

December 4, 2016 – 6:00 pm

## Principles of Christian Growth

### Section Three: The Results of Christian Growth – How does it bless us?

#### Lesson One: The fruit of the Spirit is a blessing of growth.

Bible Reading: Matt. 7:13-29; Mark 4:1-20; Gal. 5:16-26; Phil. 1:8-11

My dad loved fruit trees. He planted a number of them in our yard, learned how and when to prune them, and became certified to spray them so they would be protected from insects and disease. There is nothing quite like a tree-ripened summer peach from your dad's peach tree. Warm, juicy, sweet, and nutritious, that is good eating. A peach tree with no peaches may as well be one of the sassafras trees we had in the back yard. This is how the Lord feels about our lives. If we are alive spiritually, we will grow; and if we are growing, there will be fruit, which will richly bless our Lord, our own life, and others we touch.

Discussion questions:

1. In Matt. 7:13-29, the Lord Jesus talks about two kinds of roads, two kinds of trees, and two kinds of houses. For each pair describe how the two are different. In what ways are they the same? What can we learn from these pictures about the fruit of spiritual growth?
2. The parable of the sower describes the varied success of four seeds, depending on the soil in which each was planted. Fruit is the difference between the last seed and the first three (vv. 19-20). What causes the unfruitfulness of God's Word in the first three lives (vv. 14-19)?
3. The works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21) are the opposite of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-24). Unbelievers have only the flesh; we believers have both the flesh and the Spirit. For us, bearing fruit requires conquering the flesh. How is this done (vv. 16-18, 25-26; Phil. 1:8-11)?