

“Fruit unto God”  
Romans 7:4  
(Preached at Trinity, October 26, 2008)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we’ve seen, **Chapter 7** is a continuation of the previous chapter. In **Verse 14** of **Chapter 6** Paul makes the bold statement, **Romans 6:14** – “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”
  - A. We now have a whole new relationship to the Law  
In **Chapter 7** Paul is continuing to teach about the proper place of the Law in the life of the Christian.
    1. Paul is teaching that when we were lost, in Adam, dead in sin, the Law stood over us to condemn. It made demands that we could not fulfill.
    2. The Law was weak in that it provided no change in the heart. It offered us no means of righteousness to justification. The Law has no power to subdue sin. In fact, due to the sinfulness of our hearts, the Law only serves to enliven sin within us.
  - B. Under grace we do not look to the Law as a means of making us right in the sight of God.  
**Romans 3:20-22** – “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. <sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; <sup>22</sup> Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe:”
  - C. In this sense we have died to the Law.
2. **Chapter 7** opens with an illustration: A wife is bound to her husband as long as he is alive but when the husband dies the wife is no longer bound to him and is free to marry another. Paul is using this to illustrate that Christian has died to the Law and is now bound to Christ.
  - A. Paul’s point in **Verses 1-4** is that you must die to the one before you are free to marry another.
  - B. Paul affirms the meaning of his illustration **Verse 4**  
**Romans 7:4** – “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”
3. We have died to the Law in order that we might be married to another - that we might be united to Christ in an intimate relationship.  
As I pointed out last time, an important aspect of our marriage to Christ is fruitfulness. Fruitfulness defines us.

**John 15:4-8** – “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. <sup>7</sup> If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. <sup>8</sup> Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”

**Romans 7:4** – “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”

4. We were wed to Christ resurrected. In **Chapter 6** Paul describes our union with Christ as not only dying with Christ but also being raised with Christ.
 

**Romans 6:4** – “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”
5. In Christ we are raised to walk in righteousness. Now in **Verse 4** Paul describes the end of our resurrection with Christ – “that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” Our marriage to Christ is not a barren union but one of great fruitfulness.
6. What is the nature of bringing fruit unto God?
  - I. First, there are several things implied by the word fruit
    - A. Fruit implies health
      1. Only a healthy plant is a fruitful plant  
Farmers are careful to fertilize, cultivate, irrigate in order to bring in a full harvest.
      2. In the Parable of the Sower it is only the good soil that brought forth good fruit. There was the wayside, and the stony ground, and the thorny soil, but then there was good soil  
**Matthew 13:23** – “But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it*; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”
      3. The Christian has been changed from darkness to light, from wickedness to righteousness – from death and decay to life and health  
**Romans 7:4** – “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”
    - B. Second, fruit implies growth and increase
      1. A plant begins as a single seed but from the single seed there can be an enormous yield. A single apple seed can bring forth thousands of apples
      2. The Christian brings forth abundant fruit. This is an absolute truth.  
“some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”  
**Colossians 1:9-10** – “For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; <sup>10</sup> That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God”

- C. Third, fruit implies usefulness
1. A farmer will not keep unfruitful trees. He'll remove them and plant others.
  2. Jesus used this principle to teach His disciples the necessity of bearing fruit. The fruitless tree is a useless tree  
**Matthew 21:18-19** – “Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. <sup>19</sup> And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.”
  3. Fruitfulness marks the believer, fruit is expected. There is no such thing as a fruitless Christian.
  4. Again our Lord taught the importance of fruitfulness as He condemned the false teachers  
**Matthew 7:16-20** – “Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? <sup>17</sup> Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”
  5. Christians are fruitful, profitable, useful. The works of a Christian are “good” works. They are useful.
    - a. The Christian is useful first of all to God.  
 The grammar implies fruit directed towards God  
 “fruit unto God.” – literally, “fruit for God”
    - b. Secondly, we are useful to other men  
**Titus 3:8** – “*This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.*”
    - c. Ultimately, all of our fruitfulness is unto God – for His sake, for His glory.

## II. What does fruit unto God look like?

- A. Fruitfulness unto God is a life characterized by ever increasing holiness. The Christian life is a life of consistent obedience.  
**1 John 2:4-5** – “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. <sup>5</sup> But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.”
1. The true believer has experienced a transformation  
**2 Corinthians 5:17** – “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”  
 We have changed masters. Christ has become our Lord and King  
 Christ has captured our heart – We love to obey Him

2. Regeneration creates a heart of consistent obedience  
God brings us to hate sin and love righteousness  
**Matthew 5:6** – “Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”
  3. Paul describes the great contrast:  
**Ephesians 5:6-9** – “Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. <sup>7</sup> Be not ye therefore partakers with them. <sup>8</sup> For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are* ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: <sup>9</sup> (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)”
- B. Fruit unto God is characterized by a life that hungers after spiritual things
1. When God saves us He awakens us spiritually.  
Listen to the fruit of the Spirit  
**Galatians 5:22-23** – “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, <sup>23</sup> Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”
  2. God gives His people a spiritual thirst:  
**Psalms 42:1-2** – “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?”
- C. Fruit unto God is characterized by love
1. The means first of all that we have been captivated by Christ’s love for us  
**2 Corinthians 5:14** – “For the love of Christ constraineth us”  
It means to be pressed on every side.
  2. The Christian loves God with his whole being  
**Matthew 22:37** – “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”
  3. The Christian loves others  
**Matthew 22:38-39** – “This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup>  
And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”
- D. Fruit unto God is characterized by usefulness
1. The end of our salvation is good works  
**Ephesians 2:10** – “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”
  2. The Christian life is one of continual good works  
**James 2:26** – “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”
  3. Are you useful in our Lord’s Kingdom? Are you useful in His church  
What is your place of service? What is your ministry?  
**Ephesians 4:11-12** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;  
<sup>12</sup> For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:  
<sup>NAS</sup> **Ephesians 4:12** – “for the equipping of the saints for the work of service”

- It may be the gift of mercy – ministering to those who are in need – hospital
  - It may be the gift of giving – giving abundantly to the work of Christ
  - It may be the gift of encouragement – building up the body of Christ
  - It may be the gift of service - It may be cleaning the windows, waxing the floors, keeping the weeds out of the parking lot.
4. Are you being useful in the work of evangelism?  
Do you invite people to worship?  
Do you share Christ with others?
- E. Fruit unto God is a life of consistent increase – we are growing and maturing
1. The fruit of ever increasing righteousness  
Sanctification brings ever increasing righteousness  
**1 Peter 2:2** – “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”
  2. The fruit of ever increasing knowledge  
**2 Peter 3:18** – “But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.”
    - a. Every true believer will grow in his knowledge of the truth
    - b. We often excuse immature and ignorant professors of Christ, “They’ve just never been taught.”  
Yes it is true that God has given pastors to feed the flock.  
But how much time are they spending feeding on the Word
  3. There will be an increase in discernment
    - a. Discernment and knowledge are inseparable – as we increase in the knowledge of God’s Word we will increase in discernment  
**Ephesians 4:14-15** – “That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; <sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ.”  
**Hebrews 5:14** – “But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”
    - b. Christians have spiritual understanding – this spiritual wisdom increases with maturity

### III. Finally, fruitfulness describes a partnership between God and man

- A. A farmer understands this clearly
1. He rises early, labors hard. He prepares the field for planting. He plants and carefully tends the seedlings keeping the weeds out.
  2. He is also mindful that he is completely at the mercy of God for the harvest. If God doesn’t send the rain all of his efforts are for nothing.

- B. We must likewise labor to produce the fruit of holiness
1. There are strict commands to every believer  
**Romans 6:12-13** – “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. <sup>13</sup> Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”
  2. We are commanded to flee all that is unclean  
**2 Corinthians 6:17** – “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,”  
**1 Corinthians 6:18** – “Flee fornication.”  
**1 Corinthians 10:14** – “flee from idolatry.”  
**2 Timothy 2:22** – “Flee also youthful lusts”
- C. We must labor with all our might, but the fruit of our labor is God’s alone.
1. The fruit of holiness comes because of our marriage to Christ  
**Romans 7:4** – “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”
  2. This paradigm of God’s sovereignty and human responsibility runs throughout the Bible.  
**Philippians 2:12-13** – “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. <sup>13</sup> For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.”
- D. The same is true of the fruit of our evangelism  
**1 Corinthians 3:6-9** – “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. <sup>7</sup> So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. <sup>8</sup> Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. <sup>9</sup> For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building.”

#### Conclusion:

1. How about you? Is their evidence of fruitfulness in your life? Is their evidence of your marriage to Christ? Are you bearing fruit? Are you useful?
2. Never forget the mark of the unbeliever:  
**Romans 3:10-12** – “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: <sup>11</sup> There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. <sup>12</sup> They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”