

BECOMING A FRUITFUL PEOPLE OF GOD



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Foreword

This material was delayed for some time before the author finally decided to publish on the website and have it printed. Why was it delayed? Was it because the writer was not convinced about the contents, or he has not gained a complete understanding of the topic yet? No. The writer was fortunate to be given the understanding within but a short time. If so, why the delay? Since at the time the writer got a clear understanding of the topic, he realized that he still had many shortcomings about the subject. The writer had struggled about this issue until finally he decided to continue finishing it. He realized that it was absolutely most important to become a fruitful child of God. The writer hopes that this article he wrote would not only become a blessing to the readers, but also could motivate himself to live it.

Finally, all praise to the almighty and merciful God, who through His grace grants all of us the opportunity to be able to understand this most important topic about how we could become God's fruitful people, so that we as children of God would not be cut off and thrown into the fire of hell.

Soli Deo Gloria,

The Writer

BECOMING A FRUITFUL PEOPLE OF GOD

CHILDREN OF GOD SHOULD BEAR FRUIT

The concept of 'fruit-bearing' in the New Testament is very important to comprehend by Christ's followers. Namely, the purpose is to make clear the spiritual life of the believers as written in the Gospel of John 15:2 which states that *“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”* The Lord Jesus said that every branch that bears no fruit will be cut off and thrown away. It means that to bear fruit is obligatory for every child of God. And here to bear fruit means to bear the fruit of the Spirit, which in Galatians 5:22-23 is described as follows, *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,*

temperance: against such there is no law.” For more details please read the writer's book entitled **"Fruit of the Spirit"**.

ADMONITION TO BEAR FRUIT

In Philippians 2:12-13 the Apostle Paul said, *“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”*

Verse 13 explains that to bear fruit is part of God's plan. God Himself will work on it so that we will be able to bear fruit. However, in verse 12 there is also some part in His plan for us to do namely to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. To work out our salvation does not mean we do something in order to be saved. No! At the time we received Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we already have the salvation. All we ought to do is to **hold** that salvation. **For those who will**

be saved are those who earnestly contend for their faith to the end. So, here the emphasis is upon how we defend our faith until the end of our lives. And this needs to be done seriously, with fear and trembling.

THREE BASIC PRINCIPLES TO BEAR FRUIT

First : Be Sure We Are God's Children

John 15:4 says, *“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; **no more can ye, except ye abide in me.**”*

Thus, the part which can bear fruit is the branch that abides in the vine; and that branch is us, we as children of God. They who are not God’s children can never bear fruit. Even we, when seperated from the Vine or renounce our belief in the Lord Jesus, will be impossible to bear fruit. **Therefore, we need to be sure we have become true children of God.** So there is no harm to read again the writer's book

entitled *The Characteristics of God's Children*. For only God's children will be saved and only God's children can bear fruit.

Generally, there are 4 characteristics of God's children:

- 1. To know the Lord personally with all His laws and commandments,** to be able to discern which are the true doctrines and which are the false ones. As children, of course, we want to know our fathers, their characters, and desires. So too as children of God we certainly have a desire to know God and His laws or regulations. So if we do not have a strong desire to hear the Word of God and read His word, or do so yet reluctantly or sleepily, then we need to question our legitimacy as His children. As children of God we are required not only to know but also to be able to distinguish which is the true God and which is not, to be able to discern God and the Evil One, also to be able to recognize which are God's teachings and which are not.

2. **Following God's will** and not our own nor the desire of the flesh, meaning that we have a genuine repentance. We no longer live in the flesh but continue to follow God and do what He wants us to do.

3. **To have a personal relationship with God.** To set aside a quiet time to pray to God to communicate with Him in a personal relationship. And if we do it seriously, there will be a close and intimate interactive relationship between God and us. God might relate to us through a vision, by the voice of the Holy Spirit, or in dreams. He can also use Bible verses, by which we get a revelation or correction of disciplines while listening to His word, or some confirming statement from those around us. The revelation or special communication from God to us can occur anywhere and anytime according to God's plan and disposal.

4. To live by God's guidance. When we look back at our past, we can see how excellent and precise God has guided us. For example, why in the past I studied at college B while actually I wanted to study at college A. Now as I flash back, I understand that in fact God wants me to be like I am now. So I studied at college B. We might not understand everything that happens in our lives. Instead, often only some parts of all our experiences such as failure, lost, sickness, and others. We realize that God has a perfect plan in our lives. God's guidance does not always relate to great things, yet even in our daily lives we can sense God's guidance.

Second : To Repent

To repent is to abandon our old lives and promise not to commit sins we did in the past or before we accepted Christ as our Lord and Savior. In the Bible the word to repent is usually

given a clearer explanation and stronger emphasis so that we should not become **ungodly and wicked**.

Jude 3-4 says, *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you **that ye should earnestly contend for the faith** which was once delivered unto the saints. **For there are certain men crept in unawares**, who were before of old ordained to this **condemnation, ungodly men**, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."* - KJV

Or *"Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you **to contend for the faith** that was once for all entrusted to the saints. **For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you**. They are **godless men**, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord."* - NIV

The verse above affirms that we should strive to keep the faith and are told that we should not live like the wicked or the godless people who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness or a license of immorality.

The Ungodly

What kind of people are the ungodly? The Bible explains much about the characteristics of the ungodly or the wicked and we are required not to follow their conducts. For example, in Psalm 119:155, "*Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.*"

The Bible speaks of the wicked as those who turn away from God. They are the ones who have accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior, but in following the Lord they draw further and further away from Him because they have no desires to seek God's decrees. When they were newly converted, they read the Bible diligently and went to church faithfully. But as

they got further away, they read the Bible less and probably rarely go to church by now, so that their faith has grown weaker.

Psalms 119:53 says, "*Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.*" ("Indignation grips me because of the wicked, who have forsaken your law." - NIV). They are God's children who understand God's word, but they do not want to apply it in their lives. Formerly, when I have not yet understood the meaning of this verse, I used to think that the wicked were Christians given to drunkenness, intoxication, gambling and gathered with criminals, but it was not always that way. Jude 3-4 above explains that the wicked are "*certain men crept in unawares*".

So, the ungodly or wicked people can also be found in the church; they are not always outside the church. And even in the church it is not difficult to detect them, whether the one who is sitting in front of me, or at my left, or at my right, or behind me. We do not need to give effort to look around

finding one, because we ourselves might be the one who is ungodly!

Since I as a husband know for sure that I ought to love my wife yet I do not do so, then I am ungodly or wicked. When a wife knows for sure that she has to submit to her husband yet she does not do so, then she is ungodly or wicked. When a father knows for sure that he should not hurt his child, yet he still does, then he is ungodly or wicked. When a child knows for sure that he or she has to honor his or her parents yet does not do so, then he or she is ungodly or wicked. When we know for sure that we are in the capacity of helping our needy relatives yet unwilling to do so, we are ungodly or wicked. When we do not give our offerings and tithes, we are ungodly or wicked. Even I myself, sometimes am given the privilege to deliver a sermon and write books, would also be ungodly or wicked if I do not apply God's word that I already conceive.

Then we read in Proverbs 10:16, *“The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin.”* If we want

to know whether or not we belong to the ungodly or the wicked, one way is by looking at our income and expenditure. First, how we earn our money. Is it according to God's Word, or not? Second, how we spend our money. Do we use it for proper and essential things? Do we spend our money to glorify God, or use it on things that causes sin?

Then in Psalms 37:21 it says, *"The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth."*

Thus, if we borrow money but do not want to pay off our debt, we are wicked. Similarly, if we join in an organization but do not pay our dues, then the arrears are our debt. So too with our obligations to God to bring our offerings, tithes, and other responsibilities.

Galatians 5:13 says, *"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."*

The ungodly or the wicked are those who think that to do a sinful thing is okay. When I sin today, then I can ask for forgiveness, and things are fixed, all cleared up. Hence when I do again some sins, I again can ask for forgiveness, and things would be all right again.

**God Is Merciful and Compassionate,
But Do Not Consider His Grace Cheap**

Some people assume that as our Lord is merciful and compassionate, so they may treat Him lightly by abusing His grace; while actually we have to differentiate between God's grace and a cheap gift. Indeed, our Lord is merciful and compassionate. Because of His great love, He is willing to sacrifice His Son to redeem us from our sins. However it does not mean that God's grace is cheap. Our God is Almighty, He is the Creator of heaven and earth, a just and righteous God, but

also a jealous God who would discipline and even punish His unrepentant children.

So, the ungodly or the wicked are the so called God's children, who live carnally or in the flesh. They do not want to lead a godly life according to God's will. They refuse to bear the cross!

The Difference Between Chaffs and Grains

The ungodly or the wicked would not be saved. Psalms 1:4 says, "*The ungodly are not so: but are like **the chaff which the wind driveth away.***" This is a parable. The chaff here means the husk of grain, separated from the kernel. Usually at harvest time, after being spread out in the sun to dry, the grains are separated from the stalks and then sifted. The grains with no seeds in them, namely the chaff, will be blown away by the wind when winnowed. On the other hand, the good and full

grains or wheat remain in the sieves which would be collected then put into the barn.

Verse 6 explains, *“For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of **the ungodly shall perish.**”* Thus the chaff would finally be burnt!

How can we distinguish the chaffs from the full grains? Plants with full grains would bend down deeper and deeper, while plants with chaffs would stand erect. This means that if we conceive pride either worldly or spiritually, then we need to check less we have been trapped into ungodliness. It is impossible for the husk to grow and bear fruit since the husk does not contain seed. Instead, when planted it will get rotten.

If we look at a glance, the chaffs and the full grains or wheat look similar. Even so in our lives sometimes we cannot differentiate which are God’s true children and which are the ungodly or the wicked. The ungodly or the wicked sometimes use Christian attributes too. The ungodly or the wicked might

go to church diligently, sing praises loudly, even are active in a Christian organization, and when meet with people might spontaneously utter Christian terms like "Praise the Lord! Hallelujah!"; and might even be able to deliver astonishing sermons. Yet again, the ungodly or the wicked cannot bear fruit and will be thrown into the fire.

Third: Cleanse the Heart

In Acts 24:16 the apostle Paul said, *“And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.”*

Or *“ So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.”* - NIV

Why did the apostle Paul always strive to live with a clear conscience or pure heart? Because sins start from the heart.

Mark 7:21-22 says, *“ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murders, thefts,*

covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.”

So, sins start from the heart.

What comes out of the mouth comes from the heart. In Matthew 15:18, it is said, *“But those things which **proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.**”*

Once I heard somebody said, *“Oh, that man’s mouth is really dirty, but his heart is pure.”* Would that be possible? Someone whose mouth is dirty, must also have a dirty heart, because what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart.

Likewise, when Cain killed Abel, he did not do it all of a sudden. The intention of killing began from within his heart. In Genesis 4:5, *“but into Cain and to his offering he had not respect. **And Cain was very wrath, and his countenance fell.**”*

We praise the Lord, since at the moment we receive Christ as our Lord and Saviour our hearts are cleansed.

Hebrew 10:22 says, *“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, **having our hearts sprinkled** from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

Hence, at the moment we receive Christ as our Lord and Saviour, then our hearts are sprinkled (baptized); we are washed clean from our sins. All things that are unclean, filthy, and dirty in our hearts are purified. This is also explained in Acts 15:8-9 *“And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, **purifying their hearts by faith.**”* So when we put our faith in the Lord Jesus, God bestowes the Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts and cleanses all our filthiness.

Our hearts are most important, for if our hearts are good our lives would be good too. On the other hand, if our hearts are dirty our lives would be dirty too. That is why Proverbs 4:23 warns us, *“**Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.**”*

How can we guard our hearts?

Reciprocal Relationships Between the Heart and the Mind

As we can not see within our hearts, how can we guard them? If we observe closely there is a reciprocal relationship between the heart and the mind.

Jesus explained in Mark 7:21, *“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders.”*

From our minds, we can know what are within our hearts. If we analyze our minds or thoughts, we can know what are within our hearts. So if our thoughts are obscene, we can know that there is obscenity in our hearts. If in our minds we have plans to steal, then we know that there are evil thoughts within our hearts. So this is the kind of relationship between the heart and the mind.

Further the Lord Jesus explained in Matthew 5:28, "*But I say unto you, that whosoever **looketh** on a woman **to lust after** her hath committed adultery with her already **in his heart.***" When we "look", it is to see with our **eyes**, our **thoughts** or minds "lust after", and then enters into our **hearts**. So what our senses do can enter into our minds and then into our hearts. Therefore we must be careful and guard our five senses and our minds.

The Control of Our Five Senses

First we have to be careful with what we **see**; one of which is related to social media. We must be careful. In the past, when I joined in one of the social media groups there were but a few groups; only some business and family groups. Then recently I added another one, because I think we are already in the end times. Sometimes I indirectly delivered materials or warnings related to the end times. However, there were some groups whose messages contained pornography. So

I decided to get out of the group. Although most of the social media groups I joined in were good, yet I still ought to be careful to disclose the contents submitted as they were often inappropriate.

So too in the matter of what we **hear**. If we continue to hear gossips, bad things, wicked issues, then all of them can penetrate into our hearts. Therefore we must choose whatever is necessary and appropriate for us to listen to, so that bad things would not enter into our hearts.

We also should be careful about what we **taste**. In the extreme, do not try drugs, do not ever start it, also do not start to smoke. *"O, I just want to try a little bit. Believe me, I am strong and I will not be easily subdued, you see."* No, sometimes we are not as strong as we think.

We even must pay attention to our sense of **smell**. There was a young man who often said, *"O, I really love the smell of lady's perfume."* So for example, if this young man were in the

elevator, and a woman entered in, he would inhale her pleasant scent and thought, "*Wow, how sweet and fresh is the scent.*" People warned him, "*Today you might like the scent of a lady's perfume, tomorrow you might like the lady.*"

Likewise we must be aware of what we **touch**. Usually mothers like to go shopping, window shopping, touch many items they are interested in although they have no intention to buy at that moment. I belong to them who do not agree with such attitude. When I was still in Senior High School, I used to ride a motorcycle. Some of my friends rode on CB bikes, and some others Trailer bike. I had no desire to try their bikes. I also belong to those who do not like to explore other people's house, because when I did and returned home, then I would find my own house lacking so much compared to others' houses. I would become disappointed, dissatisfied, and so forth. So, I just enjoyed whatever I had.

To Cleanse the Heart and Fill It With Good Things

Our hearts may conceive many unrighteous things. Realizing this condition, we need to ask God to let the Holy Spirit help us cleansing our hearts. On the other hand, what else must we do? Philippians 4:8 says, *“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”*

Indeed, the verse above tells us the very things we should ponder on and let them penetrate into our hearts. Let us cast away the bad and filthy things, and substitute them with the good things. That is what we should do. We should think of the things above, not of the things below on earth. We should think of eternal things, not carnal or worldly things. Likewise in our speech. Take control of what we say everyday. If our mouth utter bad things and many kinds of animals in the zoo,

then we surely know that within our hearts dwell filthy things and the inhabitants of the zoo. If our minds are full of hatred, then surely our hearts are also full of hatred. So, we must be very careful in what we say or utter and we have to carefully control and choose every word that comes out of our mouths, for in Matthew 12:36 Jesus said, *“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”*

So, what should we do?

Exercise Diligently

In Acts 24:16 the Apostle Paul said, *“And herein **do I exercise myself**, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.”* Or *“So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.”* – NIV. Hence he said, **“I exercise myself” or “always strive”** as bad things can easily enter into our hearts. For example, at night before we

go to bed some sudden thoughts could flash into our minds, *"Well, the secretary of X smiled so nicely to me this afternoon. Was she trying to allure me into taking her as my mistress?"* Then our minds might linger in the the thoughts of how exciting and enjoyable it could be to have a secondary wife like her. And our imagination hover to profane thinking, of things that are improper. And we might make excuses in our reasoning like this, *"O, this is just a fad. I'm a Christian and can not add any wife. It's only fiddle-faddle."* Truthfully, this kind of thoughts is not just a fad. By permitting such a thought in our minds, we are actually providing access for the spirit of sexual immorality to enter into our hearts and dwell therein.

Sometimes we unconsciously act arrogantly. When we meet up with someone, we evaluate his/her car and say in our hearts, *"O my! What an old car!"* Or when we see somebody at a party we might make a comment in our hearts, *"Wow, her makeup is so vulgar, inelegant!"*

Therefore, if we do not control our senses and minds we unconsciously might commit the sin of pride, and possibly other sins too such as envy, obscenity, sexual immorality, greed, and other evils. That is why the Apostle Paul said that he always strived or diligently exercised to control his mind in order to keep his conscience clear before God and man just as at the moment when we converted. So, we must be very keen to carefully guard our five senses and our minds.

A Good Heart Is A Good Ground

In the parable of the Sower, Luke 8:15, the Lord Jesus explained, *“But that on **the good ground** are they, which in an honest and **good heart**, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”*

How can our hearts be good? First of all, confess all our sins and our filthiness, then ask God to forgive and cleanse our hearts. 1 John 1:9 says, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and*

just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Then we need to forgive those who have done us wrong, *“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”* (Matthew 6:14-15)

Besides our sins are forgiven, by forgiving others who have done wrong to us we also release ourselves from the impurities in our hearts, such as heartache, hatred, anger, resentment, evil thoughts and so on.

We also need to ask forgiveness from others as described in Matthew 5:23-24, *“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”*

Live according to our faith and the grace God gives us. Do not think of ourselves more highly than we ought. Romans 12:3 says, *“Through the grace given unto me, to every man that is*

among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

If we do not apply this verse in our daily life, we would easily become arrogant and disappointed. So, do the best we can, then leave the rest to God who knows what is best for us.

Live according to the blessings God bestows us as in Luke 3:14, *“And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, and what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.”*

When we want to live beyond our capabilities, very likely we will get stuck in the wrong ways so that our hearts would be filled with evil thoughts.

Do not be greedy and do not love money. 1 Timothy 6:10 says, *“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”*

When we are greedy and desire to be rich, we often would justify all means and sacrifice everything even our faith to achieve it.

Let's strive to keep our hearts clean so that it can be a good ground or soil for the Word of God to grow there and bear fruit. Avoid things that will pollute and damage our hearts. For example, if our hearts are full of negative things, it would be like a trash bin: grudge can be likened to stones in our hearts, hatred to pebbles, sexual immorality to trash, and pride to rocks. If our hearts are full of stones and rocks and trash, then it would be difficult for our faith to grow there prosperously and bear fruit. But if our hearts are clean we can bear fruit abundantly. *“But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”* (Matthew 23:23)

As a conclusion, glorifying God and praising Him with our mouths is appropriate. But God would be evenmore pleased when others glorify and praise Him as they see the good fruit of our true Christian lives, according to John 15:8, "*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*"