

EVERYONE'S LIFE PRODUCES SOME KIND OF FRUIT

YEAR: TRANSFORM / FOCUS: I AM GROWING
SERIES: GOD IS THE WAY - I AM RUNNING THE RACE

BIG TRUTH: EVERYONE'S LIFE PRODUCES SOME KIND OF FRUIT

Galatians 6:7-10; Matthew 6:22-23; 23:27; Luke 6:45; Matthew 12:33; Galatians 5:16-25

BIBLE VERSE: MATTHEW 7:20

"Thus you will recognize them by their fruits."

BIG IDEAS

- Beware! We are all prone to deception.
- The fruit of one's life is the byproduct of one's heart.
- Good fruit is the work of the Spirit; bad fruit is a rejection of God and will be rejected by the Father.

BIBLE PASSAGE: MATTHEW 7:15-23

TRANSFORM - I AM GROWING

The Transform Year is an exploration of what it means to become a "new creation" in Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17) In order for this to happen, we must first find our identity in Him. Many of us live in a consistent state of identity crises. We wrestle with questions like who am I, where do I belong, why do I exist? The answer to these questions is found in Jesus. Our prayer for this semester is that like the Apostle Paul we would be able to say, "I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." (Galatians 2:20).

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know that...

- God is the only way to life, hope, and peace.
- Everyone is on the path leading to life or the path leading to death.
- The path to life is hard and few find it, while the path to death is easy and many are on it.



Every student should feel...

- Fearful about the possibility of being on the road that leads to death.
- Encouraged that God's Word, people, and Spirit can help us run the race well.



Every student should strive to...

- Use the workouts consistently as a tool to help you study God's Word.
- Start using the ACTS model of daily prayer.



Every student should ask God to...

- Give them a desire to pursue the path of life and reject the path of death.
- Help them to take the next step in obediently following Him this week.

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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EVERYONE'S LIFE PRODUCES
SOME KIND OF FRUIT**BIBLE VERSE: MATTHEW 7:20***"Thus you will recognize them by their fruits."***Believers are to discern between right teaching and false teaching.***"Thus you will recognize..."*

- In the New Testament, we see the warning to believers to beware of false teachers. Some false teachers are easily identified, but others can appear to speak truth, or partial truths, but in reality they are wolves in sheep's clothing. Jesus warns His followers to use discernment, or their Godly judgment, to identify wrong teaching. It is very important that believers apply God's wisdom and discernment to any teaching that they hear.
- Jesus warned that there are many false teachers and we all can easily be led astray by them. As a follower of Christ, it is our responsibility to know truth and to know it so well that when we hear even a partial truth or a distorted truth, we recognize it as false. It is possible for believers to identify false teachers when we know God's truth and have hidden it in our hearts.

Believers can recognize false teaching by the fruit the false teachers bear.*"Thus you will recognize them by their fruits."*

- God has equipped His people with the ability to recognize false teachers by giving them the Holy Spirit as a guide. Because believers have the Holy Spirit, they can discern between good fruit and bad fruit. False teachers may speak partial truth or appear to say the right things, but the fruit they bear reveals their true hearts.
- Believers can identify false teachers by the fruit they are bearing. It is the believer's task to identify false teachers by examining their lives and the fruit they bear so that they are not led astray by false teaching.

The fruit we bear reveals the condition of our heart.*"Thus you will recognize them by their fruits."*

- Just as false teachers can be recognized by the fruit they bear, believers will be, too. The fruit we bear shows the world what is really in our heart. We can say that we follow Jesus, love others, and believe in His Word, but our actions and lives can show otherwise.
- When a person consistently lives in a way that is contrary to God's Word, their fruit reveals that their hearts are not fully submitted to God. It is from our hearts that our actions are birthed and our actions reveal what is truly in our hearts.

EVERYONE'S LIFE PRODUCES
SOME KIND OF FRUIT**BIG IDEA #1: BEWARE! WE ARE ALL PRONE TO DECEPTION.¹****[THIS]**

Matthew 7:15 gives us the command to “Beware!” This command warns us of the great danger we all face in being deceived. We are prone to being deceived by others because our flesh is weak. Matthew 7:15 goes on to say that false prophets do not look like the enemy on the outside. Instead, they look harmless, yet they are ravenous wolves. We cannot believe and trust everything we hear, even from those claiming to teach and preach God’s Word. We must know God’s Word ourselves in order to discern when someone is teaching something contrary to God’s Word. If we begin to believe that we can not be easily deceived, we are in danger of deception. We are all in danger of being led astray and must be careful to watch out for those who would deceive us.

[THEREFORE]

Who are some of the “false shepherds” that you or your friends might be deceived by?

Jeremiah 23:16 offers us a warning against those who come saying things that are not in Scripture, but speak their own thoughts as if they are God’s Word. Matthew 24:24 teaches us that false shepherds will come doing incredible things that threaten to deceive us. Acts 20:28-30 shows us that false shepherds can even be people we know and who attend church with us.

Read Matthew 7:15. How do we protect ourselves against false teachers and false desires?

Hebrews 2:1 teaches us that in order to keep ourselves from being led astray, we must know God’s Word. When we do not know God’s Word and apply it to every area of our lives, we can be led astray by others. 1 John 4:1 tells us to not believe every spirit, but to test it. When we fail to do this, we succumb to the deception of others.

[THIS]

Scripture teaches that we are prone to deceive ourselves. We easily convince ourselves of our own truth. We can convince ourselves that our sin is not that bad. We can focus on our outward appearances of religion instead of allowing God’s Spirit to sanctify us on the inside. This deception can lead us to live secret lives of sin and carry us far away from God. We can deceive ourselves into believing that our outward religious actions are more important than really following God’s Word. We can falsely believe we are more righteous than we are and this can lead us to live lives of sin and pride.

[THEREFORE]

What are some areas in your life where you are prone to self-deception?

Romans 12:3 teaches us the way to avoid self-deception. When we evaluate ourselves rightly, we will not think of ourselves too highly. Thinking we are better than we are can lead us to assign rights and privileges to ourselves that lead us away from God and not toward Him.

Read James 1:16-27. How can going to church and other religious activities deceive us into thinking we’re living for Jesus when in reality we aren’t?

James 1:16-27 teaches us what true religion really looks like. It also serves as a warning that we can say with our mouths that we love God, yet our lives reveal something different. Galatians 6:7-10 reminds us that we reap what we sow and God is fully aware of what is in our hearts. The fruit we bear over our lifetime reveals if we truly know God and follow Him.

1. Matthew 7:15: False prophets look like true prophets, but inside they are workers of iniquity.

EVERYONE'S LIFE PRODUCES
SOME KIND OF FRUIT**BIG IDEA #2: THE FRUIT OF ONE'S LIFE IS THE BYPRODUCT OF ONE'S HEART.²****[THIS]**

Jesus teaches in Matthew 7:17 that we all bear some type of fruit. The fruit we bear reveals the condition of our heart. Our hearts hold our desires and it is from our hearts that our desires become actions. Jesus taught that our hearts hold our treasure. The way we live our lives indicates if our hearts are submitted to Christ, or if they are following after our own desires. Our actions reveal whether we are truly submitted to Christ or not. No one is exempt from this truth. Jesus taught that we reap what we sow and our actions will show what is really in our hearts. Our hearts are deceptive and lead us away from God. When we are living for Him, our hearts lead us to Him because they have been made new and we are submitted to Him.

[THEREFORE]

Read Galatians 5:16-25. What is the difference between a life that is bearing spiritual fruit and one that is not?

In Matthew 6:19-23, we see the command to not store up earthly treasure. We can know our hearts are aligned with God's Word when we store up heavenly treasure. When we love the things that God loves, our hearts are in line with Him. 1 John 3:4 shows us that those who participate in wicked deeds reveal their hearts are wicked. When we abstain from wicked deeds, we reveal our hearts are submitted to God.

How would you describe the fruit your life is bearing?

Matthew 23:25-27 warns us of focusing on our outward actions and not our hearts. Even when we try to appear Godly, our hearts will reveal the truth about us. If there is sin in our hearts, it will play out in our actions. The fruit of our lives will show the world who is truly Lord of our lives.

[THIS]

We are all bearing either good or bad fruit. Those who consistently bear bad fruit reveal their hearts are far from Christ. Those who bear bad fruit do not have hearts that have been made new by Christ. When we bear good fruit, we reveal that we have been cleansed of our sin and are followers of Christ. Jesus taught that we are all known by the fruit we bear. No one who encounters Jesus will remain unchanged. He transforms lives from the inside out by giving every person who has saving faith a new heart. This new heart will lead people to follow Jesus and obey His commands, thus bearing fruit that reveals this life change.

[THEREFORE]

What do your thoughts, actions, and words reveal about your heart?

Luke 6:45 teaches us that it is from our hearts that our thoughts, actions, and words come. If we consistently think, do, and say things that do not please God, we reveal that our hearts are not truly transformed. 2 Corinthians 5:17 reminds us that when we are in Christ, we are a new creation. This means that we will not think, act, or say the same things we did before we knew Christ.

What kind of fruit would reveal that a person's life has not truly been transformed by the gospel?

1 John 4:20 shows us that when we lack love for others, we reveal that we truly don't know God. Our fruit reveals whether we are believers or not.

2. Matthew 7:17: Healthy trees bear good fruit and bad trees do not. Those with new hearts bear good fruit for God.

EVERYONE'S LIFE PRODUCES
SOME KIND OF FRUIT**BIG IDEA #3: GOOD FRUIT IS THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT; BAD FRUIT IS A REJECTION OF GOD AND WILL BE REJECTED BY THE FATHER.³****[THIS]**

There is nothing good in us apart from Christ. We cannot bear good fruit without the working of God's Spirit inside of us. Any good fruit we bear is a work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Matthew 7:15-20 teaches us that a healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, meaning that those who are in Christ will bear the fruit of His Spirit. It is impossible to know Christ and not be changed by Him. Any good fruit that a believer bears is the work of Christ inside of them, changing them to be more like Him every day. Those bearing good fruit are doing so because the Holy Spirit is inside of them and the Holy Spirit is perfect and good.

[THEREFORE]

Read Galatians 5:16-18. How have you seen the Holy Spirit work in you or others to bear good fruit?

In Galatians 5:16-18, we see that the Spirit helps us resist temptation and avoid giving in to the desires of our sin nature. Ephesians 3:16-17 teaches us that it is God's Spirit who strengthens us and helps us in our walk with God. The Spirit enables us to bear good fruit and guides us to walk in the light of Christ.

What habits and disciplines help you seek the Spirit's help to bear good fruit?

John 15:4 shows us that when we abide in Jesus, we bear good fruit. Establishing the discipline of abiding in His Word guides us to bear good fruit because we are submitted to the leading of His Spirit. 1 John 2:6 and 1 John 2:24 show us that knowing and obeying God's Word helps us bear His righteousness in our daily lives.

[THIS]

Those who bear bad fruit reveal they have rejected God and His will. They reject His salvation and offer of reconciliation. Scripture teaches that they will, in turn, be rejected by the Father at the final judgment. A person whose life consistently bears bad fruit, which is anything contrary to God's Word, is a person who has rejected Christ. Because a person who knows Christ and is in Christ cannot consistently bear bad fruit, the person whose life is marked by the ways of the flesh is living in rejection to God. Bearing bad fruit is living according to the flesh and person who lives according to the flesh is a person who does not know God.

[THEREFORE]

How have you seen a person's rejection of God lead to a life of bad fruit?

Proverbs 5:22 teaches us that the sins of a person ensnare them. When a person has rejected God, their lives will be consistently ensnared by their sin. 1 John 3:4 says that every person who makes a practice of sinning has a heart of sin. Luke 13:27 serves as a warning that those who reject God will be rejected by Him.

3. Matthew 7:15-20: God will judge our fruit and those who bear bad fruit will be cast out.