

IT'S TIME TO BEAR FRUIT

Galatians 5:22-23, John 15:1-8, 16

- *"Let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. . . . The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."* (Galatians 5:22-23)
- ***On a scale of 1 to 5 how would I rate myself regarding the development of each of the "fruit of the Spirit" in my life?***
- **We need to cooperate with God's Spirit in developing His "fruit" in our lives; and also in producing "fruit" for the Kingdom of God.**
- Jesus - *"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in Me, and I in them, will produce <u>much fruit</u>. For apart from Me you can do nothing. . . . When you produce <u>much fruit</u> you are My true disciples. This brings great glory to My Father."* (John 15:5, 8)
- **The fruit of a Christian is another person who is brought to faith in Jesus and then discipled to become a real follower of Jesus.**
- ***What does it take to produce "much fruit" for the Kingdom of God?***

Producing "Much Fruit" For God's Kingdom Requires:

DEEPENING OUR "<u>ROOTS</u>" WITH JESUS

- Jesus - *"Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in Me."* (John 15:4)
- **Jesus wants us to understand that He is the source of abundant and eternal life (John 3:16, 10:10, 14:6).**
- Jesus - *"The seed is God's word. The seeds that fell on the footpath represent those who hear the message, only to have the devil come and take it away from their hearts and prevent them from believing and being saved. The seeds on the*

rocky soil represent those who hear the message and receive it with joy. But since they don't have deep roots, they believe for a while, then they fall away . . ." (Luke 8:13)

- **The key to producing spiritual "fruit" and living a victorious life is deepening and expanding our relationship with Jesus.**
- ***What steps can I take to deepen my relationship with Jesus?***

Producing "Much Fruit" For God's Kingdom Requires:

ELIMINATING "<u>WEEDS</u>" FROM OUR LIVES

- Jesus - *"The seeds that fell among the thorns represent those who hear the message, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life. And so they never grow into maturity."* (Luke 8:14)
- **"Weeds" are the activities, ambitions, and attitudes that sap our time, energy, money and testimony and keep us from bearing fruit.**
- **Jesus said that worries, a pursuit of riches and a pursuit of pleasure are oftentimes the "weeds" in our lives.**
- **"Weeds" are a sign of neglect, and when we neglect our daily time with the Lord, Church attendance, engagement with other Christians, etc., we can be assured that "weeds" will grow in our lives.**
- ***What "weeds" do I need to eliminate from my life?***

Producing "Much Fruit" For God's Kingdom Requires:

COOPERATING WITH GOD'S "<u>PRUNING</u>" PROCESS

- Jesus - *"I am the true grapevine, and My Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and He prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more."* (John 15:1-2)
- **God uses problems, pressures and people to prune us in our lives.**
- *"No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening - it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way."* (Hebrews 12:11)
- ***Who or what is God using in my life to "prune" me and make me stronger?***

Producing "Much Fruit" For God's Kingdom Requires:

WORKING THE "<u>FIELDS</u>" GOD HAS GIVEN US

- Jesus - *"Look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest."* (John 4:35)
- **The "fields" Jesus referred to are the relationships we have, the people we interact with, and the population around us.**
- **Harvesting our "fields" requires *Showing People The Love Of Jesus.***
    - Jesus - *"Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples."* (John 13:35)

    - **We show our love for others by affirming them, serving them and giving to help them.**
    - *"Let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions."* (1 John 3:18)
- **Harvesting our "fields" requires *Telling People About Jesus*.**
    - Jesus - *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses, telling people about Me everywhere."* (Acts 1:8)
    - **People's hearts are opened as they hear from us what Jesus has done in, for and through our lives.**
    - Jesus - *"Go back to your family, and tell them everything God has done for you. So he went all through the town proclaiming the great things Jesus had done for him."* (Luke 8:39)
- **Harvesting our "fields" requires *Bringing People To Jesus*.**
    - *"Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which means 'Christ'). Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus."* (John 1:41-42)
    - **"Bringing people to Jesus" is what we do when we bring them with us to our Church services or Life Groups.**
- **Harvesting our "fields" requires *Helping People To Grow In Jesus*.**
    - Jesus - *"<u>Go and make disciples</u> of all the nations. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you."* (Matthew 28:19-20)
    - **We help people become Disciples of Jesus by Encouraging them, Modeling real Christianity to them, Teaching them and Taking them with us to do ministry (Acts 11:23, 18:26; 1 Corinthians 11:1).**
    - *"Teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others."* (2 Timothy 2:2)
- ***Who do I need to be praying for, ministering to and inviting to our Easter services; and who do I need to be discipling in the near future?***

- *"Those who plant in tears will harvest with shouts of joy. They weep as they go to plant their seed, but they sing as they return with the harvest."* (Psalm 126:5-6)
- **Nothing brings us joy like seeing people we've prayed for, ministered to, shared the gospel with and invited to Church surrender their lives to Jesus.**
- Jesus - *"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in Me, and I in them, will produce <u>much fruit</u>. . . . When you produce <u>much fruit</u>, you are My true disciples. This brings great glory to My Father."* (John 15:5, 8)
- ***What steps do I need to take to "produce much fruit" in the days ahead?***