

Branchlife of the Believer

Lesson 4: THE FRUIT

Every Branch in me That Beareth Not Fruit, He Taketh It Away - John 15:2

I. Introduction

- a. The next great word we have in this passage after the Vine, the Husbandman, and the branch, is the **fruit**.
- b. Our Lord simply says this-that fruit is the **one thing** the branch is for, and that if it does not bear fruit, the husbandman takes it away.
- c. The vine is the glory of the husbandman; the branch is the glory of the vine; the fruit is the **glory** of the branch. 1 Cor 3:13-14 *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. KJV*
- d. If the branch does not bring forth fruit, there is no glory or worth in it; it is an **offense** and a hindrance; the husbandman takes it away.
- e. The one reason for the existence of a branch, the one mark of being a true branch of the heavenly Vine, the one **condition** of being allowed by the divine Husbandman to share the life of the Vine is-bearing fruit.

II. Fruit: Of , By, and To Him

- a. Not just any fruit will do however. The fruit that is produced is required to be of Christ, by Christ and to Christ. No other production of fruit is **acceptable** because it can not glorify Christ. Romans 11:36 *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen. KJV*
- b. The fruit we bear must be **OF** him, as the original designer and author; this means that the thing that is done is something that originates with Him and we are merely his agents to bring it to pass.
- c. The fruit that we bear must be **BY** him, as the prime and efficient cause. This means that not only does He initiate the work, He enables it as well. Whatever He wills He does, thus bringing about the desired end of whatever He chooses to accomplish.
- d. The fruit that we bear must be **TO** him, the ultimate end of the fruit must manifest his eternal glory and goodness. In the end of the age all things that have come to pass will be to Him and will glorify the Son.
- e. This is the litmus test of all fruit produced by the branch. It is the only fruit that is acceptable to the Husbandman and this fruit alone will redound to the **glory** of the Son.

III. What is the Fruit?

- a. It is the fruit of the Vine. In other words **any** fruit that the Vine would produce. Such fruit that is produced by the Vine consists of two types:
 1. It is the fruit of an imparted life before unknown: Life eternal. (**salvation**) John 10:10 *I am come that they might have life, KJV*
 2. It is the fruit of abundant life or that life which is communicated to its recipients in rich supply and unending exuberance. (growth, feeding, and **transformation**) John 10:10 *That they may have it more abundantly*
- b. This fruit is something that the branch bears, not for **itself**, but for its owner; something that is to be gathered, exhibited and or given away to others. Acts 20:24 *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. KJV*
- c. The branch does indeed receive the vine sap for its own life. By this it grows thicker and stronger. But this supply for its own maintenance is entirely subordinate to its fulfillment of the **purpose** of its being-bearing fruit. 2 Cor 4:11 *For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. KJV*
- d. Though this life may be desired very earnestly; many Christians do not understand or accept the truth that the branch life of the believer is **not** a balanced life; rather, it is a singularly focused life. Luke 17:33 *Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. KJV*
- e. Those seeking the balanced life, that is, a life in and of this world **combined** with the branch life do not comprehend that fruit-bearing is the one thing for which they have been saved. Luke 14:26 *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. KJV*
- f. From a grape vine we seek grapes. From a Christian we look for **Christianity**; this is the fruit, a Christian temper and graces, a Christian life and conversation, Christian attitudes and Christian goals and spiritual affections. Rom 8:12-13 *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. ¹³ For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. KJV*

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- g. We must honor God not just with our lips but with our thoughts and deeds as well. As image bearers of the **divine** nature we should exemplify the purity and power of the faith we profess. This is bearing fruit. 2 Peter 1:3-4 *His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.* ⁴ *Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. NIV*
- h. The disciples on earth must be fruitful, as Christians, bearing the fruit of **righteousness**, and as ambassadors, in spreading the savor of Christ to a perishing world. 2 Cor 2:15-16 *For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:* ¹⁶ *To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? KJV*
- i. Just as entirely as Christ became the True Vine with the one object in mind, believers have been made a branch too, with the one object of bearing fruit for the **service** and glory of the Vine. Rom 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. KJV*
- j. The heavenly Vine and the branches, equally have their Father-**appointed** place in the world exclusively for one purpose: To manifest God's transforming grace and to deliver the message of God's saving love to condemned men. John 3:18 *He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. KJV*
- k. Believers are warned in an unmistakable fashion as to the **seriousness** of failing to produce fruit in an object lesson that Jesus demonstrated to His disciples on a walk from Bethany to Jerusalem. Mark 11:12-14 *And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:* ¹³ *And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.* ¹⁴ *And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it. KJV*
- l. Hence the **solemn** word of reminder to every believer: *Every branch that beareth not fruit, He taketh it away.*

IV. The Error of the Branch

- a. Let us specially beware of one great mistake made by many branches: Their wrong **priorities**. Those who fall into this trap think their own salvation is the first thing, followed closely by their concern for their temporal life and prosperity.
- b. This results in relegating the **leftovers** of time and energy to fruit-bearing. Not only is this neglecting one's primary purpose for being but it leads to anemic fruit and withered leaves on these branches.
- c. It is no wonder that the Christian Church lacks power and attractiveness in this present evil age when the vineyard of the Lord is virtually **indistinguishable** from the plants of this world system growing on all sides.
- d. When the people of God begin to look like, think like, live like the people who are perishing, God's historical record of judgment is indisputable and **certain**. Ezek 21:3 *And say to the land of Israel, Thus saith the LORD ; Behold, I am against thee, and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked. KJV*
- e. Let each branch, therefore, **take stock** of its own fruit bearing or lack of it. Let each branch remember that the one object God had in making you a branch is that you may bear fruit for His glory.
- f. Your personal salvation, your business and care for your family, are entirely **subordinate** to fruit bearing. Your first aim in life, your first aim every day, should be to know how Christ desires to carry out His purpose in you.
- g. Let us begin to think as God thinks. Let us accept Christ's teaching and **respond** to it. James 1:25 *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. KJV*
- h. The one object of my being a branch, the one mark of my being a true branch, the one condition of my **abiding** and growing strong, is that I bear the fruit of the heavenly Vine for dying men to eat and live.
- i. And the one thing of which I can have the most perfect **assurance** is that, with Christ as my Vine, and the Father as my Husbandman, I can indeed be a fruitful branch.

V. Application

- a. Our Father, You come seeking fruit. Teach us, we pray, to realize how truly this is the one object of our existence, and of our union to Christ.
- b. Make it the one desire of our hearts to be branches, so filled with the Spirit of the Vine, as to bring forth fruit abundantly to your eternal glory.
- c. In what ways do you see evidence of fruitfulness in your life?
- d. Do you see evidence of your own distraction from the priority of fruit bearing? If so, what will you do about it?