



Calvary of Albuquerque

Life-Lessons From Grape-Growers (Part 2) - John 15:8-11

From the Series, Believe:879

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

As we grow older, we mature. In our spiritual lives we should become spiritually mature. The Bible calls it being fruitful. Spiritual fruit is the indication that we're truly connected to Christ. But there are others, as we'll see today. Last week we examined how the relationship with Christ is described (*Connected to Christ, Cared for by the Father, and Consistent Over Time*). Today let's consider how this relationship is demonstrated. When we're rightly connected to God we'll be:

OUTLINE

- I. Fruitful in Life (vv. 2, 5, 8)
- II. Powerful in Prayer (vv. 7-10)
- III. Joyful in Spirit (v. 11)

Some Fruitful Considerations:

1. Why do you think there is so much emphasis on the production of fruit? Is there a relationship between fruit with obedience and love?
2. Try praying from Scripture. Use a promise, command or example from the Bible when you pray. (Note: This way you know the Word is "abiding" in you and the answer will be assured.)
3. Is there something getting in the way of the joyful life God wants for you? Dare to go deeper: move from seeking the temporary happiness in life to the timeless joy that transcends it.



DETAILED NOTES

I. Introduction

- A. Growth is a normal part of life
- B. General observations about spiritual growth
 1. Spiritual growth should happen
 - a. As babies grow into adults, Christians grow into mature believers
 - b. "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18)
 - c. More than an altar call: a progression throughout life
 2. Spiritual growth has nothing to do with physical age
 - a. Some older people are immature believers
 - b. Some young people demonstrate maturity, wisdom, and growth
 - c. "In the Church of God there are children who are 70 years old. Yes, little children displaying all the infirmities of declining years! ...One would not like to say of a man of 80 that he had scarcely cut his wisdom teeth—and yet there are such...On the other hand, there are fathers in the Church of God—wise, stable, instructed—who are comparatively young men. The Lord can cause His people to grow rapidly and far outstrip their years." — C. H. Spurgeon
 3. You can grow as much as you want
 - a. Spiritual resources are given to us: take them or leave them; employ them or lay them down
 - b. "His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:3-8)

II. Fruitful in Life (vv. 2, 5, 8)

- A. Progression
 1. No Fruit
 2. Fruit
 3. More Fruit
 4. Much Fruit

B. Observations

1. It's noticeable

- a. Like seeing fruit to determine the type of tree, you don't have to guess if someone is a believer
 - i. Obvious and visible fruit
 - ii. Not everyone's output is the same (See Matthew 13:23)
 - iii. There must be some kind of fruit
- b. Fruit of the spirit
 - i. Character of Christ: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23)
 - ii. People you win to Christ: "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." (Romans 1:13)
 - iii. Holy living: "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." (Romans 6:22)
 - iv. Financial giving: (See Romans 15:28)
 - v. Praise: "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." (Hebrews 13:15)
- c. A spiritual person is known more by his fruit than by his gifts
 - i. "You come short in no gift," (1 Corinthians 1:7)
 - ii. Χάρισμα; charisma-a gift
 - iii. "And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ." (1 Corinthians 3:1)
 - iv. "The Christian life should resemble a fruit tree, not a Christmas tree." -- John Stott

2. It's natural

- a. A tree doesn't work hard to produce fruit; it is the natural unfolding of life
 - a. Root system
 - b. Trunk tied to root system
 - c. Branches connected
 - d. The product of connection
- b. Spiritual fruit is the natural connection of being connected to Christ
- c. According to an AP report from an agricultural school in Iowa: to produce 100 acres of corn from one acre of land:
 - i. 4 million lbs. of water
 - ii. 6,800 lbs. of oxygen
 - iii. 5200 lbs. of carbon
 - iv. 160 lbs. of nitrogen
 - v. 125 lbs. of potassium
 - vi. 75 lbs. of yellow sulfur
 - vii. Rain and sunshine required at the right times
 - viii. Only 5% of the produce attributed to the efforts of man

3. It's nourishing

- a. Fruit produced for others
- b. If the life of God is flowing in you, the life of God will flow through you to others
- c. What Christ produces nourishes others
- d. "Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall." (Genesis 49:22)
- e. "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:37-38)
- f. We are satisfied, and a conduit to satisfy others

III. Powerful in Prayer (vv. 7-10)

- A. "But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon." (John 15:7 *The Message*)
- B. Common daily activity worldwide
 1. Jews, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, even Atheists pray
 2. According to George Barna, 4 out of 5 Americans pray during a typical week
- C. Why we don't pray more
 1. Don't see results
 2. No power in prayer
- D. Conditions of the promise
 1. Abide in Jesus
 2. Jesus abides in us (let Him control your life)
 - a. His plan
 - b. His kingdom
 - c. His purpose
 - d. In His name (according to His purpose and person)
3. The Word abides in us
 - a. Scripture gives us direction to pray the right things
 - b. "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." (Matthew 6:9-13)

- c. Purpose of Prayer: not my will in heaven—His will on earth
- d. Line your desire up with His will

IV. Joyful in Spirit (v. 11)

- A. Jesus promised peace: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27)
- B. Now Jesus promises joy
- C. The very things we crave—peace and joy—Jesus wants us to have
 - 1. We obtain peace and joy God's way
 - 2. "For the joy that was set before Him endured the cross," (Hebrews 12:2)
- D. Part of history, Christianity not associated with joy
 - 1. "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not looked and acted so much like undertakers."—Oliver Wendell Holmes
 - 2. "I went to church today and I'm not depressed."—Robert Lewis Stevenson
 - 3. "Should we not see that lines of laughter about the eyes are just as much marks of faith as are the line of care and seriousness? Is it only earnestness that is baptized? Is laughter pagan? We have already allowed too much that is good to be lost to the church and cast many pearls before swine. A church is in a bad way when it banishes laughter from the sanctuary and leaves it to the cabaret, the nightclub and the toastmasters."— Helmut Thielicke

Greek Terms: Χάρισμα; charisma-a gift

Figures Referenced: C.H. Spurgeon; John Stott; George Barna; Oliver Wendell Holmes; Robert Lewis Stevenson; Helmut Thielicke

Cross References: Genesis 49:22; Matthew 6:9-13; Matthew 13:23; John 7:37-38; John 14:27; Romans 1:13; Romans 6:22; Romans 15:28; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Corinthians 3:1; Galatians 5:22-23; Hebrews 13:15; 2 Peter 1:3-8; 2 Peter 3:18