

Abundant Spiritual Treasures



“But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold and a hundredfold” (Mark 4:20).

The fruit on that tree enticed her. Evil thoughts were put into her head, leading her to believe amazing wisdom would be hers if she ate it. Although given permission by God to eat of every tree in the garden except that one, Eve saw the beautiful fruit and desired to taste of its juicy contents. And the bonus: she would be wise like God. How could she refuse? Yielding to temptation, she ate of it and then offered it to Adam, her husband. He also ate of it. The bite they took changed their lives, and ours. Inherited sin now dwells within all mankind and remains as a constant struggle for everyone, even God’s chosen children. (Genesis 3:1-7)

Would our choice have been any different? Would we have refused to eat the fruit? We will never know, but it is likely that Satan would have done His best to entice each and every one of us, just as he did with Adam and Eve. Yet in spite of their sin, they received a promise that a Savior would come. We, too, live on the promise that our sins are covered for we are restored and redeemed children of the Father. As a result of the empowering Holy Spirit within us and the means of grace (Word and Sacraments), we can trust daily in the living spiritual fruit.

Jesus once said,

***“Abide in me, and I in you
As the branch cannot bear
fruit by itself, unless it
abides in the vine, neither
can you, unless you abide
in me. I am the vine; you
are the branches. Whoever
abides in me and I in him,
he it is that bears much
fruit, for apart from me
you can do nothing”***

(John 15:4-5).

The fruit available to us today is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is nothing like the fruit that tempted Adam and Eve in the garden, but rather a fruit that feeds us in our inner being. When loving our neighbor is challenging, His love spills out as streams of living waters. When circumstances steal our hap-

pininess, joy can be discovered from the fruit that only Christ can provide in His fullness. As patience wanes away and we cry out for a way to get the answers more quickly, the Holy Spirit provides the peace that surpasses understanding as we wait. Bothered by irritable family members or fellow workers, rather than getting angry and rude, we trust the Spirit to grant us His kindness, goodness, and self-control. Worn out from the daily grind, we cry out to Him, believing that faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control will flow from within. All are available in His fruit. All are given as needed and will reveal a Source totally uncommon to those around us as they witness a life solidly grounded in Christ (Galatians 5:22).

We can rejoice that we live in His kingdom and have His Spirit available daily. Covered by His blood, we can fall on our knees and believe that our inadequacies are used and empowered by the Lord's very special fruit – a fruit promised and provided with love.

Prayer: Dear Father, I thank You that Your love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are mine. Give me the ability to trust in your steadfast love and to rejoice in your salvation. Amen.