

Message Series: "Grace Anatomy"  
April 3, 2011

## HEART MONITOR

Luke 6:43-45

### INTENTION

*Group members will explore the fruit metaphor that Jesus offers his disciples to illustrate change from the inside out.*

### INTRODUCTION

*This section will introduce the topic allowing group members to experience the sensation of various types of fruits*

1. Ahead of time, send out an invitation to this week's "fruit party". Encourage members to choose from the following list of items to bring for the group:
  - a. Pineapple upside down cake a la mode
  - b. Cherry pie
  - c. Fruit Salad
  - d. Caramel Apples
  - e. Grape Juice / Apple Juice / Cranberry Juice
  - f. The game "Apples to Apples"
2. As group members arrive, set out the fruit foods they have brought and allow group to enjoy the fruit-fest through out the evening.
3. You may want to play one of the following games as an ice-breaker to begin your group:
  - a. The board game "Apples to Apples"
    - i. If you do not own this game, add it to the list of items in your invitation for someone to bring.
    - ii. Allow someone who owns the game to explain it and lead the group in playing a couple of rounds.
  - b. Fruit Basket Upset (for the more active groups or younger groups)
    - i. Tell the group you are going to play a game called "fruit basket upset." The rules are as follows:
      1. Begin with one person standing in the middle, with only enough seats for everyone except that person.
      2. The person standing in the middle must state a characteristic or experience they have had: i.e. "visited another country"
      3. Whoever has not done that item then must get out of their chair and move to someone else's chair.
      4. The person in the middle quickly occupies one of the empty chairs before someone else sits in it.
      5. The person who ends up without a chair then must stand in the middle and make a new proclamation: (i.e. "shaved their legs", etc.)
    - ii. Continue playing the game until either most people have ended up in the middle or you have inadvertently destroyed a piece of furniture in your host's living room

### INVESTIGATION

*This section allows group members to examine today's Scripture passage as they begin to discover what Jesus teaches about the fruit our lives should produce.*

1. Let the group know that in our Scripture passage Jesus compares his listeners to fruit trees.
2. Have a volunteer read Luke 6:43-45 one verse at a time. After each verse, have the reader pause while the group answers the question:

- a. What point do you think Jesus was making?
  - b. Why do you think he used the analogies that he used?
3. Conclude this section by further exploring the question: Why do you think Jesus used fruit and fruit trees to illustrate what his followers should be producing? (*Fruit is visible, fruit from a fruit tree is for the benefit of others, it's pleasing to the eyes, it has variety, texture, it is nourishing...*)

## INTERACTION

*This section gets the group thinking about the benefits of bearing good fruit and what that may look like in their lives.*

1. Allow group members to discuss whether they believe real Christians can produce bad fruit? Explain.
2. Allow group members to grapple with the following problem: According to James (James 3:9-12), a believer should not be praising God and cursing men any more than a fig tree should be bearing olives or a grapevine bearing figs. If that is true, how do you explain bad fruit coming from true Christians? Are there examples in your own life?
3. According to Luke 6:45, what is the ultimate evidence of whether we as followers of Christ are producing good or bad fruit?
4. Have you ever had something pop out of your mouth you wish you had not said? Explain. Why do you think that happens?
5. Let the group know that Paul illustrates the inner conflict that believers have in Galatians:
  - a. Choose two volunteers to alternate reading verses: The first volunteer should read Galatians 5:19-21 while the second should read Galatians 5:22-24.
  - b. Ask the readers to alternate back and forth, each reading one verse at a time.
6. Now have the group discuss what they believe makes the difference between them being a good tree bearing good fruit or a bad tree bearing bad fruit?
  - a. How can the habits we have developed and messages we have heard in our pasts interfere with us bearing spiritual fruit?
  - b. Read Galatians 5:24-25 and have the group discuss whether bearing good fruit is a process or a final destination? Explain.

## IMPLICATION

*This section helps members apply what they have learned about good fruit production.*

1. Ask the group to consider how Jesus' words in John 15:5 figure into the fruit production equation as you read them.
2. After reading the verse, encourage the group to discuss what it means to "abide" in Christ.
  - a. How does sorting out old messages and conditioning from our past fit in this concept?
  - b. How does listening to the new nature, springing from the Spirit of God practically apply here?
3. Pass out a copy to each group member and read over the attached worksheet (make copies ahead of time or pick up extra at the church office) and encourage group members to keep an ongoing record of fruit production during the next seven days.
4. Allow volunteers to share which fruit they have needed most in their lives lately.
5. Ask them to be prepared to share their progress or struggles during our next group time.
6. You may want to pass out a stick of "Juicy Fruit" to group members in the hopes that the lesson "sticks" with them.

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## THE FLAVOR OF FRUIT

If you could cut open a piece of “spiritual fruit” some of its flavors would include:

Love

Joy

Peace

Patience

Kindness

Goodness

Faithfulness

Gentleness

Self-Control

Put a check by the flavors you think you needed most in your life lately. Why did you check the flavors you did?

This week’s assignment: Concentrate on staying connected with Jesus this week. Keep a short daily journal, and record any fruit you observe Jesus beginning to produce in your life. Be sure to indicate how you can tell the fruit is emerging.

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

Day 6

Day 7

Galatians 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”