



Pastor David's Weekly Devotional

Beware of the deadly dangers of plastic fruit! That sentence grabbed my attention and captured my thoughts while reading a book a couple weeks ago. Shortly after reflecting on that sentence, I was sitting at a coffee shop talking with a friend when I noticed a young boy reaching for an apple out of the fruit basket in front of him. The man sitting with him, presumably his father, sternly told him “No.” The boy looked surprised and bewildered. He took his hand off the apple and gently slid back into his chair. What the boy did not know was that all the beautifully ripe and delicious-looking green apples were not what they appeared to be. Although these apples looked unbelievably real, they are incredibly fake. At a distance, they appear to be genuine produce but upon further inspection they are nothing but genuine plastic.

The first time I saw that delectable bowl of fresh green luscious apples my mouth began to water as I envisioned myself eating green apple slices dipped in crunchy peanut butter. I must admit, when I first discovered that these particular apples were fake I was disappointed, but I soon got over it. However, when I saw that little boy be deceived I remembered the sentence that I had mulled over earlier in the week: “Beware of the deadly dangers of plastic fruit.”

As Jesus makes abundantly clear, the *only* way a person yields genuine godly and spiritual fruit is through knowing, loving and obeying Jesus Christ (see Jn.15:5-8). Likewise, when a person lives their life *in Christ* the natural by-product of that life is passionately Christ-like. The opposite is also true. When a person – even a professing believer – lives apart from, or in rebellion to, Christ there will be no genuine Christian fruit in their life (and anything that looks like spiritual fruit is nothing more than a plastic imitation). Plastic fruit can be attractive and decorative, but when it is descriptive of a professing believer's life it is quite ugly and deadly...and damning. Again, Jesus' words cut right to the heart of the matter: *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me”* (John 15:1-4; Matt.7:15-20; cf. Jd.1:12).

In a sense, everyone's life bears some kind of fruit. Some bear the genuine fruit of Christ-likeness, and others produce the counterfeit fruit of worldliness. It would be simple if we could discern the difference simply by identifying professing Christians from professing atheists. Sadly, however, that is not realistic or possible. Merely *saying* you are a Christian does not make you a Christian. True Christians are *living* like and *abiding* in Christ! That means they live in, through and for Jesus Christ. As a result, the only consistently reliable means by which we can accurately discern someone's spiritual life – and discern the veracity of our own Christian life – is by observing what that life produces (whether it is the genuine fruit of Christ-likeness or the plastic fruit of worldliness).

Plastic fruit on a table is harmless, but plastic fruit in a person's life is dangerous and deadly. The life of all true believers produces the fruit of Christ-likeness (cf. Matt.3:8; Gal.5:22; Col.1:10). As the saying goes, “If God is in you then godliness comes out of you.” Genuine fruit-bearing is the duty and privilege of all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said, *“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last”* (John 15:16).

Together in and for Christ,
Pastor David

Scripture Readings for the Week (Monday – Sunday ~ Week #20):

Exodus 25-28; 2 Samuel 15-19; Psalm 57-59; Job 39-40; Jeremiah 37-41; Luke 3-4; 2 Corinthians 9-10

Recommended Reading:

“Growing Your Faith: How to Mature in Christ” by Jerry Bridges

Calendar of
Events:

SAM's Luncheon

May 17

Youth Garage Sale

May 25 & 26

Looking Ahead....

Family Camp

June 28-July 1st

For prayer requests,
email Amy Woodruff
at prayer@sbcnb.org
or call 541-404-0547

We're on the Web!

See us at:

sbcnb.org

Growth & Study.....

Men's Group Studies

Mondays ~

6:30pm "The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God" by D.A. Carson
w/Jeff Etzel

Wednesdays ~

6:30-7:30am "Jesus Among Secular Gods"
"Book of Ecclesiastes" *Begins June 13th
w/Pastor David

8:15-9:30pm "Zechariah"

w/Pastor Josh

Thursdays ~

6:30-7:30am "Galatians ~ No Other Gospel"
w/Pastor Tim

Fridays ~

6:30-7:30am "The Christian Walk"
"Jesus Among Secular Gods" *Begins June 15th
w/Pastor David

Adult Group Studies

Sundays ~

6:30-7:30pm "The Lord's Prayer"
At the Woodruff's Home (541-756-3311)

Young Adults

Thursdays ~

7:00-9:00pm At Skyline
w/Pastor Tim 541-756-3311

Women's Group Studies

Mondays ~

6:30pm "Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians"
w/Renee Middleton (541-297-2500)

Tuesdays ~

6:30-7:30am "Not By Sight"
w/Loy Huntzinger (360-607-0022)

8:30am "Isaiah, the Lord Saves"
w/Beth Wallstrom (541-404-0112)

9:00am "Live Out His Love"
w/Lois-Elaine Rencehausen (541-267-3106)

1:00-2:15pm "Romans"
w/Barb Young (541-404-6242)

7:00-8:15pm "Romans"
w/Barb Young (541-404-6242)

Wednesdays ~

9:00-10:30am "Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians"
w/Amy Woodruff (541-404-0547)

10:00am "Experiencing God's Peace"
w/Jeanette Murphy (541-266-7575)

6:30-8:00pm "Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians"
w/Amy Woodruff (541-404-0547)

Connect & Encourage.....

SAM's Potluck Luncheon ~ May 17th, Noon

For those ages 55 and up, please join us for our SAM's potluck luncheon in the Fireside Room. Aron Boesl will be speaking, about his recent medical missions trip to Côte d'Ivoire. We don't want to miss you - if you need a ride, contact the church office at least 24 hours in advance and we will arrange a ride for you.

Youth Garage Sale ~ May 25th & 26th

We are accepting clean, reusable donation items for our May 25th & 26th fundraiser garage sale. Students are raising funds for the Mexico Mission Trip in August.

Children's Ministries.....

Save the date:

June 25 – 28 9am to Noon

Vacation Bible School

Open to children 3 years old (potty-trained) through 5th Grade

VBS Meeting – June 3rd, Noon

July 30 - August 3

Big G Summer Camp

Open to students entering 4th through 9th grade.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

- Summer Sunday School Teachers and Helpers (this is our greatest area of need)
- 2nd Service Nursery Helpers (once a month)
- 1st & 2nd grade Sunday School Teacher (twice a month during second service)
- Awana helpers (Wednesday nights 6:30 to 8 pm – Summers off)
- Vacation Bible School Pre-School Director and Co-Director and leaders and helpers for other areas of VBS.

See Loy for more information. Training available.



Youth Ministries.....

Youth Group ~

High School youth group ~ Sunday nights 6 to 8pm.

Junior High youth group ~ Wednesday nights 6:30 to 8pm.