

My Disciples Who Remain in Me Bear Much Fruit

John 15:1-17 (vv. 7-9)

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND BIBLICAL CONTEXT

A. Historical Background

After the Fall of Adam and Eve and subsequent banishment from the “Garden of Eden” (Genesis 3), there was the need for man to be *reconciled* with God through *repentance* and the *forgiveness of Sin*. Therefore, the Merciful, Gracious and Loving God made a way for the children of Adam and Eve to be *reconciled* back to Himself. To that end, God *initiated* His **Plan of Salvation** through Abram (75) and Sarai (65). God *promised* Abram that He will *multiply him* into “**a great nation**,” “**make his name great**,” and “**all peoples on earth will be blessed**” through him (Genesis 12). Accordingly, God performed a miracle on Sarah’s *barren womb* and the promised son, Isaac, was born when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 years old (Genesis 21:1-7). And God *multiplied* Isaac *through* his twin sons, **Jacob and Esau**, and the grandchildren into the **12 Tribes of Israel**. By the time God sent Moses to deliver them out of slavery, the **12 Tribes of Israel** were *multiplied* to over one million people (Exodus 12:31-42). **God’s Plan of Salvation** was *established* by **the Covenant** which was *secured* by **God’s Promises** and *enforced* by **the Law** given to Moses over a period of 40 years. God’s Plan of Salvation continued through Joshua and the Israelites *prospered* **Spiritually, Morally, Socially** and **Economically** in Canaan, the Promised Land. Unfortunately, after the Joshua generation passed away, subsequent generations turned their backs on God by worshipping idols. Consequently, they lost territories, many became enslaved, and their troubles multiplied. This trend continued for many generations as recorded in the Book of Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, etc. However, God’s Plan of Salvation was rekindled and continued during the time King David and King Solomon. Unfortunately, after King Solomon died, the people of God, the Israelites, turned their back on God again and again, and suffered severe consequences in subsequent generations. Instead of being an independent, free and prosperous nation, the Israelites lived as second citizens under the rule of the Babylonians, Assyrians, and eventually the Romans.

B. Biblical Context

Even though the Israelites continually turned their backs on God, He didn’t abandon them. Even though the Israelites continually broke their covenant relationship with God, the Lord kept His

Promised given to Abraham and King David. Accordingly, God rekindled, renewed and restored His Plan of Salvation through Jesus Christ. This brings us to our lesson for today.

II. THE LESSON: My Disciples Who Remain in Me Bear Much Fruit

Jesus chose the Twelve when He began His earthly Ministry. God *multiplied* the Twelve Disciples into 120, and then into 3, 120, thereafter into several thousands as the church continued to *expand* and *multiply* as recorded in the Book of Acts. But before **God's Plan of Salvation** could *multiply* through His disciples, Jesus had to teach, preach, heal, etc. as well as train the Twelve. Of course, Jesus used metaphors, parables, miracles, etc. to help people understand all that He came to do. Now, let us examine the 17 verses and receive the revelations for our edification.

1. **vv. 1-4:** In the context of vineyard, the spiritual message of this *metaphor* is that:

- a) The **Gardner** has full authority to cultivate, prune, or cut-off as he inspects the vineyard.
- b) The **Gardner** owns the vineyard. He planted the vineyard so that it can grow and produce grapes every year.
- c) The **Gardner** (i) **cuts off** every **branch** that bears no fruit and (ii) **prunes** every branch that has the promise of being fruitful.

2. **vv. 5:** “**I AM THE VINE; YOU ARE THE BRANCHES**”

We need to understand that in God's Kingdom, there is Hierarchy, Structure and Order. As the Creator of the universe, God is Sovereign. Everything belongs to God. He has complete and absolute authority over His Creation.

- a) **The Gardner** is in charge because He **owns** the grapevine.
- b) **The Vine** is the main part of the vineyard which supplies *vital resources* to the branches.
- c) **The Branches:** parts of the vine which must produce the grapes (fruits).
- d) **The Fruits:** the desired results. Fruits brings joy and profit to the **Gardner**.
- e) **Cutting and pruning** are *necessary procedures for the production of plentiful harvest*.

The Gardner planted the Vine in order for the branches to thrive and produce good harvest/much fruit for the Kingdom of God.

3. **vv. 6 - 8: THE WARNING, PROMISE AND BENEFITS**

- a) **The Warning:** “*If any one 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.*” Notice the *conditionality* of this text denoted by “**If.**” Dried up branches are used for fuel; in the process, they were

consumed in the fire. The **allusion** of the text is clear: **Hell is Real!** Those branches which did not **remain** connected to the vine will dry up and are only good for fuel!

- b) **The Promise:** “*If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.*” Again, notice the *conditionality* of the verse denoted by “If.” A Christian must continue to *abide in Christ* in order to *ask* and *receive* his or her wishes from God.

However, what we must ask must be in line with God’s Will. In this case, as the disciples of Christ, *what we ask* must be connected to *becoming fruitful* for God’s Kingdom.

- c) **The Benefit:** The Gardner continues to *cultivate* the branches that **bears fruit**, every year.

To **bear much fruit** for the kingdom of God, the disciples must **remain** in Christ. How does the disciple of Christ **remain** in Him in order to continue bearing much fruit for the Kingdom of God?

1. **Daily Prayer.** Jesus *demonstrated* the importance of prayer since He prayed to His Father daily. Praying to God daily is one way to **remain** connected to Him.
2. **Faithfulness and Commitment** despite the troubles of this world. Jesus *demonstrated* His faithfulness to His Father by faithfully proclaiming the Truth about His Father and the Kingdom. Jesus also *remained committed* to advancing God’s Kingdom on earth despite hardships, oppositions, betrayals, etc. even death on the Cross.
3. **Remain in My Words.** Jesus *remained true in teaching and living out the Truth in practice consistently.*

III. OBEDIENCE IS PROOF OF LOVE (John 15:9-14)

1. **v. 9: Love Reigns Supreme in God’s Plan of Salvation.** “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now **remain** in my love.” Love is the Primary Indicator of your Genuine Faith in God. Just like faith, Love must be *demonstrated in action.*
 - a) God demonstrated His Love to the Israelites through His Mercy, Grace, Faithfulness, Deliverance, Provisions, etc.
 - b) Jesus demonstrated His Love the same way.
2. **v. 10: The Conditionality of God’s Command:** “If you **obey** my commands, you will **remain** in my love, just as I have **obeyed** my Father’s commands and **remain** in His love.” _
 - **Obedience to God’s commandments is the true sign of our faith in Christ.**
 - **Our obedience to Christ is Genuine Proof of Your Love for God.**

3. vv. 11-13: *Obedience – The Ultimate Divine Test*: Love one another as I have loved you.
4. vv. 14: *Obedience—The Way To Earn His Friendship*. “You are my friends **if** you do what I **command**.”

- *Friendship Must Be Earned*. Friendship must be **proven** by Faithfulness, Truthfulness and Trustworthiness over time.
- *Friendship is a Two-Way Relationship*. We cannot claim friendship with God while we are unfaithful and disobedient to Jesus Christ.
- **Authentic Love** produces **fruits** as a **proof** of what is going on inside the heart!
- **Obedience to God’s commandments** is the proof that we love Jesus Christ.

IV. THE BENEFITS OF OBEDIENT LOVE (Verses 15-17)

5. v. 15: *Direct Access to God through Christ*. God made Himself **accessible** to us *through* His Son, Jesus Christ.
6. v. 16: *Fellowship with Christ*. God chose and appointed us in Jesus Christ to bear much fruit for His Kingdom on earth.
7. v. 17: *Love Each Other*. The Ultimate Test for the disciples of Christ is Love. We must love one another as a demonstration of our love for Christ and obedience to God’s commandments.

V. CONCLUSION/APPLICATION

1. Is your **love** for God **demonstrated** in your relationship with Christians in the church?
2. How much **good fruit** are you *producing* for the Kingdom of God every year? **How do you know if you are producing good fruit for Christ?**
 - a) How often do you **witness** for Christ? Did your Testimony about the Goodness of God bring sinners to Christ?
 - b) Does your **participation** in the ministries of the Church **draw** or **repel** people?
 - c) Does the **Fruit of the Spirit** show in your **character** in your daily walk with Christ?
3. How Faithful and Committed are you to the Word of God?
 - a) Do you hunger and thirst for God’s Word every day?
 - b) Are you growing in your knowledge of Christ year after year?