

BEARING GODLY FRUIT WITH THE SHARED LIFE
APRIL 08, 2020
DURING THE GREAT TIME OUT
JOHN 15:7-8

1) THE LANGUAGE OF THE SHARED LIFE

Vine and branches - an organic, physical connection of the same material; when you are born again, you are a child of God!

The connection of the vine and branches is a living and vital one; the branch derives its life from the vine.

The vine is deeply connected to the soil, and water by its active and searching root system reminiscent of the tree of Psalm 1. The vine is alive

The branch is not alive on its own. It is fully dependent upon its relationship to the vine

The purpose of the branch is to bear fruit that is coming through the life of the vine; the branch cannot bear fruit without its attachment to the vine

Even if the connection to the vine has been damaged, if the vine can get nutrients to the branch it may yet bear fruit; but if it is broken off it has lost its purpose.

The vine is not alone; it has a caretaker, a gardener or a vinedresser. Here we see once again the vital interrelatedness, interactivity, interconnectedness, interdependence of the trinity. The Father cares for the Son, the Son carries the life of the Spirit to the children of God.

We are expected to bear fruit; that is our purpose. That fruit comes with a vital connection to the One by whom that fruit is produced. The law of sowing and reaping and after its own kind tells us that the fruit of any plant is always determined by the DNA of the parent plant. The fruit of the corn plant must be corn; the fruit does not choose what it wants to be but simply lives connected to the host

plant and fruit happens. For any branch to fall off the host plant, it dies and therefore cannot bear fruit.

2) BEARING FRUIT NOT PRODUCING FRUIT

The branch is responsible to the gardener for fruit for the farmer's use. He planted it, He watered it, He fertilized it, He trimmed it; it is His right to expect the branch to bear fruit

He prunes away from it anything that will detract it from bearing fruit. It may seem harsh to the branch at the time, but the branch does not exist to look pretty or to simply bask in the sunlight until the winter rolls around or even enjoy its little life as a branch! This present GREAT TIME OUT is an example of God's pruning on an individual and corporate level. He is pruning away everything that is not fruitful.

The branch is not free to produce its own fruit. In fact, it cannot produce fruit. Human beings are different from vines and branches as there is the little problem of will and self-determination or more theologically and roughly spoken, the longing to be our own gods!

As humans, we choose to go our own way, apart from the shared life with Christ and offer to "help God out" with our own version of fruit. It is unacceptable to God if it did not flow from the branch. Such fruit is cast away even though it may have helped someone else in their immediate problem. It may have made us look good in the eyes of someone else but it was of no value to God

Anytime we are "producing" fruit, that is, doing the fruit thing after our own desires, plans and energy, it is a rejection of God's plan for fruit-bearing. God knows what He wants from His plants; anything else is weeds. Such fruit will not be acceptable in the harvest.

3) THE 3 CONDITIONS OF BEARING FRUIT GOD LOVES

JOHN 15:7

"IF" speaks of a possibility of choice on our part not His; it is followed with a promise of actuality on His part; the potential is there for you to do it if you so choose, and there is a real result that will happen if you do

CONDITION 1 *“If you abide in me...”* If you seek to maintain a vital living relationship with Christ: He is the focus of your attention. You interpret life from Him. He is the microscope lens through which you examine the Scriptures to see Him there; He is the telescopic lens through which you see the future; He is the reading glasses through which you understand the news. He is the peace from which you avoid the anxieties of life. You understand who you are through Him. This is the most crucial relationship to you in this world. You are understanding that no matter what events are happening around you, they are not accidents, they are not mistakes, they are events leading either to conforming you to the image of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ or of moving the world one step closer to the return of Christ. He is putting all the players on the field.

You are not looking for anyone else to give you guidance; you are not looking for the love of another; to Him you are betrothed and about Him you dream of your home and life together; you are pure in your love toward Him and you cultivate it many times daily.

CONDITION 2 *“(if)...My words abide in you...”* The words of Christ are cherished by you. No one else can speak so powerfully and at the same time so gently. When you read His words they hit you right in the heart even if you did not understand them completely. They never get old to you. They are so important to you that memorizing them is no problem at all. You are captivated by them. You read them again and again. They are new every time. His commands are not harsh burdens to you. You know that even when they are difficult to completely grasp they are the words of life; they actually give life; you grow stronger by them every day. You want to do them and exactly like He said to.

The Words of Christ are not just the ones spoken when before His crucifixion in the gospels (the Red Letters) but all the words afterward that He spoke to the disciples from His resurrection to His ascension. They are the words spoken after His ascension through His Holy Spirit to the apostles found in the books of Acts through Revelation.

These are the words that change your paradigm or frame of thinking, what we call a world view. We are learning the mind of Christ, the will of God. We see it! We get it now! Once attached to the Words of Jesus you understand the world differently. It no longer matters to us the foolish rantings of the so-called wise for now we know they are little more than childish fools. They are ranting and railing against their own Creator with hollow words of broken and stained human intellect.

When those words abide in you richly, out of your inner most being flows a river of life from which others can drink and be fully refreshed. Col 3:16; John 7:37-39

CONDITION 3 “...you will ask what you will (or desire)...”
*With your focus now on the Lord Jesus Christ as the center of your life and His words having taken up residence in you body, soul and spirit changing your mind to see the world as He does and seeing reality as Him, not this transitory, messed up world, you are **motivated to pray to God** that the Son may receive the inheritance stolen from Him by rebellion; you know what to ask for; you know what things He would be pleased to do; you know what things would honor Him, would glorify Him. You know how He prayed in order to please His Father and what things the Father would do for Him. Jesus could ask the Father for the kingdoms of the world and He would give them (Psalm 2:8). Now you would ask the Father to give the Son the nations of the world for His inheritance and you know He will. You will know what you can ask for ...”If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him
Now all other prayer requests seem small and completely doable out of the compassion of the Lord Jesus Christ. You pray as He did.*

CONDITIONS (short form) Abide in Him, Words abide in you, Ask

PROMISES FROM THE FULFILLED CONDITIONS:

- 1) Answered prayer “...it will be done for you.”**
- 2) You will glorify the Father and BEAR much fruit**
- 3) You will BE His disciples**