

The Fruits of the Spirit

October 2, 2022

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. Services are presented on YouTube, Facebook and our website one week following recording. This week's message is titled : "The Fruits of the Spirit". Thank you to Glynnis, Tim, Paul and Don for being involved in the video. The scripture reading is Galatians 5:1-6.

Welcome & Prayer

Well, good morning, everyone. It's great to see [Saturday] the back rows filled up really nicely. And it's good to see you on this kind of chilly and damp morning where we're probably dealing with the remnants of the hurricane that and the degraded tropical storm that has hit the east Coast. And it's amazing how much damage it can cause. I've been looking on both on the Weather Network and CBC and seeing the devastation there. And so when we pray, we will certainly add that to our prayers. Many of the announcements have been cycling through just as you were coming in. There are a great many prayers for families who are grieving, who are dealing with illness. People need our prayers for their their healing and so on. And so I encourage you in your in your own prayers to remember these people and to keep them close to our hearts and pray for God's blessing on them.

We do have--I know it seems kind of weird to be talking about this right now--but the things from Operation Christmas Child are starting to come in. And so if you can have that in the back of your mind and I know that that correct me if I'm wrong, involves picking up a box and filling it with lots of good things. We know that there are Christmas time can be a really tough time for families that don't have a lot of money. And we know with the price of everything going up like crazy, it this probably is going to be a difficult Christmas for a lot of families. So if you would keep that in your mind, we'd certainly appreciate that.

And so if we could go to God with some prayers, dearest Lord God, thank you so much for this day. God, thank you for your protection. Thank you for the way that you both protect us and really lavish us with so many good things. And I pray that we can be hopeful people and prayerful people that keep in mind both the blessings but also the needs of others. We pray and a special prayer for our fellow Canadians that are dealing with the aftermath of this, the storm. Fiona And we know that there are a great many needs out that way and we pray that we pray for to help them to be patient to we pray that they have brought with them the kinds of things that they're going to need to survive the next few days with the incredible power outages. God, we thank you so much for the ways that you bless people who are grieving, who are mourning, who are dealing with illness, who are dealing with the illness of others, who are taking care of others who are sick and God, we pray your blessing on them. We pray that you would find ways to encourage their hearts and help them to feel your peace. God, we love you so much. We pray your blessing on this service and thank you for every good thing in Jesus' name. Amen.

Communion

Good morning. We're trying to change things up just a little bit. Let's pray first. Our Lord and Father, thank you for this opportunity to come together. Thank you for the emblems we're about to share.

Please, Lord, forgive us of our sins and help us to recognize, as fully as we're able to recognize, the sacrifice that was given for us. Bless the cup and the bread and each one who partakes. Thank you again. We pray in the holy name of Jesus, amen.

So almost every Sunday, for the last 60 years or so, I've been coming to church. I read my Bible, attended thousands of Bible classes, thousands of sermons, listen to podcasts, audio, Bible verses, all kinds of stuff. Today, I want to sum up a big portion of what I've learned in one sentence; a key point, so to speak. So if you're new to Christianity, maybe this is your take home today. This is something you can grasp and think about. So one sentence here it is: God is. And actually, I could stop right there. Let me break my sentence for a second.

"God is" is so fundamental to all of Christianity that we recognize that God is. The Bible starts with the words in the beginning, God. The psalmist says the fear of God is the beginning of knowledge, understanding. You can't really have understanding and knowledge without understanding, without having faith in God that God is there and that He created the universe, the sun, the moon, the stars, everything he designed, human nature and love and compassion and mercy and the things inside us. Feelings. He designed us, in a sense, after his own image. Right. So sorry. Back to my sentence.

God is crazy in love with you.

Why do I say God is crazy in love? I think you think about how crazy it is. I have I have two kids. And if somebody came to me and said, you've got to sacrifice one of them so that somebody else can live happy and guilt free. I'd be like, No, that's crazy. No way. Well. What if somebody said, Well, what if he had ten kids? Just give 110 kids. You got one one. What's the big deal? Right? No. Crazy. I can't do it. Can't do it. As a parent, could you think about that? So somebody might argue, well, we're all children of God. God has billions of children. One dies every second of every minute of every day. What's the big deal? That's not the same because the Bible tells us for God was so crazy in love with the world that he gave his one and only son. That means, okay, so our English language and our human logic might say, Well, we're all children of God, so therefore I'm a male child, so I'm a son, so I'm equal to Jesus. Heh, no. Someday when you get to see Jesus, you're not going to walk up and clap him on the shoulder and say, Hey, bro, how's it going? You're not an equal. Jesus is unique. He so loved the world that He gave his one and only son. That means it's not like children like all of us, the one and only son.

So I reason that out as God gave a part of Himself, not just a son, like he fathered a child, like humans father children. Right? He gave a part of himself to come down and die for people who didn't want him. That's crazy. Crazy love. You might think, well, why would God love me like, doesn't he just like people who do good. He wants us to do good. He wants us to be perfect. Why would he love me? So then I would flip over in my Bible to the Book of Hebrews, and I'd look at Chapter 11. And in there there's like God's honor roll some people that he really, really liked. And it's this one had faith and did this. This one had faith and did this. And they're all like examples of faith and like God's special people, like, look at this guy. He did this and this because he believed. But if you look carefully at that list and there's a whole list there of of God's holy people, God's special people, you look carefully at that list and one of those guys was a murderer, killed somebody in cold blood. One of the people on that list was a prostitute. One of those people on that list slept with his wife's maid and had a baby with her.

The people on that list were not perfect, just like you and I are not perfect. But the people on that list had faith. They believed in God. They said, God is I believe, and I'm going to try to do what He wants.

And they most of them, they gave up their lives trying to do what God wanted because they they said this life is not important compared to the next. So we come back to the point of why I'm up here. God was so crazy in love with you that he gave a part of himself to die for you. For me. And every Sunday we take a few minutes to remember Jesus and God's sacrifice. This was part of a design that they made from the beginning. What an incredible sacrifice. So every Sunday we take a bit of bread, bit of juice to remember that sacrifice that was given for us. Cheers.

Scripture Reading

Our scripture this morning is Galatians five one through six. If you'd like to turn your Bibles and or devices, it is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm then and do not let yourselves be burdened again by the yoke of slavery. Mark my words, I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will not be of no value to you at all. Again, I declare to every man who let himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the whole law. You are trying to be justified by the law, have been alienated from Christ. You have fallen away from grace for through the Spirit. We eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope for in Christ Jesus. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has ever has any value. The only thing that counts is faith, expressing itself through love.

Sermon

Morning, everyone. On behalf of the congregation, I want to say thank you to Tim for an exceptional communion talk today. I think that will stay with me for a long, long time. Thank you, Tim. What do you do when you have two people who are diametrically opposed to each other? I mean, they are completely, directly opposite to each other. What do you do with two people like that? Someone would say, Well, just stay away from each other. And that'll solve the problem. But that's not really going to work. I want to spend some time beginning today preaching a new series from what was purportedly the first New Testament book written, and that's the book of Galatians. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the first four gospels, but they were written longer. Way past that. The first New Testament book that was written was the book of Galatians. How do you get two cultures that are diametrically opposed to each other to come together as one? How do you do that? Well, we're going to spend some time looking at this today.

Galatians was the first New Testament book written. The author is the Apostle Paul. It is, in my mind, a monumental, life changing, cultural shaping, spiritual, scriptural book. It is excellent, even for this very time and day. There are two words that help us understand the importance of the book of Galatians. Number one is culture. Each one of us has a culture. A culture is how you live. What? What time do you go to bed? What time do you wake up? What conversations are allowed in your home and not allowed? What kind of food do you eat? It's how we live our life. Everybody has their own culture. So when two people choose to come together as one husband and wife, she's bringing her way of living her culture. He's bringing his way of living his culture and creating something brand new. Every church has its own culture. Every workplace has its own culture. You and I have our own culture. It's unique in the Bible that when we read every book in the Bible, how the culture magnifies itself and how can we learn from it? Well, culture is absolutely important.

But the second part is context. Who's writing the book? To whom is the book being written and why regarding scripture? Context is everything. How will it change our life? A book that was written

thousands of years ago. How can it completely transform and transfigure our life to the point that we become a new person and we don't? There's not a period at the end of that. The Bible keeps on teaching us, keeps on training us, keeps on moving us, hopefully to be more Christlike. So what's truly unique as a family of God is how do you do all of that and yet see things differently? What if one person says, I really believe in this scripture? Completely true. That is this. This is what we should be doing because of this. Someone else says, Yeah, but what about that other scripture over there? I think that's and all of a sudden there's all this rancor. Well, you know, right from the beginning, that's not what God ever wanted. God the father, God the son, and God, the spirit one. When people come to Christ, we come together with our own understandings, but we come together as one uniquely. So I want to begin today. This series, really the first New Testament book that was written is The Book of Galatians. How do you get cultures, Gentile and Jewish culture to come together as one where they're very, very different, but still true today? We want to unite as one, and I mean truly unite having some significant differences with scripture. How do we do that? And as I said, it's very much like a marriage where you have to create your own culture and begin something new. So this is how we grew up in our family. Someone says, Well, we lived a completely different life than that. And she comes along and says, Well, this is how we spent our holidays and so forth and so on.

So the book of Galatians is attempting to encourage us to listen now, to unite, to come together as one. With significant differences. Some would say, Well, you can't do that. How can you come together as one with significant differences? So when we go through this book of Galatians, that's exactly what we're going to find out how people who are very opposed to one another kind of came together as one and found kind of a melting pot joining together as as this unique group. I think it's not by chance that the Book of Galatians was the first New Testament book written. Is the message of Jesus Christ going to sustain itself with two cultures that are diametrically opposed to one another? And it got close to the point that it wasn't. But for those of us who've read the book of Galatians, we find out that this wonderful man, this Apostle Paul, helps to bring these two cultures together. So a couple of scriptures I'd like to read. One is obviously in the book of Galatians, and it's chapter two verses 11 to 16, Galatians two, 11 to 16. And it's powerful. You know, sometimes when you read the New Testament, you think everybody got along real well and that the apostles and disciples got along very, very well. Well, here's this is the point that Paul's trying to make.

If you have a little sub statement before I read verse 11 or say, the apostle Paul opposes the Apostle Peter. Wow. So here's what happens. When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he was clearly in the wrong before certain men came from James. He used to eat with the Gentiles, but when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belong to what's called the circumcision group, people who followed all the rules and regulations, even from the Old Testament. The other Jews joined him in this hypocrisy so that by their hypocrisy, even Barnabas, the wonderful man Barnabas, was led astray. And then it says in verse 14, when I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, the apostle Paul is saying this. I said to Peter in front of them all, You are a Jew, yet you live as a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it then that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs? And it could have ended right there where this argument would be under the surface all the time will come together as one. But I can't come to your house because I know what you eat and I can't do that. I can't eat that food. I was told all my life I can't eat that food. Or someone else says, well, you know what? Come over, come over here. I can't do that because. So how are they going to somehow deal with all of this? And so he says, we who are

Jews by birth and not justified by observing the law, we believe by grace. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus, that we may be just the meal that we are serving the law. Because by observing the law, no one will be justified. By keeping all those cultures trying to hold on to all those cultures, it's impossible to do so.

Also in the book of Galatians in Chapter 3:26 through 29, I think this is one of the great scriptures in all the Bible. It's the first New Testament book that's written, and I think this is one of the greatest Scriptures in all the Bible. Here's what he says. You are sons of God. Stop. Back when the Bible was written, it was always a male oriented. I think that we could read this without Jesus being offended in any way. This way you are all sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Now, listen, for all of you who are baptized into Christ, have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek. Well, what we just said there was Jews and Gentiles. You just said, Paul, there were Jews and Gentiles. But now, when it comes to Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek. There is neither slave nor free. Well, tell that to a slave. What do you mean? Yes. You still may be a slave, but you're free in Christ. Male or female? Don't tell me I'm a female. I'm a male and vice versa. No, we're one in Christ. So what Paul is saying, the first New Testament book that's written is the church could have been split right from day one for all of these cultural shifts. Paul comes along and says, In the first New Testament book that's written with differences, with challenges, with two cultures come together as one.

There is neither Jew nor Greek slave nor free, male or female. You are one in Christ, and if you belong to Christ, then you belong to Abraham. You go way back from the very beginning. We've read the scriptures so many times that God chose us in Him before the creation of the world. And remember in Chapter 17, where Paul wrote, saying to people, God knew the exact time and places in which we would live, and we're all part of that today. So then in order to live a life united in Christ, living a life of love, love from God, love from Jesus and love from the Holy Spirit. The question then remains, How do we do this even in this year? The apostle Paul says, Here's how we do this. Here's how we do this. There are some words that must be magnified in our head, in our mouth, and in our heart. This is how we do this. Love, joy, peace and peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithful goodness, gentleness and self-control. How do you get two cultures that are diametrically opposed to each other to come together as one? Well, this is what Paul is saying right from the very beginning and what exists for us today by living by the fruit of the spirit. So what I want to do, beginning today and running right through, believe it or not, all the way through until Christmas, is looking at each one of these marvelous graces that God gives to us. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and control. So we begin this series today, and I'll just keep reminding us of why we're doing this, how important it is for each of us to live.

So let's just begin with the first. And that is, of course, love. God loves us even before we were born. Many mothers and dads to some point, many mothers understand this. Her baby is growing inside her, and she's got to know this baby even before she seen that baby. And that baby is so connected to her mom and that mom is so connected to the baby. Dads try to understand. We do try to understand. We want to touch our wife's tummy when she says, oh, baby's kicking. Okay. Oh, look at that. And all of a sudden, we're the part of something that we can't yet quite see. But moms, they've got this. They've got this. We're not accidents. The God who made the world and everything in it doesn't live by temple. In temple built by hands. He's not served as if he needed anything because he himself gives all people life. And breath. That baby that's in that womb. God knows that baby. Even before mom and Dad did from one person, he made every nation in him. We live and move and have our very being. None of us

were accidents. God knew you how you came into the world. Maybe a different story, but you weren't an accident. God knew the exact time and place in which you would live. And he pours out his love into each of our hearts. I'd like you to stick with me for just a moment. How much does God love Jesus? Can you fathom that? Can you answer that? How much does God love Jesus and how much does Jesus love God? How much does God and Jesus love the Holy Spirit and how much does the Holy Spirit love God and Jesus? And how much does God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit love you the same. It's beyond comprehension.

When Paul writes to this church in the province of Galatia. They're having this problem of their cultures, not allowing the love of God to really flow into their lives. There was this rancor, there was this bitterness, and it was, you know, how we do this, how we do that. Who's going to lead the singing? What songs are we going to sing? Who's going to do Communion? I don't like the way that person does that, and I don't like the way. And it was just rancor. The first New Testament book, Begin Rancor. So Paul comes along and says, look, this is how God created us to live with love, with joy, with peace, with patience, with kindness, with goodness, with faithfulness, with gentleness and with control. It doesn't mean we're always going to get our own way. It means Christ has poured out his love into our hearts so that we can pour that out into people's lives, knowing that he knew us even before we knew him.

So let's just begin with what makes the world go round, makes life beautiful. But God will never withhold from us what God pours out into our lives. And that's love. So it's so very important to be loved. And we have to be rest assured that we are loved. Love is the most powerful force in the world. You've heard it say love is what makes the world go round. The apostle John stated it clearly, God is love. It's his nature. God's constantly reminding us to love each other, not to tolerate each other, but to love each other. What would life be like if God was described in the Bible as this God who created all of us tolerates us. Wouldn't be much of a relationship. Hmm. He loves us. Loves us. Not loved. Loves us. And when you know. When you have two people who are in love every once in a while. I hope it doesn't happen to you very often. Every once in a while to people who are in love. One person says, you know, I know, I know. We really love each other. It's just should be we should just be able to say that to each other every once in a while. Oh, yeah. I just thought you knew how much I loved you. Well, you need to communicate that sometimes, even with God. Have you ever just talked to God and say, God, I, I truly do love you. You're so amazing. And I know that he pours out his love into our hearts. So love is patient. Love is kind. Love does not envy. It does not boast. It's not proud. It's not rude, it's not self-seeking. It's not easily angered. It doesn't keep records of wrong. But love. Love does not delight in evil. But love rejoices with truth. It always is, always protects it always trusts. It always hopes. It always perseveres. Love never fails. And now these three remain faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. It always trusts. It always protects.

For those of you that may have younger children or young brothers and sisters, and for those of us remember when we had our babies, we really wanted to protect them. We loved it when they were able to roll around. And they we loved it when they were able to crawl. And then we loved it that when when they were able to walk. But then when they started to run, look out. Let's protect outside. They don't know the dangers. And so we want we want to come along and hold them and protect them. When I read the Bible, it's God saying the same thing. There are some dangers in this world. I didn't create the dangers, but you have to be careful, love people, be safe with one another, encourage with one another. So today might be kind of a ramble, but it's the beginning of what I want to be talking

about right through until about Christmas time, how with this fruit, this extension of God's spirit can live in our lives and change our lives, and I hope would even change the world. Some of you may recall this name. Her name was Maria Rilke. And this is what she said about everything that I've just been talking about this morning. This is the miracle that happens every time to those who really love this is the miracle. The more they love, the more they give, the more they possess of that precious, nourishing love from which flowers and children have their strength and which could help all human beings if they would take it and receive it without doubting.

For a moment, let me conclude some of you recall to the singing group, the authors, Gloria Gaither, her husband, Bill. The Gloria wrote these words to a song right from the beginning God's love has reached and from the beginning man has refused to understand. But love went on reaching offering its self love offer heard the eternal we wanted the immediate love offered joy we wanted thrills, love offered freedom. We wanted license to do whatever we wanted to do whenever we want. Love offered communion with God himself while we wanted to worship at the shrine of our own wants love offers peace. We wanted approval for our wars. Even yet, love went on reaching and still today after 2000 years, patiently, lovingly, Christ is reaching out to each one of us today, right through the chaos of our world, through the confusion of our minds, God is reaching out to us, longing to share with us himself. He is loving us, and his love reaches all of us today and always. So we begin this preaching series on the book of Galatians. Amen.

Closing Prayer

There's something so amazing about that kind of response of our lives really don't go the way we planned. And that's one reason why we need God. And I pray as we pray together to close out our week, that we will have a great week where we're really able to go out, help people to love one another, work on the inside. So we can do that because that's kind of where it's let's pray. Dear Lord, God, thank you so much for the way that you use the service to touch our hearts, to touch our minds. God, you are such a good God. Thank you so much that you have books like Galatians that can inspire us and people like Don and Tim who can help us to really connect in a more powerful way with with the words that you have kept for us, for always. God, we love you so much. We pray that we will grow in the fruits of the Spirit God. We pray for, pray for our world. We pray for our hearts and we pray with such Thanksgiving we love you. It's in Jesus name. We pray. Amen.

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