

Studies in Christianity

Christian Living #3

S#1.

Fruit We Must Bear

S#2.

Text : **I Corinthians 2: 6-16 ; James 3: 13-18**

A. God has made an investment in every Christian and He expects a return. S#3.

1. He gave His Only Begotten Son to ransom them from captivity.
2. Jesus told parables that illustrate this principle, such as the parable of the talents.

B. When one is created as a Christian, he is created for a purpose.

1. **Eph. 2: 10** – For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. S#4.

* Note : *We were saved to work, NOT work to be saved.*

2. Part of the Christian's responsibility is to represent Jesus on the earth.
 - a. **II Cor.5: 20** – Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.
 - b. An ambassador is never off duty; he always represents the one sent him.
3. Christians are expected to do good works publically to influence people. S#5.
Matt 5: 16 – Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.
4. Good works are required, but specific works are not specified. (Cf .. Phil. 4: 8)
 - a. They must be observable.
 - b. They must make an appeal to follow God.

C. Christians are required to bear fruit or be cut off from God and destroyed. S#6.

1. Before being baptized into Christ we were all separated from Christ – w/o hope.
Eph. 2: 12 – *remember* that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.
2. The story of the vine and the branches in John 15 illustrates that bearing fruit is an absolute requirement for all Christians.
3. The Apostle taught us that we can ONLY bear fruit IN Christ.
Rom. 7: 4 – Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. S#7.
 5 For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

D. In our last lesson we observed that bearing fruit :**S#8.**

1. is a mark of salvation.
2. is a lifestyle, not an accomplishment.
3. is an expression of a dedicated heart, not just acts performed.
4. will be a standard of judgment.

E. This lesson will continue this study to begin defining “what is fruit.”**S#9.**

1. What Fruit is not.
2. Some characteristics of good fruit.
3. God want the fruit of righteousness. .

I. One way to define the positive is by observing the negative shadow it leaves.**S#10.****A. Already observed in **Matt 5:16** good fruit is not something that goes unseen.****B. Jesus also taught fruit is not the performance of religious acts.****S#11.**

1. **Matt. 7: 21** – Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord.' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. **22** Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophecy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' **23** And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'
2. Notice the rejected religious acts :
 - a. Confess of faith “Lord, Lord”
 - b. Preaching “Prophecy in Your name”
 - c. “cast out demons,”
 - d. Healing “perform many miracles”
3. One must be IN CHRIST before he can bear fruit to His glory. (**on the vine**)

C. Many people are religious, but not spiritual.**S#12.**

1. They enjoy religious activities and fellowship of believers.
2. Many are cultural Christians.
3. These do acts, but not from a heart devoted to God’s glory.

II. Let's observe some characteristics of good fruit.

S#13.

A. Good fruit is not hypocritical.

S#14.

1. **James 3:17** – But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle,, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy
2. Religious activities (*leaves*) are no substitute for fruit.
Mark 11: 13 –Seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. **14** He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again!" And His disciples were listening.

B. Good fruit is produced consistently.

S#15.

1. Remember the good heart in the parable of the sower.
Luke 8: 15 – But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance. (Strong's = steadfastness, patient enduring)
2. Remember ... **James 3: 17** (above) ... good fruit is “*unwavering*”
3. The faithful servant of God serves on an ongoing basis, *as his lifestyle*.

C. Good fruit isn't only produced persistently, it increases with experience

S#16.

1. **Col. 1: 6** – ... you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel **6** which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth; ... **10** so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;
2. Experience enhances proficiency and proficiency increases productivity.
3. When our desire is strong we work at it. (E.G. .. *Any sport .. shooting, tackling*)

S#17.

D. Good fruit is not borne for the benefit of the producer, but he may benefit.

1. Speaking of elders, the inspired Apostle taught the same as the Law of Moses.
I Tim. 5: 8 – For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

2. The Apostle applied the same rule to himself and Barnabas.

I Cor. 9: 5 – Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the **S#18.** rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? **6** Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working? **7** Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock?

3. The Apostle did all to the glory of our God. (Cf .. *every epistle he penned*)
Phil. 4: 20 – Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

E. It is the desire of Jesus that the world observe the fruit of His servants. S#19.

1. **Matt 5: 16** – Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.
2. People are supposed to be able to see our good works BUT glorify God.
3. It is hard to do good for someone and not expect acknowledgement.

F. Good fruit is peaceful, full of mercy S#20.

1. **James 3: 18** – the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
2. Don't do something that will upset those with a good heart. (*can't please some*)
3. The doer's attitude is also important. Remember Moses ... **Num. 20**

III. God wants the “fruit of righteousness.” S#21.

- A. **Phil. 1: 9** – And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, **10 so that** you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; **11** having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. S#22.

1. Requires sufficient knowledge to develop discernment of what is right.
2. The goal is to lead a life that has no charge against it. (*Cannot be spoken evil of*)
3. God is praised because of the “fruit of righteousness.”

- B. **Eph. 5: 9** – (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), S#23.

* I often pass over this verse because of it making it difficult to keep maintain the continuity between verse 8 & 10.

1. To understand this verse one must understand what is “light.”
 - a. Jesus was called “the light” because he came into the world to enlighten mankind.
John 1: 8 – He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light. **9** There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.
 - b. Jesus identified himself as “the light of the world.” (**John 8: 12, 9: 5**)
2. The Apostle John tells us that we must live enlightened as Jesus is enlightened. S#24
I John 1: 6 – If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; **7** but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

C. **Heb. 12: 11** – He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. **S#25.**
11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful;
yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

1. Even Jesus “learned obedience” by the discipline of the Father.

Heb. 5: 8 – Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

2. Discipline only works on one who wants to be approved. *The rebellious rebel more.*

*3. *Disciple is the “Pruning” referred to in John 15: 2.*

D. **The fruit of righteousness is observable in our lives.**

1. **Phil. 1: 9-11** .. It cause us to seek to be sincere and blameless in God’s eyes.

2. **Eph. 5: 8-10** .. Motivation for study “trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.”

3. **I John 1: 6-10** .. We seek His guidance to walk the enlightened path.

4. **Psa. 119: 105** – Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path. **106** I have **S#26.**
sworn and I will confirm it, That I will keep Your righteous ordinances.

5. Man seeks the approval of his peers, **but** the Christian lives to seek God’s approval.

CONCLUSION :

A. **SO FAR .. we have seen :**

S#27.

1. Some things that are not fruit ... religious activities by those outside Christ.

2. Some characteristics of good fruit :

- a. Not hypocritical
- b. Produced consistently (Lifestyle)
- c. Increasing (don’t get complacent)
- d. For God’s glory, not personal gain
- e. Observable
- f. Peaceful and merciful

3. God wants us to bear the fruit of righteousness

B. **We are each examining ourselves. How do you measure up ?**

S#28.

II Cor. 13: 5 – Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!
Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ
is in you — unless indeed you fail the test?

S#29. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**I Corinthians 2: 6-16**

6 Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; **7** but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory; **8** the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; **9** but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man. All that God has prepared for those who love Him."

10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. **11** For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. **12** Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, **13** which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. **15** But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. **16** For "who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

James 3: 13-18

13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. **14** But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. **15** This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. **16** For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. **17** But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. **18** And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.