Core Values



SELF-CONTROL

Rebekah Robinson
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BEKAH CREATIVE PUBLISHING

The DNA of God Series

Core Values:		Love
Core Values:		Joy
Core Values:		Peace
Core Values:		Patience
Core Values:		Kindness, Goodness, Faith
Core Values:		Gentleness
Core Values:		Self-Control
Core Values:		Walking By the Spirit

Grace Drops with Anne podcast:
gracedropswithanne.com

Other Works by Rebekah Robinson

Someone to Look Up To: A Lay View of Leadership
(with ***Study Notebook*** companion)

Day in the Sun (music CD)

Faith Life Art blog: beckrblog.wordpress.com

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Fruit

Greek *karpos*

Aramaic *'eb*

Hebrew *priy*

NIV

KJV *fruit*

DRB *fruit*

Latin *fructus*



fruit, bough, reward;

fruit (as plucked);

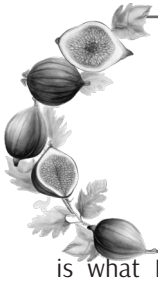
qualities of the heart

Setting the Scene

WELCOME TO THE FINAL DESCRIPTOR of the fruit (singular!) of the Spirit! In the last six volumes, we've explored the ways in which the Lord exemplifies love, joy, peace, patience, kindness + goodness + faith, and gentleness. The more we delve into the beauty of the Lord, the harder it is to focus on the negativity around and in us.

Some hold that there is a danger on focusing only on Jesus, rather than paying close attention and keeping a tight rein on our sin. I understand this drive for diligence, but to perpetually nitpick oneself is to miss the grace of God. We are never going to find *all* our peccadilloes, and we are not supposed to live paranoid! It is the throne of *grace* we are to approach confidently, not the throne of *judgment*.

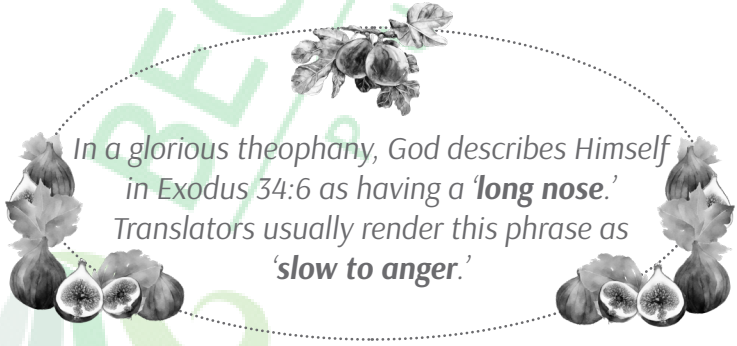
Without being indulgent or reckless, I do have insurance for my sins, and I can rest in that, for it is an easy yoke – if an expensive one at God's end. Perpetual self-renovation can itself become an idol. I would far rather behold the perfections of Christ than the filthy rags of my own stringent efforts at measuring up. If repentance is needed, in His kindness He will draw my attention to it. And in my grateful response to His kindness, we will address it together. Meantime, He



To seek the Kingdom of God
and His righteousness
is to seek Him!

is what I want to behold. Everything else goes back into perspective when I make Him the focus. Sin becomes a less attractive prospect in the process.

Whether Christ is, or holds out, the righteousness of God, to 'seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness' is to seek Christ, depend on Him, and work with Him. All the things you need will be given to you in addition, as bonuses. It's not conditional, as in, *if you don't seek My Kingdom first, why should I give you a thing?* We're told in Romans 8:32 that if God is generous enough to give us His *actual Son*, then throwing in a bunch of lesser stuff is, to use earthly parlance, no extra skin off His very long nose! In addition, according to 2 Corinthians 5:21, when we are in Christ *we* become the righteousness of God! Blessed are those who hungered and thirsted for it, for it is now possible to be filled! To this verse's first audience on the Mount – who looked to Deuteronomy for reasons why they weren't getting ahead with life, with God, or with conquering their



*In a glorious theophany, God describes Himself in Exodus 34:6 as having a '**long nose**.' Translators usually render this phrase as '**slow to anger**.'*

own iniquities, and concluded they just weren't able to be righteous enough – this was astoundingly good news!

Those who lean on God find help. Pastor Wayne Brooker says that even in poverty-stricken countries, you never see a skinny sparrow. The keys to providence, and the victory over worry, are found in remembering and dwelling on the perfections of God's nature and then trusting Him to have your back as He has covenanted to do. Covenants are meaningless without trust and faithfulness, and He calls Himself *Faithful and True*.

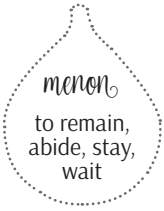
Fruit is reproduced according to the DNA of its seed. So in the end, developing the fruit of the Spirit is not about notching my belt through self-effort, but about letting the Spirit of God shape my character. All of the attributes of the fruit flow through the DNA of the God who has made His home in us: He is loving, joyful, integrous, patient, kind, good, faithful, humble and self-controlled.

Sometimes we see famous people who have led a lot of souls to the Lord, and yet they are not loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, or even good ... what are we to make of that?

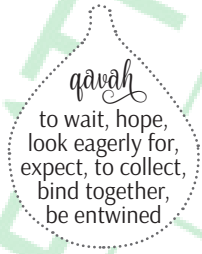
When we read in John 15 that Jesus wishes His disciples to 'bear much fruit that remains,' perhaps we auto-interpret *fruit* to mean 'a fruitful ministry.' However, that isn't stated.

A ministry can function independently in some respects, because the gifts and call of God are without *re*call. Non-Christians do it all the time, living out their makeup through their professions with no God-consciousness at all. Your ***voc***ation (calling) cannot be re***vok***ed (un-spoken) once it is ***voc***alised by the Lord when He whispers your name. You're free to quibble with this next statement, but it seems to me that *getting results in ministry* is not the fruit-generation Jesus speaks of. He stipulates that 'bearing much fruit' is a goal we cannot achieve outside of us abiding in Him and He remaining in us. And the way He lives in us is through His Spirit. Personal fruitfulness, then – the development of the fruit of the Spirit – is contingent on

fellowship with the Spirit. He tells us plainly in John 15:5 ESV that *'Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.'*



'Abide' is the Greek word *menon*, which is 'to remain, abide, stay, wait.' Possibly this is a parallel to Isaiah 40:31 which, as mentioned, says that 'they that wait [Hebrew *qavah:* 'to wait, look eagerly for, hope, expect, to collect, bind together, be entwined'] upon the Lord shall renew their strength … and not faint.' To me, this sounds very like *going the distance* as a result of *strapping oneself inextricably* to the Lord. Lasting fruit.



A fruitful ministry may or may not have arisen from a fruitful life; you can conceivably lead people to Jesus without being Jesussy. But a fruitful life – one entwined with Jesus – cannot help but produce a fruitful ministry, whatever that may look like, because the evidence of true faith is the works it generates. Faith either outworks itself or dies.

Getting a lot of people saved – that is the fruit of one's *ministry*. No matter how good our preaching is, we don't have control over whether people make the right spiritual decisions! Growing more Christlike through the Spirit's influence – that is the fruit of one's *life*. And it is by THAT fruit that we identify each other and discern false followers and false prophets from true. What is that person like on the inside? Are they thorny and voracious? Or are they mild and kind? They



The fruit of your *life*
≠
the fruit of your *ministry*.

don't have to be perfect to be identified as one of us – but there should be an earnest *desire* for Christlikeness there. If my character doesn't reflect my stated beliefs, how deeply can I possibly believe them? And if I don't believe them, why should a seeker?

When Jesus said, *'Now remain in My love,'* He was speaking to His disciples *as a group*, in John 15. Perhaps His remarks could have also carried a sense of 'ya'll': 'Everyone stay inside the house together,' so to speak. There could well be an aspect of abiding in Jesus that flowers best *in Godly community*.



The Fruit of Paul's Life

Paul writes to the Galatians about *self-control*. As we've noted in previous volumes, the Galatians had a reputation as 'fierce, strutting, white outlander merc descendants.' It would be understandable if such a culture produced rough people who did whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted. On the other hand, military discipline was part of their heritage, too. We have no way of knowing if they were given more to brash impulsivity or to careful regimentation.

One thing we do know: Galatia was one of the places Paul was persecuted. And so the fact that he wrote to them about embracing and spreading an outlook of grace is, actually, astonishing.

In 2 Timothy 3:11 NLT he recounts, *'You know how much persecution and suffering I have endured. You know all about how I was persecuted in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra – but the Lord rescued me from all of it.'* None of this is even *mentioned* in His letter to the Galatians, nor in Acts. It's only when you've looked at the map of Galatia (page 8) that you realise these are the regional towns he visited and then wrote to.

Timothy, in fact, was 'discovered' by Paul in Lystra. It says his mother was a Jewish believer and his father was a Greek. Since the Galatians (several generations removed from their Gaulish roots)

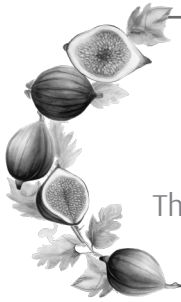
were sometimes referred to as 'Gallo-Greeks,' we don't know if this man was ethnically Greek, ethnically Celtic, or both. 'Greek' could also be a catch-all term in Asia Minor for 'Gentile.'

In Galatians 4:12b–15 NLT Paul affirms the church in this way: *'You did not mistreat me when I first preached to you. ... even though my* [sick] *condition tempted you to reject me, you did not despise me or turn me away. No, you took me in and cared for me as though I were an angel from God or even Christ Jesus Himself. Where is that joyful and grateful spirit you felt then? I am sure you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me if it had been possible.'*

Clearly, Galatia was remembered with close fondness and not just horror – a definite delineation between the apostate opposition and the loving, caring church.

Paul visited Galatia at least three times, around AD 47, 49 and 52. I think that took not only a great love and concern for the churches, but also a deal of self-control. Most people, having been mistreated in a given place, avoid that place as much as they can. It re-triggers trauma. But either Paul had been healed of his trauma, or he had learned to take it in stride, remembering that he himself was once someone who dished it out. His focus in the letter to the Galatians is *purity of doctrine*; the point he makes in his letter to Timothy is in praise of our rescuing God. He does not snarl, whine or whimper, even though he had grounds to. He simply states facts with faith.





The fruit ***of*** the Spirit can only
be produced ***by*** God's Holy Spirit.
Fruit is produced in accordance with
the DNA of its plant.
Therefore, the fruit ***of the Spirit*** embodies
the DNA of God's heart.



Is the List Order Important?

Fruit, *karpos*, is singular: *a* fruit, not *many* fruits. It's possible that its list of attributes is not just a round description, but a cascade:

- When you have **love**, it fills you with joy.
- When you have **joy**, you want for nothing and are at peace.
- When you have **peace**, you can be patient.
- When you are **patient**, you are better placed to be kind.
- When you are **kind**, you impart goodness.
- When you are **good**, you demonstrate practical faith.
- When your **faith** is in God and not yourself,
  you can be humble and **gentle**.
- When you are gentle, you are **self-controlled**.
- And all of this can be made intrinsic only by **walking in the Spirit**.

Our God is all of these things, and forever worthy of our worship.

Bad Fruit  & Dirty Lies

As we examine self-control, we'll also look at some of the 'bad fruit' listed in Galatians 5 along with the 'good fruit.' We'll investigate some of the lies the enemy tells in order to discredit God and throw us off the scent of His true nature.

BAD FRUIT

Category 1:

Lustful things

sexual immorality
impurity
debauchery

Category 2:

Demonic things

idolatry
witchcraft

Category 3:

Divisive things

hatred
discord
jealousy
fits of rage
selfish ambition
dissensions
factions
envy

Category 4:

Unbridled things

fits of rage
drunkenness
orgies
and the like



parach
to sprout, blossom, break forth, flourish

dashen
full of sap, prosperous, fat with oil, rich

The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree,
He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
Those who are planted in the house of the LORD
Shall flourish in the courts of our God.
They shall still bear fruit in old age;
They shall be fresh and flourishing,
To declare that the LORD *is upright;*
He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

nub
to flourish, sprout, bear fruit

raanan
fresh, green, flourishing

Psalm 92:12–15 NKJV

Self-Control

Greek egkrateia

Aramaic misaup ramuta

Hebrew tzeniut

NIV

KJV temperance

DRB continency

Latin continentia



continence, self-control,
self mastery, inner strength,
balance, empowerment,
endurance,
true mastery from within

strength to serve
and please God

modesty,
deferring praise for all
these virtues to the power of
the Spirit within