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Fruit Bearing 101



Part 29 (020127PM)

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Since each of us who are born again and members of Christ's family have an accounting to face, How is your fruit bearing these days? We each get the awesome responsibility of standing alone in front of the nail-scarred hands of the One who loved and purchased us. At that meeting He will evaluate our lives on the basis of two tests: what was "good" in our lives and what was "bad" in our lives. Now the question we need to ask ourselves is, how is my fruitfulness coming. Do you have fruit already sent up? Are you bearing fruit today? Are you living to protect your future fruitfulness?

Remember, we urgently need to understand fruitfulness because everything we ever have will turn to rust and ashes except for what was transformed by our ABIDING in Christ into Eternal Fruit. Christ's rewards to us are based on what was GOOD or fruitful, all else attached to our lives Jesus Christ has promised He will burn away at the BEMA SEAT JUDGMENT.

1 GOD WANTS TO MAKE EACH DAY OF OUR LIFE FRUITFUL

We are looking at the seventh and final of Christ's great titles: **I AM THE TRUE VINE** (15:1) - Jesus is all I need to be fruitful to the last day of my life, apart from Him is only continual withering. We already learned that because of the grape's tendency to grow so vigorously, a lot of wood must be cut away each year. Grapevines can become so dense that the sun cannot reach into the area where fruit should form. Left to itself, a grape plant will always favor new growth over more grapes. The result? From a distance, luxurious growth, an impressive achievement. Up close, an under-whelming harvest.

- Jesus says I am the Vine, your source of life and health. The state of your health is all in my hands.
- I will provide for you living grace, enduring declining life grace, and dying grace. Each just when you need them!
- If the vine speaks of all of life as one growing season, then we should get more fruit filled the older we get (ala Psalm 92), if it is many seasons then life is a succession of growing /pruning /bearing /resting and then growing/pruning...

2 ALL BELIEVERS BEAR FRUIT

A true branch[1], united with the vine, will always bear fruit. Not every branch bears a bumper crop, just as not every field has a bumper harvest (Matt. 13:8, 23), but there is always fruit where there is life. If there is no fruit, the branch is worthless and it is cast away and burned[2]. The main[3] truth Christ is teaching in this parable is the importance of abiding in Him in order to bear fruit. The word "fruit" is used six times, and "abide" at least fifteen times (but it is not always translated "abide"). The main point of the teaching here is fellowship, not sonship..

3 ABIDING IS THE KEY

To abide[4] in Christ is to continue to draw from His fullness. It is not enough that I turn from myself in disgust; I must turn to Christ with delight. I must seek His presence; I must be occupied with communing with Him. It is no longer a question of my sufficiency, my strength, or my anything. It is solely a matter of His sufficiency. The branch is simply a conduit, through which flows the fruity-producing juices, which result in the lovely clusters of grapes. Of course the key to this passage[5] is the word *abide*: it is used eleven times in John 15:1-11 ("continue" in John 15:9 and "remain" in John 15:11). What does it mean to "abide"? It means to keep in fellowship with Christ so that His life can work in and through us to produce fruit.

4 BUT -- WHAT IS FRUIT?

God's Word describes no less than seven different, yet closely related types of fruit. These are:

Part: 33	Do Troubles Push you Toward God?
Part: 32	Are You Pushed Toward God?
Part: 31	Is It Chastening or Pruning?
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Part: 28	Are You Cleansed, Clipped and Christ-like?
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Part: 25	A Life Useful for Jesus
Part: 24	Starting Over in Newness in Jesus
Part: 23	Jesus: I Am the Vine
Part: 22	Secrets of the VINE
Part: 21	How to Get Christ's Well Done
Part: 20	How To Walk Through The Valley Of Death's Shadow
Part: 19	The Race and the Crown
Part: 18	Finishing Well With Christ's WELL DONE
Part: 17	I Go To Prepare a Place
Part: 16	In My Fathers House
Part: 15	Who is the LORD - Jehovah or Allah?
Part: 14	Are You Secure for Eternity?
Part: 13	Mormonism Is the Wrong Way to God
Part: 12	Are You Ready to Die?
Part: 11	Jesus: I AM the Resurrection and the Life
Part: 10	Is Your Cup Overflowing
Part: 9	Following Jesus as My Good Shepherd in the Hard Times of Life!
Part: 8	Is Your Head Oiled?
Part: 7	Following Jesus As My Good Shepherd
Part: 6	I AM THE DOOR: Entering Life Through Jesus
Part: 5	Have You Given Your Life to Jesus?
Part: 4	Jesus: I AM the Bread of Life
Part: 3	Jesus: I am the LIGHT in the Wilderness
Part: 2	Jesus: I AM the Light to follow
Part: 1	Jesus: I AM the Light to Trust

1. **SOWING AND WATERING FRUIT:** One type of fruit are those we win to Christ. We were commissioned to "go and make disciples" **Matthew 28: 19-20** Go therefore and **make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20 teaching them** to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. **Romans 1:13** Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might **have some fruit among you** also, just as among the other Gentiles. **1 Corinthians 3:8-9** **Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.** **9** For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.
2. **FLESH DENYING FRUIT:** Growth[6] in holiness and obedience, we are bearing fruit. **Romans 6:22** But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your **fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.**
3. **GIVING (MONEY AND TIME) FRUIT:** Stewardship is fruit from a dedicated life. **Romans 15:27-28** It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also **to minister to them in material things.** **28** Therefore, when I have performed this and **have sealed to them this fruit**, I shall go by way of you to Spain. **Luke 12:21** "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not **rich toward God.**"
4. **SPIRIT WALKING FRUIT:** The fruit of the Spirit[7] in **Gal. 5:22-23** is the lifestyle that glorifies God and makes Christ real to others. **James 3; Colossians 3; 1 Corinthians 13.**
5. **SERVING FRUIT:** Good works of serving others is a fruit in an abiding life. **Colossians 1:10** that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being **fruitful in every good work** and increasing in the knowledge of God; **Hebrews 13:16** **But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.** **Matthew 20:26-28** Yet it shall not be so among you: but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. **27** And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— **28** just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."
6. **SPEAKING FRUIT:** Words of worship and praise to God that comes from our hearts and lips is a wonderful fruit to the glory of God. **Hebrews 13:15** Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, **the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.**
7. **FASTING AND PRAYING FRUIT:** When all else fails, sleeplessness, ill health, strength, eyesight, hearing, mobility, finances, independence – there is one fruit bearing, Christ honoring ministry we all can do as aged Anna showed in **Luke 2:37** and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, **but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.**

[1] Quoted from Wiersbe, Warren W., *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) 1997.

[2] Wiersbe writes: "The Lord isn't teaching here that true believers can lose their salvation, for this would contradict what He taught in **John 6:37 and 10:27-30**. Here Christ's one main truth is the fruitful life of the believer. Just as an unfruitful branch is useless, so an unfruitful believer is useless; and both must be dealt with. It is a tragic thing for a once-fruitful believer to backslide and lose his privilege of fellowship and service. If anything, **John 15:6** describes divine discipline rather than eternal destiny. "There is [for believers] a sin unto death" (**1 John 5:16**). To use v. 6 to teach that a Christian loses his salvation and is burned in hell if he fails to bear fruit is to twist the meaning of the parable. In the first place, such a teaching contradicts the plain teaching of other verses—**John 6:27; 10:27-29**; etc. Furthermore, note that the branch Christ speaks of in v. 6 withers after it is cast forth! If this branch pictures a backslidden Christian who loses his salvation, he should "wither" first, then fail to bear fruit, then be cast out."

[3] Quoted from Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books) 1992.

[4] Paraphrased from Arthur W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John Volume 3*. Swengel, Pa.: Bible Truth Depot, 1945, p. 307-309.

[5] Quoted and adapted from Bruce Wilkinson, *Secrets of The Vine*. Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, Inc., 2001, p. 39-48.

[6] PRIDE INVITES CHASTENING

How much does God want to remove pride[6] in our life? Immensely! The Bible says, "God resists the proud. . ." **James 4:6** NKJV) and "These six things the LORD hates. . . a proud look" (**Prov. 6:16-17** NKJV). Pride was Nebuchadnezzar surveying his kingdom and saying, "look what I've done." The result of pride was Nebuchadnezzar on his hands and knees eating grass in a cow pasture.

- Pride is an acid that turns the finest fruit bitter.
- Pride is a shallow and superficial weed that grows in all soils, without need of water or care. It consumes and destroys every living thing it overshadows.
- Pride is a swelling of the heart filled with ego and self-importance.
- Pride raises you above others until you look down on them.
- Pride is the basis of racism that divides the church and America. There is no white church, black church, brown church, or yellow church in Scripture. There is only the blood-bought church of Jesus Christ.
- Pride is a cancer that rots the soul. A man infected with pride needs nothing...not even God! **God hates pride because it declares our independence of God.**

HUMBLING INVITES BLESSING

- Do you want[6] God's blessing upon your life? Then hunger and thirst for righteousness! Jesus said, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (**Matt. 6:33** NKJV).
- Do you want God's protection? Live a righteous and pure life! "The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous," wrote the psalmist "and His ears are open to their cry" (**Ps. 34:15** NKJV).
- Do you want God to provide for your children? Live a godly life! In **Psalms 37:25**, the psalmist assures us, "I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread" (NKJV).
- Do you want God to answer your prayers? Live righteously! "The LORD is far from the

wicked," Solomon wrote, "but He hears the prayer of the righteous" ([Prov. 15:29 NKJV](#)). James assures us that the prayer of a righteous man avails much ([5:16](#)), and the psalmist adds a warning: "If I regard iniquity [sin] in my heart The Lord will not hear" ([Ps. 66:18 NKJV](#)).

[7] The Scriptures show us that a truly spiritual person will be growing in a visible way in each of these areas.

1. **LOVE** is the absence of selfishness. Can others trace my progress in expressing God's love? Am I less selfish and self-seeking than I was last month?

2. **JOY** is the spiritual quality that releases us from circumstances. Do those that know me and watch my life see me as a joyful person?

3. **PEACE** is the internal serenity that only God can give. Has peace become more and more a way of life for you this year?

4. **PATIENCE** is the absence of personal irritation at the actions of others. Ask yourself, am I more patient than I was three months ago? Or less? If we are not increasing in patience it is only that we are not yielding and submitting to the Holy Spirit.

5. **KINDNESS** is a beautiful reflection of God in our lives. It is the absence of an abrasive manner in my dealings with people. Is my character showing an increasing tendency toward personal kindness in my way with others?

6. **GOODNESS** is being Godlike! It is the opposite of fallen humanity. Am I a visibly better person than last year? Do people see me doing good to all those around me?

7. **FAITHFULNESS** is the idea here. A trustworthy and dependable life. The kind of person that keeps their own life in order so that you can count on them. Like Psalm 15 speaks of, they make and keep their word. Am I making strides in reliability and dependability?

8. **MEEKNESS** is the opposite of asserting yourself. What shape is my personal agenda in? Is it intact and my rights being defended? Or, is it in hopeless shape, crucified with Christ and fading?

9. **DISCIPLINE** is defined by the Greek Dictionary as "a virtue, which consists in mastery of the appetites and passions, especially the sensual ones." The only force that can control or flesh is the Holy Spirit. When yielded to Him we become vessels that are worshipful sacrifices to Him no longer to self. Self cannot control self. Flesh is not able to harness flesh. Only the Spirit can discipline us. Do others see me as graciously under the control of God's Spirit of Discipline? Are you beating under and giving knockout blows to your flesh? Paul was in [1 Cor 9:27](#). Can we do any less?

Well, are they present? Are they growing? The proof is in how we are with our relationships

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