

A Closer Look at Fruit

John 15:8

Reading: Psalm 1 (have we used this already?)

Are there any videos on this text
Or on prayer?

Bethany Baptist Church
July 2, 2017 (p.m. service)

Jesus said: “*By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*”

“...*that you bear much fruit ...*”

That is John 15:8, one of key verses in our John 15 passage.

A real branch bears fruit, but what does Jesus mean by *fruit*?

Let’s review Jesus’ entire account by **re-reading John 15:1-11**.

My go-to commentator on this text makes a simple but thoughtful comment on Jesus’ words:

Fruit is the product of life! (2X)

Or you could say it like this: God says fruit bearing is what life is all about.

Fruit (fruit producing) is important for **two** basic reasons:

1. God *stresses* it.
2. God *produces* it.

God stresses the importance of fruit.

One hint of *fruit* is that the main NT word for fruit (καρπος) appears almost 70X.

And the concept of bearing fruit can be traced in **24** of the **27 NT** books.

It appears in the first and last chapters of your Bible (Gen 1 – be *fruitful* & Rev 22 – the **12** kinds of fruit on the *tree of life*).

Here are some significant biblical texts (you are familiar w/ most of them): Psa 1, Isa 5, Jn 15 (here) and Gal 5.

- Psa 1:3 – *It bears its fruit in its season* (= righteous man).
- Gal 5 – *the fruit of the Spirit ...*

In fact the entire *goal* of the Christian life, in light of Jesus' teaching in Jn 15, could be summarized: *bear much fruit.*

So let's pause and do a little lifetime math to help us consider our opportunity to be fruitful Christians:

If you live for **50** years as a believer (and sleep **8**/night) you have about **17,520,000** hours to do something with your life. *Like bearing much fruit.*

Spiritual fruit must be important because ultimately God produces the fruit we bear.

God is the source of physical & spiritual life, and of fruit.

Remember my initial quote: *fruit is the product of life!*

In the vineyard and in the Christian life, life passes from vine to branch.

In the vineyard (garden) God gives the rain for the plants to thrive and to produce fruit (so God is the ultimate source). And that's just as true in our spiritual life:

Hosea 14:8 – *“From Me comes your fruit.”*

John 15:4 – the abider bears fruit; v.5 – without him we can do nothing

Phil 1:9-11 – the fruit of righteousness comes by Jesus

Phil 2:12-13 – you have a responsibility, but over & above that, God is at work w/in you both to will& to work His good pleasure

Phil 4:13 – *I can do all things thru Christ who strengthens me*

Gal 5:22-23 – Holy Spirit produces His fruit (Gal 5:22-23).

What kind of fruit does an apple tree produce!?! All fruit has the characteristics of its source (Christ, Spirit, God). 2X

So if God is producing His fruit in you, what (in general) will it be like?
And therefore, who will you become like?

There is no fooling God on fruit bearing!

Have you ever tried to eat a wax apple!?! God knows when our fruit is genuine or fake!

“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”

Look at that text in your Bible (pause)....

Jesus states directly that your fruit has **two** results that further prove how important it is:

First: Your spiritual productivity *glorifies God*. → It enhances His reputation!

For example, if demonstrates that He has the love & power to change lives.

Second: Your spiritual fruitfulness *proves* that you *are Jesus' disciple*.

Jesus has already (Upper Room) provided one important example (Jn 13):
Love – *by this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

I hope this study reminds you that we must make *fruitfulness* important in our lives.

- Do you want to be fruitful? The vineyard (garden) is a place that requires both hard work and still complete dependence (prayer) on God (rain, sun, protection from blight).
- Take a personal inventory. Are you bearing fruit (you will get some help on this next week)? 1 Cor 11, 2 Cor 13:5 – *examine yourselves*
- What areas of fruitfulness are strong? What types (aspect) of fruit are lacking (for example, of the fruit of the Spirit)? Wouldn't you agree that God wants every aspect of fruit to be a bountiful harvest.

Lord willing, next Sunday we will consider five biblical categories of spiritual fruit.

So we will close by saying that the Vineyard examines and prunes every branch!

The Vine calls you to abide in Him daily and bring forth a harvest!

Abide in Christ! ...*pray*...