

Dear Friends,

In last months letter I was focused on being KIND! The first of the 'nesses' listed in the "fruit of the Spirit" and I was going to just go down the list UNTIL I came across a pithy little statement that just would not let me ignore it.

It is; **"RAISE YOUR WORDS – NOT YOUR VOICE. IT IS RAIN THAT GROWS FLOWERS, NOT THUNDER!!"**

Growing up in a home where 'who ever was loudest the longest won the argument' you can imagine how this little saying caught my attention. Enough about me, but you can figure out what I can be like at times 😊

The Holy Spirit will NOT allow born again people to ignore our responsibility to be controlled by Him. We have a responsibility to walk in Him and be victorious over our flesh. Our flesh is the way we learned, usually as youngsters, to be safe, or be in control and have our own way.

Galatians 5:16-17 I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh, For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. What Paul is saying here is that a conflict is active in all saved people. The ways we learned to behave growing up are in opposition to what the Holy Spirit is trying to accomplish in us and we are responsible to choose how we will handle our life. If the Holy Spirit is in control then His fruit will be seen in how we handle life and especially conflict and disappointment.

What we should be like is describe in Galatians 5:22-23 the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control;

So my focus today is on gentleness and self control. The Greek for gentleness has to do with mildness that is, (by implication) humility. Webster's says humility is freedom from pride or arrogance. My understanding of pride is the need to always be right and arrogance is to be so confident your right you are pushy about it. Know anyone like that? Many people see meekness as being weak but Jesus encourages us to be like Him. Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Then there is self control. Not much self control is seen in our culture today but here is the basic idea we should have as the Holy Spirit is strong in us. We should have the ability to control oneself, in particular our emotions and desires and the expression of them especially in difficult situations.

As Covid continues to lurk around I was exposed on Labor Day and spent time being inactive but, thankfully, I haven't had symptoms and only negative tests. Please continue to pray for Alpha, Debi, and me. The summer has been slow at Alpha but already things have picked up as school gets started and routine settles in for families. Thank you for you prayers and support for Alpha.

So-Stay Positive and please test negative!! .

Richard

Alpha Counseling Services
20730 Bond Road, Poulsbo, WA 98370
(360)779-3624/alphapoulsbo.org
September, 2022