

Small Group Bible Study Questions

- A) Read Galatians 6:16-21 out loud together as a group. What do you find notable in this passage about Spirit-led living. Verses 19-21 are examples of “rotten” fruit which comes from the flesh. In what ways do Christians hide their rotten fruit and display their “fake” fruit?
- B) What are the most common areas where Christians “fake” their fruitfulness? Do you think it is common for Christians to “fake” their fruit? Why would someone want to fake their fruitfulness?
- C) What are the results of faking fruitfulness? What has been your experience from your own life? Can you share an experience from your own life with your group of a time when others thought you were living a fruit-filled life, when in fact, you were actually producing rotten fruit?
- D) Read Galatians 6:22-25 together in your group. What do you find notable about his passage? Here’s an puzzling question... How can you tell fake fruit from authentic fruit?
- E) Take a careful look through the list of fruit of the Spirit. Is there a fruit you do not see in your life? Sure, we could all you use “more” fruit... What I mean is, do you find that the Spirit has not taken control of some key area of your life, and the list of the Spirit’s fruit has revealed this to you again?! Please, take the time in your group to share the areas of your lives where you sense that you are missing the Spirit of God’s fruitfulness. What will it take for fruit in this (or these) area(s) of your life? Pray together and implore God to send His Spirit to change these areas of your life (and your fellow group members) for fruitful and abundant change!

A Fruitful Mission

Long Beach Alliance Church • August 14th, 2005 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**NO LONGER DO I CALL YOU
SLAVES, FOR THE SLAVE DOES
NOT KNOW WHAT HIS MASTER IS
DOING; BUT I HAVE CALLED YOU
FRIENDS, FOR ALL THINGS THAT I
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HAVE MADE KNOWN TO YOU.
~ JOHN 15:15 (NASB)**

1) You Cannot Fake Authentic Fruitfulness

- A) God is glorified when a Christian “bears much fruit” (John 15:8). The route to this “fruitfulness” is “abiding” in a love relationship with Jesus Christ (15:9).
- B) Our relationship with Jesus Christ leads to following His commands (teaching) and results in complete (full) joy for Christians (15:10-11).
- C) There is a sense in which Christ’s constant teaching on love, His reminding that ‘we love each other as He loved us’ (15:12), is because we have a stubborn & strong tendency to fake authentic intimacy with God and others.

2) Authentic Fruitfulness Will Cost You

- A) To further illuminate our incapacity to love one another apart from our love relationship with Him, Jesus Christ “ups the ante” on what loving one another will cost Himself, and those who follow Him (15:13).

- B) Jesus calls on His followers to love one another, even to the point of death (15:13)! How can anyone accomplish such a thing?! Only through the loss of ourselves in our love relationship with Jesus Christ!

- C) Jesus Christ is also giving His disciples a clear-cut prediction of His own death on their behalf. This “future-sight” moment would be one they would recall after the fact, one which would encourage the disciples in their darkest moments of confusion, loss and dismay (15:13).

3) Authentic Fruitfulness Will Benefit You

- A) Reminding His disciples again (cf. 14:15-21) that obedience flows out of relationship (15:14), Christ powerfully illustrates the depth to which relationship is central to our obedience by contrasting a slave (servant/worker) against his owner/boss (15:15).

- B) While the slave is on a “need to know” basis with his owner, the “friend” (15:15) of Christ has “insider information” which previously was only known between God/Christ/Holy Spirit (15:15 & cf. 1st Peter 1:10-12).

- C) This is not to say that the disciples knew all (John 16:12) that Christ had to teach them, but they were the most privileged, and most informed believers than the whole company of Christ-followers which had preceded them in history (15:15).

4) Authentic Fruitfulness Isn't About You

- A) Perhaps to prevent pride from their privileged position, or perhaps simply to give a deep security that they had not “invented” their relationship with Him, Jesus reminds the disciples that He chose them and has sent them (“appointed”) to bear fruit (15:16).

- B) Even the fruit which the disciples will produce will come from the Holy Spirit (cf. Galatians 5:22-25), in other words, it is not their own. When fruitfulness is truly from the Spirit, it has eternally (“remain”) lasting consequences (15:16).

- C) It is notable that the “other-person” focus of this entire section (chosen by another to reach another) reveals that bearing fruit is largely missional. In other words, we are sent to bear fruit (mission) for the benefit of others (mission), some of which we will never know (mission)!

5) Authentic Fruitfulness Find Life In Love

- A) As if to sum up His teaching, Christ boils the whole of what He has said back down to “love one another” (15:17, cf. 15:12). This is both a capstone to this section, and a sharp contrast of introduction to the next, “if the world hates you...” (15:18 ff).