

## **Being Fruitful**

### **John 15:1-8**

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.  
NKJV

I. How is the Father glorified? V-8

A. Why us?

1. Have you ever wondered why God has chosen people to bring Him glory.
2. I mean couldn't God do miracles a hundred times a second and put us all in awe.
3. Couldn't He arrange the stars to spell out His glory and majesty?
4. I mean, if it is glory that He wants, couldn't He do so much better Himself.
5. Tomorrow God could turn Texas into the lush green of the midwest.
6. Or He could turn the Sahara into a tropical jungle.
7. He could make every cartel member turn himself in.
8. He could force the nations to beat their weapons into farm impliments and bring peace to this trouble world.
9. So why is He wasting His time on us?
10. I can only guess that God knows better than me and is doing bring glory to Himself by the best means possible, through His people, or those who are in Jesus Christ.

B. Jesus said that the Father is glorified when His people, that's us, bear much fruit.

1. That is our purpose once we become God's children.
2. Henry Ward Beecher said, "God requires that His vines be fruitful: -- A vine would never be so stupid as to examine itself thus, but suppose it

should, and should call out, "Roots, do you enjoy being down there in the soil?" "Yes, we enjoy being here in the soil." "Stem, do you like to be out there in summer?" "Yes, I like to be out here in summer." "Leaves, are you fond of waving in the sun and air?" "Yes, we are fond of the sun and air;" and, satisfied, it says, "I am an excellent vine."

The gardener, standing near, exclaims, "The useless thing! I paid ten dollars for the cutting, and I have pruned and cultivated it, and for years looked for the black Hamburg grapes it was to bear, but it has yielded only leaves." He does not care that the roots love the soil, and the stem the summer. It makes no difference to him though every leaf spread itself broad as Sahara in its barrenness. It is fruit that he wants." (H. W. Beecher.) (from The Biblical Illustrator Copyright © 2002, 2003, 2006 Ages Software, Inc. and Biblesoft, Inc.)

3. So it is not God's purpose to have a beautiful vine, but a fruitful one.
- C. God knows how we are made and we can never be happy, fulfilled until we are fruitful for Him
1. Many are fruitful but not for God, but for themselves.
  2. But that is such an empty life.
  3. In America we see it played out every day that the rich and famous are not those most fulfilled and satisfied.
  4. I wonder how few if any of them reach life's end with real satisfaction.
  5. You see God has made us for Himself; "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You" (Augustine).
- II. When will our prayers be answered? V-7
- A. When we abide in Christ, but what does that mean, what does that look like?
1. When our Lord says, "Abide in me," it is as if he had said, 'Think as I think ; feel as I feel ; will as I will; choose as I choose ; and let my views of all objects and all events be yours, because they are mine ; let my feelings, my volitions, my choices, all be yours, and let them be yours because they are mine. Prosecute my ends—use my means—rely on me, entirely on me. Let my wisdom be your wisdom—my righteousness your righteousness—my strength your strength. Come out of yourselves. "Renounce yourselves," your own understandings, your own righteousness, your own will, your own strength, Come out of the creature. Let no creature, no combination of creatures, be the lord of your faith—the chief subject of your thoughts—the chief object of your affections—the chief ground of your dependence. Come into me—unite your mind to my mind, your heart

to my heart, and continue to do all this.' John Brown, *Discourses*

2. You see once we really abide in Christ, our prayers will be His prayers and we know that the Father hears and answers all His prayers.
3. Once we are totally in tune with Jesus, we will no longer be governed by the desires of the flesh and our depraved mind but by the will of our Father in heaven.

B. Some foolishly teach that this means that God is obligated to grant every capricious prayer we make.

1. But how far from the truth could that be.
2. That is the whole definition of abiding in Christ.
3. Paul said, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."
4. When did Jesus ever pray for a new donkey, and bigger boat, a summer house down in Gaza, or even for food or drink.
5. God is obligated to not answer every self-centered prayer, because it will not be His will.

III. What is the mark of a true believer? V-6

A. It is simple, those who abide in Jesus.

1. It is not our superficial actions that we identify with Jesus.
2. There are so many religions where that is all that they have.
3. Outward ceremonies and ordinances can never affect the heart.
4. As Jesus made it plain to the woman at the well, God is seeking those to worship Him who will worship Him in spirit and in truth, not in forms and ordinances.

B. To abide in Jesus is as simple as the branch abiding in the vine.

1. Even a child can understand that concept.
2. There must be a real and living connection.
3. It is not based on what our parents or grand parents did.
4. It is not even based on what we did 10, 20, or 40 years ago.
5. It is based on a present living connection to Jesus.
6. As one fellow said, "If you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?"

C. The vital connection to the vine produces fruit, much fruit.

IV. How do we bear much fruit? V-5

A. Not of ourselves.

1. It is only in our connection to Jesus that we can be fruitful.
2. If it was possible to be fruitful without that vital connection then the whole parable crumbles into meaninglessness.

B. Fruit is borne in conformity to Jesus.

1. It happens when we abide in Him and His word abides in us.
  - a. “The two parts of the injunction are closely connected. Christians will abide in Christ just in the degree in which they let Christ abide in them. It is by yielding to the influence of his Spirit, working by his word, that that spiritual identification of character with Christ, which is termed abiding in him, and which is the sum and substance of Christian sanctification and comfort, is to be obtained.” John Brown, *Discourses*
2. It is in the next two verses that we see how all this is intertwined.
  - a. John 15:9-10 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. NKJV
  - b. There is no such thing as being fruitful and also disobedient.
  - c. There is no such thing as being fruitful and not displaying the love of God in our lives.
  - d. The history of many an apostate is strikingly given by Matthew Henry, " They flourish awhile in a plausible, at least passable, profession ; but not abiding in Christ, they wither and come to nothing—their parts and gifts wither—their zeal and devotion wither—their credit and reputation wither—their hopes and comforts wither. They that bear no fruit, after awhile bear no leaves." John Brown, *Discourses*

V. What can we do without Jesus? V-5

A. This is the easiest question to answer of all, NOTHING, NOTHING AT ALL.

If you look at your life today and wonder where the fruit is, maybe it is because you are not in the vine. Oh you might have been close to the vine. Growing right along side of it, but the grand distinction is that the vine bears fruit, much fruit and you have not.

Come to Him today, surrender to Him, give your life to Him and He can graft you into the living, the true vine and make you also fruitful.