



A Good Apple

“The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.”

Proverbs 11:25 (NLT)

One bad apple spoils the whole bunch...

Health issues, financial challenges, problems at work... we have justification, but before long, like a frog being cooked in a pot of increasingly hot water, our attitudes begin to rot. Have you noticed?

I’ve become keenly aware when I’ve allowed my attitude to grow into a Bad Apple. Nonetheless, I seem to think that wallowing will lead to refreshment. Never does... it yields more rotten fruit!

The Principle of Sowing and Reaping – we reap what we sow, we reap

more than we sow, we sow in one season and reap in the next – rings true. Wallowing leads to more wallowing... a bad attitude spoils everything it touches! Fortunately, this principle works both ways. Seeking its benefits, I preach to myself, “Whatever I want more of, give what I have away.”

Having fallen into the pit of wallowing countless times, I know the way out, but when desperate for refreshment who can muster the strength to generously refresh others? Once trapped, all I can do is yell, “Help!”

“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! The Apostle Paul (Galatians 5:22-23)

Recently in the pit, the Spirit responded to my cry... “What if your bad attitude spoils your imprint on your grandkids?”

Ouch! (What pierces more deeply than a poignant question?)

His precision shot produced the Self-Control I needed to change my attitude so I wouldn’t spoil the whole bunch. Plus, he showed me I must nourish my newly acquired Self-Control to grow a Good Apple.

Reflect: Is a bad attitude spoiling the fruits in my life?

Once again, he pulled me out of the pit when I let my attitude get out of control. I've come to love the intervention of the Spirit. It's proof that God loves me!

"I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you." The Lord (Psalm 32:8)

Likewise, when trapped in the pit of wallowing, cry out for the intervention of the Spirit to produce Self-Control in your life; God loves you too! But it's not his desire to pull you (or me) out time after time. Peter warns "Don't slip back into the pit... you know better now!"

"So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then." The Apostle Peter (1 Peter 1:13-14)

The Spirit would rather us grow a Good Apple – an attitude that refreshes everything it touches... **regardless of our circumstances!** And Peter reveals how... "Prepare your mind to actively exercise Self-Control by obediently putting **all** your hope in the truth of your salvation."

Wait! Isn't Self-Control a management problem, me trying harder to

change my behavior?

Consider: I must consume Spiritual Milk to produce Self-Control.

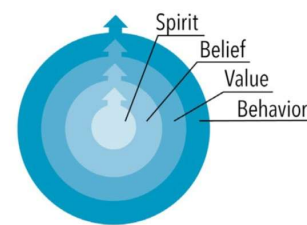
A bad attitude needs to be called what it really is – an evil behavior – the root of many others. This Bad Apple will quickly spoil the whole bunch!

“So get rid of all evil behavior. Be done with all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and all unkind speech. Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, now that you have had a taste of the Lord’s kindness.” The Apostle Peter (1 Peter 2:1-3)

After being pulled from the pit, wanting to “be done with it,” I’ve declared, “From now on I’ll have a good attitude!” only to find myself in the pit again crying, “Help!” How about you?

We confuse ourselves thinking that Self-Control centers on managing our outward behavior. No! It emanates from the inside out. Self-Control outpours from the

communion of the Spirit with our spirit. The Spirit produces the change in belief required to grow a Good Apple.



Changed belief >> Changed Behavior = Self-Control.

The Spirit's intervention gives us a taste but like a hungry infant we must consume pure Spiritual Milk – the nutrient rich Gospel – throughout the day to nourish the new beliefs we need to grow a Good Apple. (Honestly, since starting to do this I've had to take a Gospel drink literally hundreds of times a day to gain Self-Control over my attitude!)

*Imagine: **My Good Apple refreshing others, refreshing my Mission.***

Advance your Mission (refreshing others) and your Mission will be refreshed in you. A Bad Apple spoils this beautiful fruit in your life...

"Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy." The Apostle Paul (Ephesians 4:21-24)

Does your attitude need refreshment? Obediently put **all** your hope in the truth of your salvation. You have a new nature! Gain Self-Control by letting the Spirit renew your beliefs – feed on the truth of the Gospel and grow...

A Good Apple!

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach's Questions

- Soberly ask, "How is my attitude?"
- What really happened when I was saved? Have I fully embraced this truth?
- How can I increase my focus on the Gospel throughout the day?
- How does the Gospel power my Mission?
- Don't know my Mission? [Start here!](#)

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

Embracing My New Life Grows a Good Apple

"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"

The Apostle Paul | 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT)



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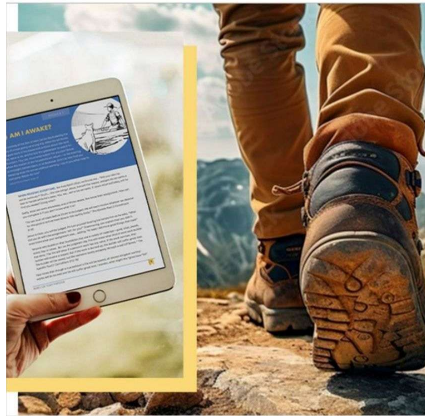
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