

To Bear Much Fruit, Love Each Other

John 15:1-17 (vv.16-17)

I. Historical Background and Biblical Context

The Book of John (collectively with Mathew, Mark, and Luke) accounts the life, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

His coming was part of God's Plan of Salvation - a plan orchestrated out of God's love, grace, and mercy for all of mankind after the Fall (Gen. 3). His plan is carried forth in the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, paving a pathway for us to receive salvation and access to eternity with God. Amen! Throughout history, God called and appointed people from Noah, Abraham (Sarah), Isaac, Jacob, the Israelites, Moses, Joshua, judges, kings, the prophets, etc. to help carry out His Plan and then to the coming of our Savior, Jesus. Due to the sinful nature of mankind, humanity consistently failed. Witnessing the sins of mankind and seeing no intercessor, God sent himself in the flesh, Jesus Christ, who made the ultimate sacrifice: to offer Himself for sin, to repay our sins and to redeem us (Isa. 53:10, Isa. 59:16,18, and Gal. 3:13-14).

On earth, Jesus ministered to everyone from all walks of life. He appointed and trained disciples to continue to advance God's Kingdom – in preparation for after His resurrection and ascension to the Kingdom. Jesus is risen and now sits beside the Father in the Kingdom, waiting to return for all believers.

John 15 is one of Jesus' messages and commands to his disciples and all who believe.

II. Lesson: "To Bear Much Fruit, Love Each Other"

In John 15:1-17, Jesus is speaking (evident by the scriptures in red). The title of today's message comes from versus 16 and 17. Here, Jesus connects four things about our relationship and responsibilities as believers and followers:

1. From the beginning of time, we were chosen!
2. We were chosen to **bear lasting fruit!**
3. In order to bear fruit, we must follow his commands!
4. His command is to **love one another!**

In order to really grasp this, let's start at the beginning:

In John 15:1-8, Jesus describes the role of the *gardener*, *vines*, *branches*, and *fruit* to illustrate the following:

God is the Gardener, and We Must Bear Fruit. (v. 1-2)

Jesus establishes himself as the “*true vine*” and God as the Gardener. As the gardener tends to the garden, God tends to each of us with great love, care, and patience. He watches over us with great anticipation at our progress and growth, awaiting our fruits to come to maturity and completeness. Cutting and pruning are done by the Gardener and are necessary procedures for the production of plentiful harvest.

We must remain in Jesus to bear fruit (v. 3-8)

Jesus is the Vine. We are the Branches. We must bear Fruit!

1. The *Vine* (Jesus) is the main part of the vineyard. It gives nutrients to the branches, helping them to grow and produce fruit. The vine keeps the branches nourished and supports them from withering and dying. Similarly, Jesus gives us life and instruction through the Word and the Word cultivates and matures us (**v. 3**).
2. The *Branches* (Us) produce the fruit. As believers and followers of Jesus, we are branches on the vine and we must remain in Him (**v. 5**). Branches cannot produce fruit by themselves; similarly, we cannot produce anything without Jesus. Branches must be connected to the vine in order to receive nutrients and produce fruit; similarly, we must be connected to Jesus to mature and grow (**v. 4**). Branches that are separated from the vine can no longer grow nor can they produce any fruit. Without receiving proper nutrients that comes from the vine, these branches wither, die, become worthless, are thrown away, and burned. Don't become detached or disconnected from Jesus! Jesus is our connection to God. It is why it important for us to remain in Jesus (**v. 6-7**). As the Gardener inspects the vineyard for fruit, branches are cultivated, pruned or cut-off. (**vs. 8**): Branches that bear fruit are cultivated or pruned to increase fruitfulness and growth. Branches that do not bear fruit are cut-off. **Obedience enables us to continue to bear fruit.** We are cultivated or pruned, but not cut-off from the vine.
3. The *Fruits* are the end goal, desires, maturity, and completion. The Gardener planted the Vine in order for the Branches to thrive and produce a good and abundant harvest. Seeing good fruits brings joy and profit to the Gardener.

How do we remain in His love? By Following His Commands! (John 15:9-15)

It was out of love that God initiated His Plan of Salvation. Everything that Jesus did was out of His love, obedience, and submission to God's Will. Jesus tells us to remain in His love through that same love, obedience, and submission. By being

obedient to God's commands, we remain in the love of Christ. By remaining in his love, we continue to grow and mature – clinging onto the vine and producing good and abundant fruit. For those who obey, it brings joy to us and to God. **Obedience brings growth; growth brings maturity; and maturity brings completeness - good fruit.** Recall at the vineyard, the Gardener is pleased and happy with a good harvest.

In vs. 13 - Jesus commands that we love each other as He have loved us. How has Jesus loved us? He showed us love when He offered Himself to pay the price for our sins – a price we could not repay and for our sins that He did not commit. He bore the pain of the cross. He laid down His life for us. He continues to show us love daily! **Amen!** We are not to hold on to his love for ourselves – we are commanded to share His love with others. Being authentic in our love to God and others produces fruit.

When we are obedient, we form a deeper connection with Jesus. We are still His followers – be we are elevated. We become His friends – respected, trusted, elevated, approved, and certified! We prove our friendship through obedience. Therefore, we must keep His commands and to do that we must stay in the Word and be obedient.

Through our obedience and friendship with Jesus, He opens gateways between us and God. We know what God has done for us and what He has planned for us, because Jesus passed the knowledge to us. Having this knowledge helps us to grow mature and rich fruits – as branches on the vine. We find true and endless happiness in Jesus. We feel the joy deep within our hearts when we think about Him. We make progress towards our completeness – and that brings joy to God.

When we are connected to Jesus, we are connected to the Father through Him. When we ask for things “in the name of Jesus”, we can expect to receive it – according to the Father's Will.

Love For Each Other Bears Fruit (vs. 16-17)

God is the gardener. Jesus is the vine. We are the branches. Jesus makes it clear that we were chosen by Him (not the other way around). We were chosen for a purpose and that purpose is **to bear much fruit.** We bear fruit by remaining in Him and being obedient to His commands. We are commanded to love each other. We are commanded to share His love and the knowledge we receive from Him to others.

Let us continue to love each other and share the same love that Jesus showed us.

AMEN!