

Rev. Andrew Murray was a missionary to South Africa at the end of the 19th Century and wrote many books. He was from a Dutch Reformed background. I don't know how closely that church's teaching relate to Wesleyan teachings, but I do know that his quote hits right at the heart of the role that the Fruit of the Spirit has in our going on to perfection.

Disciple Life

The Wesleyan Way

Week # 7

"The Holy Spirit was poured out as the fruit of Resurrection and Ascension. And the Spirit is now the Power of God in us, working upwards towards Christ, to reproduce His life and Holiness in us, to fit us for fully receiving and showing forth Him in our lives. We must take the lesson to heart; we can have as much of the Spirit as we are willing to have of His Holiness. Be full of the Spirit, must mean to us, Be fully holy. [. . .] Be holy means, Be filled with the Spirit. If we inquire more closely how it is that this Holy Spirit makes holy, the answer is,—He reveals and imparts the Holiness of Christ."

There is so much to unpack from that quote. Let me focus though on the idea that the connection between being full of the Fruit of the Spirit and being fully holy. You can't have one without the other. You cannot be moving onto perfection-trying to become perfect in love in this world—and not be full of the Fruit of the Spirit. You cannot be full of the Fruit of the Spirit unless you are allowing the Holy Spirit to move in your life and shape you more and more each day into the image of Christ.

As you think about this process, you have to consider that the change that has to happen in our lives does not come from our own power. We cannot force the Fruit of the Spirit to grow. We cannot demand which



Start the
Conversation:
Provoke One
Another in Love

PROVOKING QUESTION:

This week, you are encouraged to ask a church member the following:

What weeding do you need to do in your life so that God can more effectively grow the Fruit of the Spirit?

Fruit will be produced. We cannot force God to give us more of the Holy Spirit. It's all about God's grace unfolding in our lives and God moving in us as God deems fit and necessary.

So, if we can't make God do any of this, what is our role. Well, since God is the gardener that provides the growth, our role is, in my opinion, best seen as a co-gardener that helps to keep the weeds out. Not a very glamorous role. Yet, one that is important. Have you ever seen a garden overrun with weeds? It's not a very effective garden—is it?

We need to identify the weeds in our garden that need pulling so that God can more freely begin to develop the Fruit within us and so that the Holy Spirit can more easily shape us into Christ's image. We need to get rid of things that pull us away from prayer, the Bible, coming together for fellowship, service toward others...the list could go on. I hope you get my point. If you want to be more like Christ, you have to allow the Holy Spirit to move in your life and you have to allow the Fruit of the Spirit to grow.

Carry the cross  **and follow me.**
Luke 14:27, NRSV