

ABIDE IN JESUS, LOVE ONE ANOTHER

I. [John 15:8-17](#)

A. Last week we talked about the vertical and horizontal implications of the cross. I said: *'The vertical post reminds us that Jesus absorbed the wrath of God for each of our sins... The horizontal post reminds us that His arms were stretched out wide because He loved us so much He was willing to die in our place.... His resurrection affirmed His mission was accomplished. His sacrifice was to make us His own--all of us together--His very own people. Any notion that He died for you in order to allow you to live a separate existence from the body of Christ is a false notion...*

B. Today we pick up in John 15:8-17. The setting is the Last Supper. Jesus has just talked about being the Vine, His Father the Vine Dresser, and we the branches... I want to drill down on verses 8-17 before we celebrate the Lord's Supper...

1) V8 *"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples."* (cf Matt. 7:16-19) Jesus is not saying, Go and bear fruit so you'll become My disciples; He's saying, My true disciples, as a result of Me making them Mine, will bear fruit as proof of what I've done in them... (Quote by John Piper...)

2) V9-18 *"As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love. 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."* Keeping Jesus' commandments, obeying His Word, does not save us or regenerate us or make us His own. Obedience is the affirming evidence of genuine faith...

3) V11 *"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."* White-knuckle obedience that's trying to earn God's favor and salvation won't lead to joy. But when your awakening comes, when righteousness is imputed to you, when you experience salvation by grace through faith and not by works, the result is joy exceeding description!

4) V12-14 *"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you."* Prov. 18:24b: *"There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."* The ultimate Friend is found in Jesus. How did Jesus demonstrate His friendship to us? How do we demonstrate our friendship to Him? House does love for one another fit in here? Our crosses likewise have 2 beams...

5) V15 *"No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."* (Gk: *Doulos*- bondservant, an honorable position but 'friend' is so much better...)

6) V16-17 *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another."* What kind of fruit have we been called to bear? The fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23); Christlikeness; the fruits of Jesus' teaching and ministry exhibited to the last, lost, & least--making disciples; even the fruit of worship--see Hebrews 13:15...

II. [Communion](#)

A. C.S. Lewis quote, from *The Four Loves*, will take us to Communion....

B. We take the Bread & Cup with the Cross in mind. *"As often as we do this we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."* We proclaim His death because it saved us. We proclaim it until He comes because He's risen, alive, reigning, and returning...

* Pray and serve Communion...

* Benediction Verse: John 15:12-14...

[Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff](#)

[John 15:9-17 \(ESV\)](#)

8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples. **9** As the Father has loved Me, so have I 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. **11** These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. **12** This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13** Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. **14** You are My friends if you do what I command you. **15** No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. **16** You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you. **17** These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

[Matthew 7:15-20 \(ESV\)](#)

15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **16** You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? **17** So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. **18** A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

[Quote by John Piper](#)

“Fruit does not make a tree good; A good tree bears good fruit... it shows that the tree is good.”

[Galatians 5:22-23 \(ESV\)](#)

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

[Hebrews 13:15 \(NIV\)](#)

15 Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that openly profess His name.

[Quote by C.S. Lewis](#)

“In friendship...we think we have chosen our peers. In reality a few years' difference in the dates of our births, a few more miles between certain houses, the choice of one university instead of another...the accident of a topic being raised or not raised at a first meeting--any of these chances might have kept us apart. But, for a Christian, there are, strictly speaking no chances. A secret master of ceremonies has been at work. Christ, who said to the disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," can truly say to every group of Christian friends, "Ye have not chosen one another but I have chosen you for one another." The friendship is not a reward for our discriminating and good taste in finding one another out. It is the instrument by which God reveals to each of us the beauties of others.”

- C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, p. 89

[Film Clips & Other Links](#)

International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church - Voice of the Martyrs

<http://www.persecution.com/idop>

Reflections on Fruit Bearing - John Piper

<http://www.desiringgod.org/blog/posts/reflections-on-fruit-bearing>

Pruning for Fruit-Bearing - Charles H. Spurgeon

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4N-QBwQXSOE>

Like Trees That Bear Fruit - John Piper

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4-c0gNG-JU>

"The Fruit Song" (Kid's Song) - SplashJohn Music

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NV9RRm3ano>

[Bonus Stuff](#)

[Psalm 1:1-3 \(ESV\)](#)

1 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; **2** but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night. **3** He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither--In all that he does, he prospers.

[Ephesians 5:8-11 \(NIV\)](#)

8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light **9** (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) **10** and find out what pleases the Lord. **11** Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. **12** It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. **13** But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. **14** This is why it is said:

*"Wake up, sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you."*

1 John 2:1-6 (ESV)

1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. **2** He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. **3** And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. **4** Whoever says "I know Him" but does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, **5** but whoever keeps His word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in Him: **6** whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked.

Quote by Francis Chan

"Is this idea of the non-fruit bearing Christian something that we have concocted in order to make Christianity 'easier?' ...so that we can follow our own course while still calling ourselves followers of Christ?"

- Francis Chan, *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God*.

Quote by John MacArthur

"Fruit-bearing is not a matter of being strong or weak, good or bad, brave or cowardly, clever or foolish, experienced or inexperienced. Whatever your gifts, accomplishments, or virtues, they cannot produce fruit if you are detached from Jesus Christ. Christians who think they are bearing fruit apart from the Vine are only tying on artificial fruit. They run around grunting and groaning to produce fruit but accomplish nothing. Fruit is borne not by trying, but by abiding."

- John MacArthur, *"Abiding in Christ,"* Grace to You.

Hymn Lyric by Fred Kaan

Jesus calls us in, sends us out
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share;
God (Immanuel) everywhere!

- Fred Kaan, congregational minister and hymn-writer, © 1975.

Every Christian Will Bear Fruit

By Charles Ryrie

Every Christian will bear spiritual fruit. Somewhere, sometime, somehow. Otherwise that person is not a believer. Every born-again individual will be fruitful. Not to be fruitful is to be faithless, without faith, and therefore without salvation. Having said that, some caveats are in order.

One, this does not mean that a believer will always be fruitful. Certainly we can admit that if there can be hours and days when a believer can be unfruitful, then why may there not also be months and even years when he can be in that same condition? Paul exhorted believers to engage in good works so they would not be unfruitful (Titus 3:14). Peter also exhorted believers to add the qualities of Christian character to their faith lest they be unfruitful (2 Peter 1:8). Obviously, both of those passages indicate that a true believer might be unfruitful. And the simple fact that both Paul and Peter exhort believers to be fruitful shows that believers are not always fruitful.

Two, this does not mean that a certain person's fruit will necessarily be outwardly evident. Even if I know the person and have some regular contact with him, I still may not see his fruit. Indeed, I might even have legitimate grounds for wondering if he is a believer because I have not seen fruit. His fruit may be very private or erratic, but the fact that I do not see it does not mean it is not there.

Three, my understanding of what fruit is and therefore what I expect others to bear may be faulty and/or incomplete. It is all too easy to have a mental list of spiritual fruits and to conclude if someone does not produce what is on my list that he or she is not a believer. But the reality is that most lists that we humans devise are too short, too selective, too prejudiced, and often extra-biblical. God likely has a much more accurate and longer list than most of us do. Nevertheless, every Christian will bear fruit; otherwise he or she is not a true believer. In speaking about the Judgment Seat of Christ, Paul says unequivocally that every believer will have praise come to him from God (1 Corinthians 4:5).

- Charles Ryrie, *So Great Salvation*, Victor Books, 1989, p.p. 45-46.

What is Fruit?

By Charles Ryrie

What is fruit? Actually the question ought to be phrased in the plural: What are fruits which a Christian can bear: The New Testament gives several answers to the question.

One, a developing Christian character is fruit. If the goal of the Christian life may be stated as Christlikeness, then surely every trait developed in us that reflects His character must be fruit that is very pleasing to Him. Paul describes the fruit of the Spirit in nine terms in Galatians 5:22-23, and Peter urges the development of seven accompaniments to faith in order that we might be fruitful (2 Peter 1:5-8). Two of these terms are common to both lists: love and self-control. The others are joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness goodness, faithfulness, meekness, virtue, knowledge, endurance, piety, and brotherly love. To show these character traits is to bear fruit in one's life.

Two, right character will result in right conduct, and as we live a life of good works we produce fruit (Colossians 1:10). This goes hand in hand with increasing in the knowledge of God, for as we learn what pleases Him, our fruitful works become more and more conformed to that knowledge. When Paul expressed how torn he was between the two possibilities of either dying and being with Christ or living on in this life, he said that living on would mean fruitful labor or work (Philippians 1:22). This phrase could mean that (1) his work itself was fruit, or (2) fruit would result from his work. In either case, his life and work were fruit. So may ours be.

Three, those who come to Christ through our witness are fruit. Paul longed to go to Rome to have some fruit from his ministry there (Romans 1:13), and he characterized the conversion of the household of Stephanas as the firstfruits of Achaia (1 Corinthians 16:15).

Four, we may also bear fruit with our lips by giving praise to God and thankfully confessing His name (Hebrews 13:15). In other words, our lips bear fruit when we offer thankful acknowledgment to the name of God. And this is something we should do continually.

Five, we bear fruit when we give money. Paul designated the collection of money for the poorer saints in Jerusalem as fruit (Romans 15:28). Too, when he thanked the Philippians for their financial support of his ministry, he said that their act of giving brought fruit to their account (Philippians 4:17, KJV).

To sum up, fruit includes: (1) a Christlike character, (2) a life characterized by good works, (3) a faithful witness, (4) a pair of lips that praise God, and (5) a generous giving of one's money.

- Charles Ryrie, *So Great Salvation*, Victor Books, 1989, p.p. 49-50.

Charles Swindoll - Illustration on Obedience

Imagine, if you will, that you work for a company whose president found it necessary to travel out of the country and spend an extended period of time abroad. So he says to you and the other trusted employees, *"Look, I'm going to leave. And while I'm gone, I want you to pay close attention to the business. You manage things while I'm away. I will write you regularly. When I do, I will instruct you in what you should do from now until I return from this trip."* Everyone agrees.

He leaves and stays gone for a couple of years. During that time he writes often, communicating his desires and concerns. Finally he returns. He walks up to the front door of the company and immediately discovers everything is in a mess--weeds flourishing in the flower beds, windows broken across the front of the building, the gal at the front desk dozing, loud music roaring from several offices, two or three people engaged in horseplay in the back room. Instead of making a profit, the business has suffered a great loss. Without hesitation he calls everyone together and with a frown asks, *"What happened? Didn't you get my letters?"*

You say, *"Oh, yeah, sure. We got all your letters. We've even bound them in a book. And some of us have memorized them. In fact, we have 'letter study' every Sunday. You know, those were really great letters."* I think the president would then ask, *"But what did you do about my instructions?"* And, no doubt the employees would respond, *"Do? Well, nothing. But we read every one!"*

- Charles Swindoll, *Living Above the Level of Mediocrity*, p. 242.