

Jesus Authorizes His Followers to Bear Fruit
(John 15:8)

Introduction:

1. Three weeks ago we studied an important subject: "the authority of Christ."
2. Two weeks ago: "Christ authorizes His followers to worship."
3. Last week: "Christ authorizes His followers to love each other."
4. Today: "Christ authorizes His followers to bear fruit."

Discussion:

- I. AS JESUS TAUGHT THE APOSTLES TO BEAR FRUIT IN JOHN 15:1-8, HE SPOKE ABOUT THINGS THAT WERE FAMILIAR TO THEM
 - A. Jesus talked about a "vine."
 1. This was a grapevine that was very useful to people living in Palestine.
 2. Jesus identified Himself as "the vine."
 - a. (vs.1) *"I am the true vine."*
 - b. (vs.5) *"I am the vine."*
 - B. Jesus talked about "branches."
 1. Branches are the part of a grapevine where the fruit grows.
 - a. Branches are connected to the vine, and their main function is to bear fruit.
 - 1) A branch that does not bear fruit does not serve any useful purpose.
 - 2) It is actually harmful because it takes nourishment from other branches.
 - 3) It must be removed so the other branches can produce more fruit.
 - b. In order to produce fruit, a branch must abide in the vine -- if it is separated from the vine it will not survive.
 2. (vs.5) Jesus identified His followers as the branches -- *"ye are the branches."*
 - C. Jesus also talked about the "husbandman."
 1. The husbandman is the caretaker of a vineyard.
 - a. He cares for and tends the grapevines.
 - b. He cuts away the branches that do not bear fruit.
 - c. He prunes the branches that bear fruit so they bear even more fruit.
 2. (vs.1) Jesus identified His Father as the husbandman.
 - a. The Father cuts away every branch that does not bear fruit.
 - b. He prunes the branches that bear fruit so they can produce more fruit.
 - D. By talking about these things the apostles would have understood the lesson that Jesus was teaching them, and we can understand it, too.
 - E. The Lord wants us to bear much fruit (Matthew 13:23; Romans 7:4).
- II. IN ORDER TO BEAR FRUIT, WE MUST ABIDE IN THE LORD
 - A. (vs.4) Just as a branch cannot bear fruit unless it remains in the vine, we cannot bear fruit unless we remain in Christ.
 - B. (vs.6) A child of God who does not abide in the Lord will be cut off and cast into the fire at the judgment.
 - C. (vs.5) If we abide in Christ and He abides in us we will bring forth much fruit.
 1. (vs.8) The Father is glorified when we bear much fruit.
 2. We also prove that we are the Lord's true disciples.
- III. WHAT IS THE FRUIT THAT THE LORD WANTS US TO BEAR?
 - A. "Good works" (Colossians 1:10; Galatians 6:9-10)
 - B. "The fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23)
 - C. "Other disciples" (2 Corinthians 5:18)
- IV. BEARING FRUIT IS A LIFELONG RESPONSIBILITY (Psalm 92:12-15)

Conclusion:

1. We have examined a few of the principles revealed in the Bible that relate to bearing fruit.
2. This evening we will study some additional principles.
3. As we conclude our study this morning:
 - a. Have you become a branch by getting into the Lord?
 - b. If you have, are you bearing much fruit?