

Christ-Followers Produce Fruit

In This Series We Will Learn That...

1. True believers have identifying, unmistakable characteristics.
2. Each of us should evaluate ourselves based on these marks and then ask ourselves if we are truly “remaining” in Christ.

Some Background

Jesus is in the Upper Room with eleven disciples celebrating the Passover in what we call “The Last Supper”.

He is giving them His final instructions.

The context of this passage is important to its understanding.

This is the last of the “I Am” statements in John’s Gospel.

The key thought of this entire section (chapters 15-16) is that true followers of Christ remain in Him.

“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.” - John 15:4

The Seven “I Am” Statements

1. The Bread 6:35
2. The Light 8:12
3. The Gate 10:9
4. The Good Shepherd 10:11
5. The Resurrection and Life 11:25
6. The Way, Truth and Life 14:6
7. The True Vine 15:1

The Scriptures

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.” - Jn. 15:1-8

The Characteristic: Bearing Fruit

1. The Vine is Jesus.

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.” - John 15:1

Israel had been the “vine”, but they failed to produce the fruit.

“I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine?” - Jeremiah 2:21

Jesus is the true vine. The word “true” indicates real or genuine.

*“The **true light** that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.”* - John 1:9

*“Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the **true bread from heaven.**”* - John 6:32

2. The Gardener is the Heavenly Father.

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.”

- John 15:1

He removes every branch that bears no fruit.

He prunes every branch that does bear fruit.

“...the Lord disciplines those He loves, and He punishes everyone He accepts as a son.”

- Hebrews 12:6

3. The fruitful branches are believers.

The nature of the branches is to bear fruit, and they do this because they are connected to the vine.

¹⁷*“Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit...”*

²⁰*“Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.”* - Matthew 7:17,20

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” - Ephesians 2:10

Believers will be “pruned” to be more fruitful, but are already clean because of the Word of Jesus.

“You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.” - John 15:3

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” - Hebrews 4:12

The only way to bear fruit is to remain in the vine (and apart from the vine, you can accomplish nothing).

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” - John 15:5

When we remain in the Vine, we know the Father’s will and we will know how to pray.

“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.” - John 15:7

When branches bear fruit, it brings glory to the Father, and it proves our relationship to Him.

“This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.” - John 15:8

The test of our fruit is that it is long-lasting.

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit — fruit that will last.” - John 15:16

4. The unfruitful branches are non-believers.

There are many who are religious, and even look like true branches.

Useless branches are cut off, picked up, and burned.

So Ask Yourself, “Is the fruit of my faith OBVIOUS?”

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