

7th July 2021

Fruit

“By their fruits ye shall know them.”

Bible, Matthew 7:20

The comedian, Eddie Izzard, has a thread in one of his routines about pears. In fact, he indicates – in the most graphic of language – he’d be happy if pears departed from his life altogether. Why? Here’s his reason ...

‘Cause they're gorgeous little beasts, but they're ripe for half an hour, and you're never there. They're like a rock or they're mush. In the supermarket, people banging in nails. ‘I'll just put these shelves up, mate, then you can have the pear.’ So you think, ‘I'll take them home and they'll ripen up.’ But you put them in the bowl at home, and they sit there, going, ‘No! No! Don't ripen yet, don't ripen yet. Wait ‘til he goes out the room! Ripen! Now! Now! Now!’

And aren't peaches, plums and nectarines equally culpable?

Fruit is important in our diet. When I was a child, you got fruit “in season”. Now, because of the development of different growing techniques and the availability of transport links, we can buy strawberries in December and Kiwi Fruit in February. But, nonetheless, Eddie Izzard is right. Regardless of when your fruit of choice is available to you, it has to be ready to be eaten. Too unripe or too over-ripe, and there are problems.

In his letter to the Church in Galatia, St Paul suggests that if we are filled with God's Spirit, we will produce good fruit.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

What a crop of good fruit Paul points to! What an amazing orchard of good things can grow if we live our lives in the right way.

But take a lesson from Eddie Izzard. Of course we know that our fruits have to develop well and be properly cared for so that we can live the full lives of service expected of us. But what a pity it would be if that good fruit was left untouched and unused so that, like Izzard's pears that ripen in an instant, they are no good to anyone at all.

Fruit produced “in the Spirit” is good fruit. But, when it develops “in season”, we have to ensure it is well used and available at the right time.

A prayer for today

If I am to be known by my fruits, help me to make sure my fruits are well used. Amen.

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