



Start the
Conversation:
Provoke One
Another in Love

PROVOKING QUESTION:

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

Do you think the Fruit of the Spirit are evident in your life? Why or why not.

process?

The more I think about this topic, the more questions that arise in my own mind. I am trying to remember if I have ever heard a sermon or sermon series on the Fruit of the Spirit. In the back of my mind, I vaguely remember one and it was decades (Yes. I am old enough to use the word decades in this context.) ago.

So, I suppose, I need to do some searching on my own and see where the Lord leads me on this topic. I suggest that you, likewise, begin some searching. I sense that there may be a sermon or two that might come out of this search. I can't promise when, but I suspect soon.

Let me close with the following quote from the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer for us to ponder this week:

"Fruit is always the miraculous, the created; it is never the result of willing, but always a growth. The fruit of the Spirit is a gift of God, and only He can produce it. They who bear it know as little about it as the tree knows of its fruit. They know only the power of Him on whom their life depends."

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



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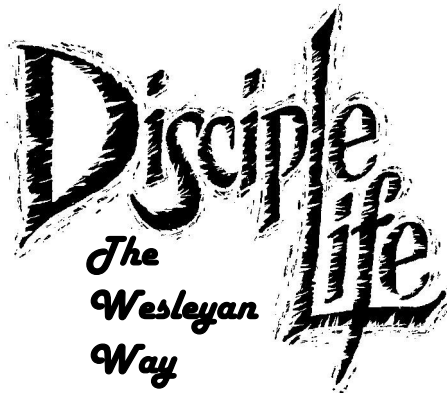
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I was interviewing Rusty Taylor for my podcast and I asked him, “What is your favorite dessert?” This is a standard question to end my podcast interviews. His response, though, was unexpected. Everyone else I had asked that question had talked about cakes, pies, cookies, etc. Rusty, though said, “Watermelon. Only after the Fourth of July, at least that’s what my grandfather taught me. Before then, it’s not ripe enough to eat.”



Week # 5

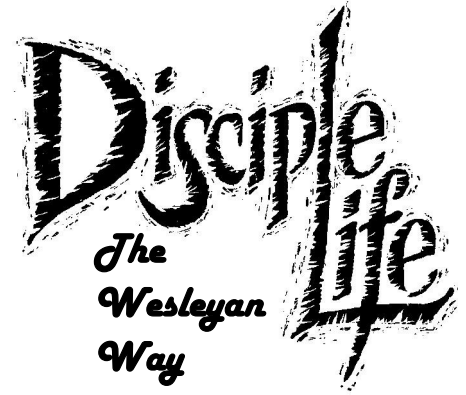
Rusty knew how to answer my question and didn’t hesitate in doing so. He knew that there was only one right answer for him. He knew that watermelon was the only dessert for him.

Let me ask you something. “What is your favorite Fruit of the Spirit?” Think about that in two different ways. First of all, what is the favorite in terms of what is evident in your life right now? Secondly, what is your favorite in terms of I need more of that fruit? Could you answer in a no hesitation manner as did Rusty?

Even as I pose these questions, I am trying to answer them in my own mind. You see, when it comes to the Fruit of the Spirit, how many of us actually think about them being present in our lives? How many of us strive to allow that fruit to be on display for all the world to see?

John Wesley said that once we get the love of Christ in our hearts and began to see the world as Christ sees it, then the first thing that would be produced in our lives would be Fruit of the Spirit. The questions that are before each of us are these: Is there Fruit of the Spirit present in my life? How is this fruit manifested and seen by others? Is there fruit present in my life that I may not recognize, but that others do see? Am I striving to make the fruit abundant? What is God’s role in this

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