

The Fruit of Grace

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Colossians 3:12ff.
- B. The way that we can tell if we are living by grace is the fruit in our lives. (Galatians 5)
- C. In Colossians, Paul switches between explaining what we have in Christ and applying it to our lives.
- D. Colossians 3 is clear description of what a life lived by grace looks like; Galatians 5:22-23 is a parallel passage to it.

II. In Colossians 3, Paul starts with who we are.

- A. We are chosen by God. (Ephesians 1:4; John 15; 2 Thessalonians 2:13)
- B. We are holy; that is, we are separated from the world to be in relationship with God.
- C. We are dearly loved by God. We can know this through the gospel.
- D. We will manifest the characteristics of a life lived by grace to the degree that we understand and believe that we are chosen, holy, and loved.

III. We are able to clothe ourselves with grace-filled characteristics by the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Colossians 3:12; Galatians 5:22)

- A. Humility is an abiding sense of ill desert because of our sinfulness and the consciousness that what good there is in us is due to the grace of God.
 - 1. This means that you are more suspicious of your own heart than you are judgmental of other people's hearts.
 - 2. Paul's expresses his humility in the context of grace. Grace is the soil in which humility grows. (1 Corinthians 15:9; Ephesians 3:8; 1 Timothy 1)
 - a) Growing in grace produces growth in humility and growth in confidence.

b) Without grace, confidence and humility can only grow at the expense of the other.

B. Love is the foremost characteristic of a life lived by grace. (1 Corinthians 13)

1. Love is what gives value to other characteristics of grace.
2. Loving God and loving your neighbor sums up the whole law and the prophets. (Matthew 22)
3. Treating other as you would like to be treated is an expression of love. (Matthew 7:12)
4. Love is growth process.

Application questions:

1. Is it difficult for you to believe that God dearly loves you? Why?

2. Why are other good character qualities valueless without love?

3. Why does an understanding and acceptance of grace help a person grow in both humility and confidence?
