



CHRISTADELPHIAN ISOLATION LEAGUE

EXHORTATION

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SECTION LEADER:

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Readings: Deuteronomy 2, Proverbs 29, John 12

The Fruit of the Spirit

When we were baptised we had reached a point in our life where we knew we could not continue in our old ways. We understood from the scriptures we had studied that a change in our life was now necessary. The emphasis was no longer on pleasing our self (the man of the flesh). The change meant pleasing God; we had to begin a process of radical change of both thought & deed. This challenge faces all believers who take these first steps to a new life in Christ Jesus. How to effect this change? The scriptures (**Galatians 5:22 AV**), give us direction in our daily living by showing us that we must start to use *"the fruit of the spirit"* in our daily life, our example being the Lord Jesus Christ who never strayed from His Father's will and whose speech was without any form of deceit or malice. What a great example for us to follow. The Lord Jesus tells his disciples to: *"...love one another as I have loved you"* **John 15:12**. *"...that my joy might remain in you"* **John 15:11**.

Let us consider the first *"fruit of the spirit"* that is mentioned in **Galatians 5:22-25**: *"But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit"*. One of these fruits is love. The love of God to man is shown through the Lord Jesus' sacrifice and we should thank God daily for God's love to mankind, this is the Greek word *'agape'*

To love The Lord God is the first commandment. This indeed is the love we should show and is part of the fruit of the spirit we each need. To love others as oneself is the Greek word *'philio'*. Love is a small word with a huge meaning on many levels so it is important we show this in our daily lives as followers of The Lord Jesus.

Some of the parables Jesus taught were connected with love. In His teaching The Lord Jesus says: *"But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you"*. (**Luke 6:27**). This is difficult to do and tests our faith. The parable of the good Samaritan demonstrates this so well (**Luke 10 25-37**). This parable is one such outpouring of love to another human. The Jews hated the Samaritans and there was strong feeling against this teaching of The Lord Jesus. This parable is especially important as The Lord Jesus shows the hard-hearted way in which some Jews looked after themselves and passed by on the other side, even though there was a fellow human being that needed urgent help. Robbers were common in those days so this was a story with a real meaning.

The lawyer asks the question: *"Master what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"* (**Luke 10:25**). This parable is to show the lawyer, the Levite, the Priest and us the importance of love, even to those who are our enemies. And while the parable shows the heartless attitude of the Jewish religious leaders, we can learn from it.

In the parable, the man who has been robbed was shown compassion by the hated Samaritan, who not only helped to bring this poor man to safety, but also said when he came back that way he would, at his own expense, pay the host from his own finances for the ongoing care of this stranger. The lawyer who asked the question must have been humbled by the answer and the question Jesus then went on to ask him: *"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he (the lawyer) said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."* (**Luke 10:36, 37**). What a powerful lesson for us. Faith comes from

the delight in God's law which we can read each day and therefore become, not only familiar with it, but be strengthened by it. Faith must come first, then when we have a full knowledge of God's grace and mercy and what he expects from us, only then can we think about doing good works to others. Those Jews in the parable knew the law and what was expected of them, but chose not to do it.

Throughout the New Testament we see this same message; love your neighbour as yourself. The Lord Jesus preached to the Jews, but after his death and resurrection others were sent to the Gentiles, who did not know God, but worshipped gods of wood & stone.

The Apostle Peter who was one of the three chosen apostles who was closest to the Lord Jesus would later write these words: *"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity(love)"* (**2 Peter 1:5-7**).

We now see the importance of love as a *"fruit of the spirit"*. This is not only a daily way of living our lives but an hourly one, giving praise to God for his great power and gifts in creating and sustaining the world in which we live. We will always fall short of the high standard set by the Lord Jesus Christ. God knows we are trying to please him even though we are sinners. We always need to keep in mind that this is God's world created for his pleasure. We are here by His grace and God cannot be approached by sin or sinners or anything that is imperfect. All we have comes from him. God gave His Son to the world as an example of His love. The Lord Jesus gave His life in obedience to His Father for our sins.

Naturally we will all die but we have a wonderful hope: *"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."* (**1 Corinthians 15:21-23**). These verses show that there is a great hope for those that truly believe in God's Son whose Gospel message we are privileged to read in peace and safety and in our own language whenever we choose. We have looked at just one or two of the aspects concerning *"the fruit of the spirit"*, there are many more.

Forgiveness is another *"fruit of the spirit."* Jesus who endured a terrible death on the cross, a man who knew no sin, was able to say in His dying words: *"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."* (**Luke 23:24**).

This same Jesus who His Father raised from the dead as the firstfruit of those who sleep in the earth, will soon return and start the process of ridding the world of evil and finally death itself.

Before He left to be with His Father Jesus told His Apostles that He would come again: *"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."* (**Acts 1:11**). These same disciples who witnessed the teaching and miracles of Jesus were able to go to their graves with the same hope that we have.

So let us now remember His death and resurrection as he commanded us to do

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