Diving Deeper into Discipleship

May 2, 2021 | Pastor Pete Fowler

Open Invitation: Which Fruit Are You Full Of?

Sermon Reflection Questions:

- Have you been attending to the fruit from your life in a "behavior modification" manner? Are you tired of just trying to "do better?"
- Do you have a tendency to keep people at an arm's length so they can't see your fruit? Are you honest with the Christians you are closest to when it comes to their fruit?
- What kind of fruit are you storing up in your heart as a result of the condition and rhythm of your inner life?
- Think back over the most memorable or significant conversations you had last week. What might your words reveal about your heart?

Devotional Reading and Reflection

- **Jeremiah 17:7-10** | In this Old Testament passage, like Luke 6 in connecting our hearts to trees, what do we learn about combating the default deceptiveness of our hearts?
- **James 2:14-18** | How does this passage about words and deeds connect with the passage from Luke 6 about trees and fruit?
- **Ephesians 4:29** | According to this verse, what kinds of words should we prioritize in our conversations with others?

Self-Care Discipline

May Discipline:

Essentials for Confession | Definite Sins (*Celebration of Discipline, p.145, 151-152*)

- Confession is a difficult discipline for us, because we all too often view the believing community as a fellowship of saints before we see it as a fellowship of sinners. We feel that everyone else has advanced so far into holiness that we are isolated and alone in our sin. We cannot bear to reveal our failures to others. We imagine that we are the only ones who have not stepped onto the high road to heaven. Therefore, we hide ourselves.
- The first essential is opening ourselves up to the "gaze of God." In doing so, we must be prepared to deal with definite sins. A generalized confession may save us from humiliation and shame, but it will not ignite inner healing. The people who came to Jesus came with obvious, specific sins, and they were forgiven for each one. It is far too easy to avoid our real guilt in a general confession. In our confession, we bring concrete sins. By calling them concrete it does not only mean outward sins. It means definite sins, including the sins of the heart. As we come to God with these sins, we know that God is ready, already knowing our sins, and waiting for us to confess and move towards a path of healing.

Notes