

Sweet Fruit, Sour Fruit

Laurissa Wolfram

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness - Galatians 5:22

Today I am writing this devotion in Hanoi, Vietnam. My family and I decided to make a little side trip while I was on this side of the world, and it has definitely been an experience. There are so many wonderful things about traveling: experiencing different modes of transportation, the amazing architecture, the unique culture and traditions. The list could go on and on.

But my favorite thing about traveling is sampling the local cuisine, especially the fresh fruit. I absolutely *love* fruit, and I've been stuffing myself with pineapple, mangoes, bananas, and papaya. Last week in the Philippines, you'd see me just about every morning bent over the kitchen sink, with mango juice running down my chin and arms as I savored each sweet little bite. I've already decided that the abundance of exotic fresh fruit is the thing I will miss the most after going back to the U.S.

I can't tell you the times I've walked down the produce isle at my local grocery store back home and snatched up some yummy looking mangoes only to be utterly disappointed once I bit into them. I am firmly convinced that the only reason that there are people out there who don't like fruit is because they haven't tried "the good stuff." They've had the stuff that was picked green and imported in from another country. Ew. Those people have a skewed perception of fruit, thinking *all* fruit is bitter, sour, and stringy! I don't blame them for not liking it!

In a way, that's how many people view Christianity. They are confronted with sour-faced, depressed, and miserable children of God. Well no wonder they have a negative image of Christians! Why would anyone want to take a bite out of a piece of fruit that's been advertised as sour? All this misguided "advertisement" discourages people from

seeking a relationship with God, something that would be the best experience they have ever had. Let's remember to reflect the goodness of God, allowing ourselves to be the sweet fruit that attracts others to Him and His presence, rather than a bitter experience that would dissuade them from finding His love.