeting, and they handed out pieces of paper with nine different titles of possibilities for the staff to vote on for the name of the theme. I just said, "Girls, it's Fresh Fruit Daily." They lobbied the seven staff members that were there that morning, and when we tabulated all of the votes, I saw four votes for Fresh Fruit Daily. So can you imagine my surprise when the

t-shirts came out and said, Got Fruit? I have no idea how that happened, except I don't have as much influence as senior pastor as I thought I had. So this week, instead of talking about fresh fruit daily, for the last three weeks every time I drive up and down the road, I see a little fruit stand of somebody selling fresh fruit daily. Can you imagine of the theme of vacation Bible school this year, fresh fruit daily? No, it's Got fruit? So every night on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, Chuck, Kory, all the teachers and I are going to be asking your kids, grandkids, and neighbor's kids this question, Got Fruit? However this morning, we're not just talking to the VBS student, we're talking to all of us. So could we explore this thought got fruit? We all know, according to the Bible, that the evidence that we are a Christian is that we have the Holy Spirit of God living inside us and He is reproducing His life in us. As He reproduces His life in us, there is the nine-fold cluster of fruit called the fruit of the Spirit. Got fruit? Can I go a little deeper? Got Fresh Fruit? Let's not just ask if we have fruit, or if we have fresh fruit, let's ask, Got fresh Fruit Daily? I want to warn you parents and grandparent, your children love VBS. They are going to come home at the end of this week, nightly, and they're going to be singing these three songs Matt has written specifically for our VBS. They're going to be singing, VBS, VBS, VBS. They're going to be singing about Got Fruit? They're going to be singing about Keeping in Step with the Spirit. We're going to be teaching some of them who are young believers, some who are not believers yet, but will be. We're going to be teaching them about what is the evidence of the Christian life. here's what they're going to do; they're going to look in your life as their mother, the dad, the grandparent, Aunt, or Uncle, and they are going to be asking, Got Fruit? Got Fresh Fruit? Got Fresh Fruit Daily?

I stopped yesterday at a fruit stand because we're struggling at our house right now to have fresh fruit. I could go to the freezer and thaw out some strawberries that were frozen months ago, but it wouldn't be fresh. It was fresh months ago, but it's not fresh now. I could go to the pantry and we have some little peaches in syrup in a container that was fresh when it was picked, but it's not fresh now. I could pull out that bottom drawer and there are some apples and oranges that I promise you they were not fresh when I got them at the store, and they're really not fresh now, but it's all

they had. Yesterday, I saw that stand, Fresh Fruit Daily, and I stopped and before I bought, I asked where the peaches came from. They came from Union City, TN. That's close. I asked where the watermelons came from, and they came from Missouri, and that's getting closer than Alabama, and Georgia. But on my own farm, if I wanted something fresh, I would have to go out to the garden, wade through the weeds, and try to find a tomato. That would be the only fresh fruit on my farm.

If somebody wanted fresh fruit, how far would they have to go to see it? Could they just look at you as a dad, as a mom, as a granny, or papaw? Where would they have to go? I need you mom and dads to listen very close this morning because we need you to be the examples of what a life looks like that's giving evidence of the fruit of the Spirit. Let's stand together and turn attention to Galatians 5. I want you to know that if you're an adult, our children have a sermon note worksheet, and they're going to be listening for keywords that only they know. So when you see them make marks, know that means they're listening to me for some keywords like fruit, VBS, and love.

Scripture

"For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before,

that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

(Prayer)

Father, one more time we pray to You, asking for Your anointing to let us from the smallest preschooler to the oldest senior saint to truly listen, hear, and be obedient to Your Word. We don't want to be hearers only; we want to be doers. I don't want to be a speaker only, but a doers of Your Word. Thank You Father for VBS. Thank You for this fruit that we get to examine this week during VBS on First Fruits Farm. In Your Son's name, we ask for this anointing, amen.

Watch out. Keep up. Would you say that with me, watch out, keep up. That's what we want every adult and every child to understand this morning. As Paul writes to the church at Galatia, and he talks about this great freedom that we have in Christ Jesus where we have been set free from the penalty of sin and the power of sin, Paul warns us, cautions us, he is waving at us to get our attention to say watch out. What does he want us to watch out for? Please hear this if you're a mommy, a daddy, a grandparent, an employer, or an employee, you've got to watch out because even though you're free in Christ, have the Holy Spirit of God living inside you, and you can give evidence of the fruit of the Spirit, you still have a flesh that has not been redeemed. What your flesh would like to do because it has a mind of its own is to take the freedom you've got and get you to use it selfishly.

Did you catch that? He talks about is if you're not careful and you don't watch out, if you don't realize you still have an unredeemed flesh and can still do acts of sin, you will get in relationships with people, a husband-wife, parent-child, a best friend relationship, a work relationship, an employer-employee relationship, or a church member relationship and it could be like

two animals that start playing. Let's just imagine two pet dogs that we have at our house and they are playing. Have you ever noticed they'll put their paw on each other, then their body on each other? They kind of wrestle around and the next thing you know, one of them starts mouthing at the other. The other mouths back, and then the other mouths again, but this time he does it just a little too hard, and instead of acting like nothing happened and walking away and realizing he didn't mean to hurt him, the other dog bites back. So now the first dog yelps, and he doesn't just yelp, he bites back harder! So the second dog yelps and the next thing you know they are trying to kill each other. We've all seen that, right.

Do you see why Paul says to watch out? Paul is warning us that there will be times when somebody is going to wrong us, and because we're free in Christ our unredeemed flesh is going to tell you that because of what they just did to you, you now need to do this back. What your flesh is leading you to do back is just as wrong as what they did to you. The Bible warns us that if you do that, it could break relationships. Adults, your flesh will say to you that if you don't act back this way and defend yourself, they're going to think what they just did was ok. So if you let that slide and don't act wrong back, they'll never change. They'll stay the same. Paul says watch out! Can I be honest with you? When someone wronged me and I decided to listen to my flesh and did something wrong back, I have never had the person say, "Oh, I get it! I'm sorry! I didn't mean to do that; how thoughtless of me!" Have you? Never. Do you know what always happens? When they have wronged me and I now wrong them back, they have forgotten all about the wrong they did, and now they only see my wrong. Before this thing is over, this thing has been turned around on me and it is my fault.

Do you get it? Why are we studying about the fruit of the Spirit? Why are we teaching this to our kids and grandkids? It is because in life, inevitably, somebody is going to wrong us, but if we're children of God, He never wants us to do wrong back. God always wants us to do right back. When we do right back, people see the personality of Christ in us, and doing right back, over a period of time, ultimately brings them to see and be convicted about what they're doing wrong. So we don't need to just have fruit; we

need to have fresh fruit. We don't need a reaction that comes from something you decided to do years ago, you've stored it away in the freezer, and in a moment's notice, you take it out of the freezer, put it in the microwave, and react. No, it's not going to be a prepackaged answer, and it's not going to be a rotten or bad fruit. It's going to be us in such a relationship with God through His Holy Spirit that the moment someone wrongs us, we respond with fruit, which gives evidence we are really His. Moms and dads, your kids are watching you. Please tell me you know that. Grandparents, as much fun as they have at your house, they're watching you.

Now your church is going to come along this week and actually teach your children what the real evidence of being under the control of the Holy Spirit is. They will come home and the first place they're going to expect to see fruit is in mom and dad's life and in the grandparent's life. So we want you to be ready. So let's all say, watch out! Now, I'm not watching out for you and what you do wrong to me. I'm watching out for what's inside me, and that's a flesh that's going to react wrong to what you just did wrong. So I'm going to watch out.

Now Paul tells me as I'm watching out, he tells me if I would just walk in step with the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit, I can never fulfil the lust of the flesh. Whoa! Get this picture. If I'm a believer and I walk under the control of the Spirit, I'll never do something that would wrong anyone, either the initiation of it, or the response of it, because I can't. Was that clear? This is where Abbey and Shelley have to help me break it down. Did you catch that? If I'm walking in step with the Spirit, I'll never want to do anything that would hurt anybody. I'll never want to commit an act of sin. so Paul is teaching that if I'm under the control of the Spirit, I can't fulfil the desire of the flesh, which means if I ever fulfil the desire of my flesh, I'm not under the control of the Spirit. Tell me you see that. I may not always know when I am under the control of the Spirit, but I always know when I'm not. When I'm not is when I sin against God, and I sin against someone. So immediately, I've got to realize Paul says I have an unredeemed flesh living inside me, I have the Spirit of God living inside me, and they are actually battling each other. So the Holy Spirit of God at

all times, anytime a temptation comes, is going to try to lead me to do right while my unredeemed flesh may want me to do wrong, they are going to be battling with each other, and I've got to choose who I'm going to listen to. Paul just kind of throws in that as a believer, we can do acts of sin, but if we continue to practice a lifestyle of sin then we'll not inherit the kingdom of God. Which means what? We're not really a believer.

So what do I have to do to have love, where I put others first; joy, where I'm smiling on the inside; peace, where there are no worries; patience, where I wait. I can go all the way through the list. This is not found in the manufacturing section in my life; it is in the produce section, which means I don't do anything. There's nothing I can do. I can't make it happen; I just have to yield and let the Holy Spirit of God live His life through me. I have to keep in step with the Spirit. Do you know, I think that's the problem? I think Christianity is kind of like riding a bicycle. There is that part where you pedal, and you pedal, and you pedal, and all of a sudden, you're not on flat ground anymore; you're on a hill. That hill gets a little steeper and you're pedaling really hard, and the next thing you know you are on top of a mountain. You're seeing a view you've never seen before and it's absolutely awesome! How many of you have been there? You get to the crest, and now you've got a choice. I was going about eight to ten miles per hour up the hill, and I'm now at the top and I can coast down and probably pick up a little speed, maybe do fifteen, sixteen, twenty miles per hour and I'm not even pedaling; I'm just coasting, being rewarded for all the pedaling I've been doing. Depending on how high I was, I can go a long way for a long time. Or, I can choose to shift the road bike into the highest gear I've got and pedal as fast as I can pedal and break speeds I've never broken before if I just keep pedaling! Some of us have stopped pedaling, and we're coasting. Your wife doesn't know it, your pastor doesn't know it, your best friend at work doesn't know it because you've been so high in your life and so close to the Lord that at first you're going faster than you were when you were pedaling, and everything looks good. But now, instead of a day or two, it's been a week or two. Instead of a week or two, it's been months, or it's been years, and you don't have fruit, fresh fruit daily.

So what do we have to do to have fresh fruit daily? We've got to watch out for what's on the inside of us, and that's an unredeemed flesh. Then, we've got to keep up with who is on the inside of us, and that's the Holy Spirit of God. I know I've told you this, but I wish I had never told you as a church, (sometimes I've just been too honest with who I really am) but you know that I have no musical ability in me at all. I see those smirks. But I really believe if I had not told you that, and the only time you saw me was on Sunday morning sitting on the front row, you would never know that I don't have musical ability. Let me tell you what I've been doing for a long time. Sometimes on Sunday morning, I sway back and forth when I'm worshipping. Have you ever noticed that about me? Have you ever seen me get so excited in worship that I just start to clap, and sway. What I have learned to do in this church is to watch our worship leader, Matt. Sometimes, I see his little foot start tapping, and I just do what he does! He taught me a long time ago that if I will just listen to the drum, which sets the beat, I can clap in step with the drum, and you would never know that I don't have rhythm! Without the drum and without Matt, it would be bad. That's why some of you are messing up really, really bad. In and of yourself, you have nothing, so we've got to manufacture love, manufacture joy, and peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. but if we would just keep in step with God, who is on the inside of us, He will start reproducing His life in us, and the life He reproduces in us looks a whole lot like the life of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Got fruit? Got fresh fruit? Got fresh fruit daily?