

PENTECOST 2016 – THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to FIRE conference 2016. We are heading to Pentecost Sunday. God has an amazing blessing in store for us as we move through this week. As I was preparing for the conference, I felt the Lord leading me to a number of scriptures about fruit, grain, wine & oil. Through these, I believe the Lord is calling us to a time of repentance and seeking Him like never before. If we do, He will bring revival. His promise in Joel is this:

Joel 2:19 (NLT) The Lord will reply, "Look! I am sending you grain and new wine and olive oil, enough to satisfy your needs. You will no longer be an object of mockery among the surrounding nations.

- Grain speaks of life. It was used to make bread – Jesus is the bread of life.
- Grain also refers to people.
- New wine speaks of joy – joy is a fruit of the Spirit, in God's presence there is fullness of joy.
- Olive oil speaks of anointing – in the Holy Spirit we find fresh anointing.

All of the above, grain, wine and oil are agricultural products, they are the fruit of the land. Today, God wants to help us to bear the fruit, not of the land, but of the Spirit!

MESSAGE

On the day of Pentecost, Peter said that what was taking place was what was prophesied by Joel. I want to quote some more just to give context. Joel was prophesying about judgement, but part way through, God's mercy breaks through like a brand new dawn:

Joel 2:12 (NLT) That is why the Lord says, "Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, and mourning. 13 Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead." Return to the Lord your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish. 14 Who knows? Perhaps he will give you a reprieve, sending you a blessing instead of this curse. Perhaps you will be able to offer grain and wine to the Lord your God as before.

And then comes this amazing promise:

Joel 2:21-32 Don't be afraid, O land. Be **glad now and rejoice**, for the Lord has done great things. 22 Don't be afraid, you animals of the field, for the wilderness pastures will soon be green. The trees will again be filled with fruit; fig trees and grapevines will be loaded down once more. 23 Rejoice, you people of Jerusalem! Rejoice in the Lord your God! For the rain He sends demonstrates His faithfulness. Once more the autumn rains will come, as well as the rains of spring. 24 The threshing floors will again be piled high with

grain, and the presses will overflow with new wine and olive oil. 25 **The Lord says**, "I will give you back what you lost to the swarming locusts, the hopping locusts, the stripping locusts, and the cutting locusts. **It was I who sent this** great destroying army against you. 26 Once again you will have all the food you want, and you will praise the Lord your God, who does these miracles for you. Never again will my people be disgraced. 27 Then you will know that I am among my people Israel, that I am the Lord your God, and there is no other. Never again will my people be disgraced. 28 "Then, **after doing all those things**, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions. 29 **In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on servants—men and women alike.**

DEALING WITH THE BARRENNESS

God was promising restoration. The land was barren, the people had become just like the pagan nations they had displaced, and as a result they not only didn't have the fruit of the land, but they were spiritually barren.

- Who caused the growth to stop? God did, He sent the locusts, "It was I who sent this great destroying army against you.
- God was promising restoration from the punishment He had placed on the Israelites due to their sin.
- **Only after that would He pour out His Holy Spirit!**
- **But the people first had to turn from their wickedness and bear some fruit!**

Jesus gave a similar warning!

THE GRAPEVINE, THE GARDENER & THE BRANCHES

John 15:1-3 (NLT) "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. 3 You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you.

- Jesus is the grapevine – He feeds us
- Father God is the gardener – He either prunes us or cuts us off
- We are the branches – we bear lots of fruit because we are pruned or we get cut off because we bear no fruit.

The good news is that we have already been pruned by the message of Christ! With the result that we must be bearing lots of fruit!

John 15:8 (NLT) When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

- Bearing much fruit declares that we are true disciples of Christ.
- Bearing much fruit honours the Father.

WHAT IS THIS FRUIT?

John 15:16-17 (NLT) You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. 17 This is my command: Love each other.

Living by the Spirit's Power

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT) But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

The fruit we bear much of is the fruit of the Spirit!

- We sometimes see it as witnessing only, but that's only part of it – it's linked to the very first fruit – Love.
 - if we love people, we won't want them to end up lost.
 - If we love Jesus, we will obey His command to make disciples.
- But what about the 8 other fruit?... They relate to our lifestyle and our attitudes across the board!
- We can better understand the fruit of the Spirit when we understand what it's not:

Galatians 5:16-21 (NLT) So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. 17 The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. 18 But when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses. 19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

- This is what it's not.
- People living like this will be like those branches that get cut off. They will not inherit God's kingdom.

But if we do bear the fruit of the Spirit, God's word prunes us and we bear more and more fruit!

WE NEED TO REPENT

I repeat God's cry to us tonight.

Joel 2:12 (NLT) That is why the Lord says, "Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, and mourning. 13

Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead." Return to the Lord your God, for He is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He is eager to relent and not punish. 14 Who knows? Perhaps He will give you a reprieve, sending you a blessing instead of this curse. Perhaps you will be able to offer grain and wine to the Lord your God as before.

When we repent, God brings restoration and we are able to bear much fruit once again.

Joel 2:22 Don't be afraid, you animals of the field, for the wilderness pastures will soon be green. The trees will again be filled with fruit; fig trees and grapevines will be loaded down once more.

Joel 2:24-25a (NLT) The threshing floors will again be piled high with grain, and the presses will overflow with new wine and olive oil. 25 The Lord says, "I will give you back what you lost.

- The green pastures come from the Hebrew word "dasha".
- This "dasha" is only found in one other place in the bible...
- **Genesis 1:11** (NLT) Then God said, "Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came." And that is what happened.
- **This speaks of newness, a brand new start, not something second hand, but the new of the new just like in the Garden of Eden!**

CONCLUSION

Some things have to happen before the Lord can pour out His Spirit...Tonight the Lord wants to bring us back to a place of bearing much fruit

- Is the fruit of the Spirit evident in our lives?
- We are already pruned and should be bearing much fruit.
- We dealt with sin 2 Sunday's ago and we have been fasting and seeking the Lord's face.
- We don't need to be cut off, we need to be made new.
- The best part is that when God makes us new, we are brand new! Garden of Eden style new.
- Let us ask God to allow a large crop of the fruit of the Spirit to grow in us once again.

Let's partake of that today.