

## Becoming a Tender of the Garden An Issue of the Fruits of the Spirit vs. Gifts of the Spirit

### Opening Thoughts

- Review of the four soils
- The good soil: The story of growing to maturity – From salvation to fruitful ministry.
  - Cultivated and broken
  - Significant work below the surface – the work God does in silence. Being rooted & established in love.
  - Growing up together in a symbiotic community.
  - Spiritual photosynthesis – a picture of divine or miraculous conversion.
  - If a garden is to grow to maturity and bear fruit it needs spiritually gifted gardeners.

### Three Points

#### 1. *If the garden is to mature it requires mature & gifted gardeners.*

#### 1 Corinthians 3

1Dear brothers and sisters, when I was with you I couldn't talk to you as I would to mature Christians. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in the Christian life. 2I had to feed you with milk and not with solid food, because you couldn't handle anything stronger. And you still aren't ready, 3for you are still controlled by your own sinful desires. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn't that prove you are controlled by your own desires? You are acting like people who don't belong to the Lord. 4When one of you says, "I am a follower of Paul," and another says, "I prefer Apollos," aren't you acting like those who are not Christians? (*Looking to men instead of God. – Some reject the church because of the mistakes of people.*)

5Who is Apollos, and who is Paul, that we should be the cause of such quarrels? Why, we're only servants. Through us God caused you to believe. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. 6My job was to plant the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God, not we, who made it grow. 7The ones who do the planting or watering aren't important, but God is important because he is the one who makes the seed grow. 8The one who plants and the one who waters work as a team with the same purpose. Yet they will be rewarded individually, according to their own hard work. 9We work together as partners who belong to God. You are God's field, God's building--not ours.

- 2. Christian maturity results when we no longer conform to the world but are transformed by the Spirit to become Kingdom people. The desires of the flesh are replaced by the fruits of the Spirit.**

### ***Galatians 5 – fruit of the Spirit vs. a life of immaturity***

*16* So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. *17* The old sinful nature loves to do evil, which is just opposite from what the Holy Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are opposite from what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, and your choices are never free from this conflict. *18* But when you are directed by the Holy Spirit, you are no longer subject to the law.

*19* When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, *20* idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, *21* envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

*22* But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, *23* gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law.

*24* Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. *25* If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. *26* Let us not become conceited, or irritate one another, or be jealous of one another.

- 3. Those who are called to be tenders of this spiritual garden need spiritual tools to serve in it.**

### **1 Corinthians 12**

*1* And now, dear brothers and sisters, I will write about the special abilities the Holy Spirit gives to each of us, for I must correct your misunderstandings about them. ***(They too must have had confusion)***

*2* You know that when you were still pagans you were led astray and swept along in worshipping speechless idols. *3* So I want you to know how to discern what is truly from God: No one speaking by the Spirit of God can curse Jesus, and no one is able to say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

*4* Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all. *5* There are different kinds of service in the church, ***(These tools are meant for service)*** but it is the same Lord we are serving. *6* There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work through all of us. *7* A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church. ***(Gifts are to help the Church fulfill its commission)***

8To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another he gives the gift of special knowledge. 9The Spirit gives special faith to another, and to someone else he gives the power to heal the sick. 10He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and to another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to know whether it is really the Spirit of God or another spirit that is speaking. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, and another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. 11It is the one and only Holy Spirit who distributes these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.

### *New American Standard*

8For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.

- **Gifts of the Spirit are the tools of those who are called to tend the garden**
  - Word of knowledge - Why won't this plant grow – what's its problem?
  - Word of wisdom – Proclamation of the solution
  - Faith – Believing for transformation in people who seem too far gone to grow.
  - Healing – Of broken or stunted plants
  - Effects of miracles –
  - Prophecy – Being able to see what God sees – visionary
  - Discerning or distinguishing of spirits – What's a weed and what's a good plant
  - Tongues – Spiritually praying in the garden
  - Interpretations of tongues

## 4. A Biblical example on one who effectively used these spiritual tools:

### Acts 8

1 Saul was one of the official witnesses at the killing of Stephen.

A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem, and all the believers except the apostles fled into Judea and Samaria. 2(Some godly men came and buried Stephen with loud weeping.) 3Saul was going everywhere to devastate the church. He went from house to house, dragging out both men and women to throw them into jail.

4But the believers who had fled Jerusalem went everywhere preaching the Good News about Jesus. 5Philip, for example, went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah. 6Crowds listened intently to what he had to say because of the miracles he did. 7Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims. And many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed. (*Philip was a gardener who needed & used the spiritual tools.*)

8So there was great joy in that city. (*The fruit of the Spirit began to immerge*)

9A man named Simon had been a sorcerer there for many years, claiming to be someone great. 10The

Samaritan people, from the least to the greatest, often spoke of him as "the Great One--the Power of God." 11He was very influential because of the magic he performed. 12But now the people believed Philip's message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. (*Salvation*) As a result, many men and women were baptized. 13Then Simon himself believed and was baptized. He began following Philip wherever he went, and he was amazed by the great miracles and signs Philip performed. (*The discerning of spirits reveals the heart and motive of those who are growing up in the garden. - Weeds vs. righteous plants.*)

14When the apostles back in Jerusalem heard that the people of Samaria had accepted God's message, they sent Peter and John there. 15As soon as they arrived, they prayed for these new Christians to receive the Holy Spirit. 16The Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them, for they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17Then Peter and John laid their hands upon these believers, and they received the Holy Spirit. (*Baptism of the Spirit is in addition to Salvation*)

18When Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given when the apostles placed their hands upon people's heads, he offered money to buy this power. 19"Let me have this power, too," he exclaimed, "so that when I lay my hands on people, they will receive the Holy Spirit!" (*There is nothing worse than an immature Christian wanting power for the sake of power. Character must precede service in order that people don't get hurt.*)

20But Peter replied, "May your money perish with you for thinking God's gift can be bought! 21You can have no part in this, for your heart is not right before God. 22Turn from your wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive your evil thoughts, 23for I can see that you are full of bitterness and held captive by sin." (*Word of knowledge*)

24"Pray to the Lord for me," Simon exclaimed, "that these terrible things won't happen to me!"