

Good morning, Church. Daily Reading, Ecclesiastes 6.

A few years ago, I picked apples off our tree at the church only to discover the skin was tough and the fruit was not very tasty. But then, for the past few years, Paul W. and others have pruned, fertilized, and water the tree. Now the fruit is so much better and enjoyable to eat.

John 15:1-2 "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." (NIV)

I was talking with Pastor Jeremy and the topic of "How can we gage spiritual growth?" came up. How can we measure our own spiritual growth, as well as see if our church members are growing in Christ? We were not talking about numerical growth but spiritual. How can spiritual growth be measured. One answer we agreed upon was the fruit being produced in our lives and the lives of those in the church. Is spiritual fruit being produced within us. Like, the fruit of the Spirit, i.e., "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." (Gal. 5:22-23)

Are we able to see evidence of God pruning away "immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, outburst of anger, disputes, dissension, factions, envying, drunkenness and carousing" (Gal 5:19-21) out from our midst.

What is the quality of the fruit being produced in our lives, our hearts, and minds? For our lives to be enjoyable, our hearts and minds must be tended by the Father. Have you felt any pruning in your life lately?