

Monday, 31 December 2018 Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Would you like an orange? But until you have that orange in your hand, you know very little about it. Even then, there is still considerably more to be known: color, size, firmness, and aroma are not a complete description of an orange. There have been times when an attractive orange in the supermarket was a product of the Republic of Pucker.

How are the characteristics of the Spirit displayed in my life? Do I talk about the life of a transformed child of the King or is it only skin deep, hiding a heart of bitterness and hatred?

Tuesday, 1 January 2019 Galatians 5:25-26

If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

“Keeping in step with the Spirit” Or keep me walking as the Spirit walks. The Spirit is not conceited, nor irritating or envying; He is humble and gentle, contented and very aware of His place in the Godhead. I must always use Him as my role model.

Forgive me, LORD, when I fail.

Wednesday, 2 January 2019 Galatians 6:7-8

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

A quick first reading suggests that Paul is intimating salvation by works, but he is not. He is pointing out, once again, that the Spirit confirms the transformation. It is an affirmation of the statement that without transformation, there is no salvation. I, you, we must continuously strive to listen to and obey the guidance of the Holy Spirit. When I, you, we fail, I, you, we must repent and seek the Spirit's guidance in the next step of our transformation into the likeness of Christ.

Thursday, 3 January 2019 Ephesians 1:13-14

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

I have a gift card in my billfold, a gift from a dear friend, that claims that it can be applied to a meal at a local restaurant. Betty and I are having a great time discussing the appropriate occasion to use this gift. A great deal of the joy in a gift like this is in anticipation of the realization. Do you see the analogy with the Holy Spirit? He, like the gift card tucked in my wallet, is the guarantee of the inheritance yet to come. I do have a modicum of trust that the restaurant will honor the card, I **know** that the Holy Spirit is the absolute guarantor of the Promises of the LORD, God, the Almighty. Hallelujah!

Friday, 4 January 2019 Ephesians 1:16-17

I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

Paul sets an exemplary example of one burdened for prayer for his flock. While this is addressed to the saints gathered in Ephesus, there is no doubt in my mind that as Paul prays, he is aware of all the others that he has touched in his missionary travels. I must do likewise, lifting up all members of my personal mission field, both past, present, and future.

Saturday, 5 January 2019 Ephesians 2:13-18 106 days until Easter

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might

reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

This is a complete statement of our salvation, all in 119 words in this translation (ESV). Lets count: 1-brought near to Christ, 2-He is our peace, 3-We are one in Him, 4-The end of hostility, 6-abolished the Law as an ordinance, 7-brought us into a place of peace, 8-reconciled us to God, 9-made us one body, 10-brought peace to all, 11-provided the Spirit to give us access to the Father.

Completion from a dividing wall of hostility to open access to the LORD, God, the Almighty. All from the One whose birth we remembered a few days ago and whose resurrection we will celebrate on April 21, 2019

Lord's Day, 6 January 2019 Psalm 119:13 105 days until Easter

With my lips I declare all the rules of your mouth.

Another area in which I need to be more faithful and diligent. I need to be forthright and outgoing in my testimony, not shirking any opportunity to demonstrate by word and deed that the Law of God has value and pertinence to address the problems of the culture.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



December 31, 2018 to January 6, 2019

Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: *Philippians 4:23*
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

LORD, may Your grace be the salt which flavors and enhances all our conversations and interactions with those in our Personal Mission Field. Our witness without grace is as food without salt, flat and lifeless. With the infusion of grace, our spirits become vibrant and life giving, fully empowered to lead others into the righteousness, peace and joy that is life in the Kingdom with You.

May it be so with each member of the [Congregation] this week and in the weeks to come. Amen

To fear or not to fear, that is the question.

The fear of the Lord, an expression that occurs many times in Scripture, 142 in the ESV in various forms, is not well understood in the Church today. For many, the phrase represents a weak and flabby description of an overly saccharine spiritual being of some sort. It certainly does not include the concept of the LORD, God the Almighty who spoke all things into being and who controls all things.

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, www.ailbe.org; along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

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