

## Pastor Tim's Message, June 2017

As we head into summer and hopefully some warmer weather, this is the season for growth as we see our plants and gardens bloom with life. As I was thinking about this, I came across this story. Once there was a little boy who used to escape his bedroom after being punished. He would crawl out of his bedroom window down an old fruit tree to the ground. One day, his father told him that he was going to chop down the fruit tree, because it hadn't borne any fruit for a number of years.

That evening, the boy and his friend bought a bushel of apples, and during the night, tied those apples on the barren branches. The next morning, the man could not believe his eyes. He said to his wife, "Honey, I just can't believe it! That old tree hasn't yielded any fruit for years, and now it's covered with apples. And, the most amazing thing is that it's a pear tree!"

This funny little story has a serious point that trees have a purpose, to bear fruit. In the same way our lives have a purpose and they also bear fruit. When we go to work or school, we produce fruit through our products and learning. When we work out we want to see the fruit of a healthy body. No matter what we do we produce fruits of some kind.

When Paul wrote to the church in Galatia, he wanted them to understand that a life of faith also has fruit. Paul wrote, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." These qualities of faith are what we, as disciples of Jesus, need to show and share through our words and actions.

But just as a tree needs some tending to produce fruit, since fruit tied on a tree will not really last, so to do our lives need some loving care. All throughout scripture God is often referred to as that gardener who comes to tend our lives and hearts into producing harvests of abundant life.

So how are we doing in letting God work in our souls and hearts to weed out fear, anger, anxiety or anything else that is choking the joy out of our lives? Are we letting God through worship and prayer, water and nourish us with grace and hope? Are we taking the time to nurture our faith through Bible study and service to others letting it grow and deepen? So that we bear the fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. And since good fruit is not meant to stay on the tree, we need to freely share all our fruits of faith with our family, neighbors, and the world around us.

*In God's Love,*

*Pastor Tim*

