

Your New Life In Christ: Bearing Good Fruit

We are exploring our new life in Christ. We have discovered that God wants to produce evidences of Christ's mind, life, and power in us. It is an amazing discovery to see the radical change that occurs in us when Christ comes in and gives us His abundant life. Each believer should examine themselves to see if they can see evidence of Christ's mind, life and power in them. This evidence changes the way we think, live and what we do. The scripture calls this evidence fruit. It is the fruit of Christ's influence in us. During the sermon on the mount, Jesus spoke about the fruit that we bear.

Matthew 7:16-20 NKJV You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

Jesus gave this practical illustration to help us understand the fruit that we bear. Although He was talking about trees and fruit, Jesus was really looking at people's lives and the fruit of their lives. Jesus is very interested in believers bearing good fruit. Throughout our lives, we all produce some kind of fruit. The fruit of our old lives was bad fruit. Our connection to Christ is evidenced by the fruit we bear. Jesus said, "Every good tree bears good fruit."

Several years ago, we had a huge apple tree behind our house. I never paid much attention to it because most years it did not produce much fruit and the fruit it did produce was not good. One year when the tree was heavy with fruit, my wife's brother came to visit. He went out to the tree and started picking apples. He brought a large bag of fruit into the house and was impressed by how sweet and good they were. That year we picked several large baskets of sweet crisp red apples. Out of fourteen years, that was the only time we were able to get good fruit from that tree.

Jesus was saying that fruit is the testimony of a tree and our lives.

Can anything be done if the fruit of our life has been bad? According to Jesus, if a tree bears bad fruit it is cut down and thrown into the fire. The message is clear. The Lord is not just looking for some fruit, but good fruit. We want to produce good fruit, but how can we do it?

In Romans 11, the Apostle Paul talked about branches of an olive tree that were broken off and new branches were grafted in.

The text is referring to the salvation that has come to us who were not of the household of faith. Paul said we were from a wild olive tree. Everything about our old life testified of our wild root and fruit. The fruit of our lives testified of us. When we came to Christ, the fruit of our old life was not good. By grace through faith, we have been brought to Christ and have been given new life in Him.

Jeremiah 11:15-16 said the branches were broken off and cast away because their fruit was bad. God's people had started doing evil and lewd deeds. They forsook God and started serving other gods. The fruit of their lives was not good.

Now in the Book of Romans, it says we have been given access to the root and fatness of the olive tree. Romans 11:19 says, "They were broken off that we might be grafted in." By grace and mercy we have been saved and made partakers of the richness of life that is in Christ.

Since we have been brought into this grace in which we stand, we should produce

fruit that gives evidence of our connection to Christ.

There are two kinds of fruit we may produce from our lives, good and bad.

- In Luke 3:8, we are told to “bear fruits worthy of repentance.”
- Romans 6:22, “You have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.”
- 2 Corinthians 9:10 “increase the fruits of your righteousness.”
- Philippians 1:11 “being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”
- Colossians 1:10 “being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”
- Revelation 22:2 talks about a tree that bears twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month.
- Ezekiel saw all kinds of trees whose leaves do not wither, and their fruit does not fail, (Ezekiel 47:12).

Ephesians 5:8-9 NKJV For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

How is it possible to cast off the old fruit from that old life and bring forth good fruit?

Each of us face this dilemma. The Apostle Paul said he delighted in the law of God and wanted to do good, but evil was always present in him. He recognized the struggle we all have. How could he change the fruit of his life? How could he walk out of darkness into light? How could he be delivered from the body of death? In Romans 7:25, he said, “Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.”

In John 15, Jesus used a vine and branch to show how we can bear fruit.

John 15:1 NKJV I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

You should know that you are under the Father’s care. He is watching over you to guard, protect and encourage new life in Christ.

John 15:2 NKJV Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

Notice that the Father is examining every branch. He is doing this to guarantee that we bear fruit.

John 15:3-4 NKJV You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

Did you see that Jesus makes it possible for you to bear fruit?

You cannot bear fruit unless you remain in Christ. If you remain in Christ, you will bear fruit.

John 15:5 NKJV I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

If you remain in Christ, you will bear much fruit and the fruit that you bear will bring glory to the Father.

Notice the certainty of Christ’s statement. He did not say you may bear fruit. Jesus said you would bear much good fruit. The struggle to be productive and blessed is removed in Christ. If you remain in Him and He remains in you, you are going to glorify God in your fruit-bearing, (John 15:8).

Galatians 2:20 NKJV I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but

Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Do you see evidence of this in your life? Has your old fruitless life been done away with? Do you see evidence of Christ's life and power working in you? Give Him praise, He has given you new life in Christ.

As Jesus drew near to His final day with His disciples, He met with them in an upper room for a Passover meal.

The meal was a time to remember that God brought His people out of Egypt. Jesus wanted believers to know that He was providing an exodus from the life of sin through His cross and blood. As they were eating the meal, Jesus made it clear that their new life depended upon their partaking of Him. Jesus was demonstrating that He was giving Himself so that all believers may have life more abundantly.

Jesus spoke with His disciples about our need to fellowship and feast on His richness.

John 6:54-57 NKJV Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.

Jesus' words spoke of the rich benefits of our fellowship and drawing from Him and His life. Every time we receive communion, we are caused to focus on this fact. Jesus is the source of our new life. When we abide in Him and He abides in us, we gain the blessing and benefit of everything that Jesus is.

We are going to receive communion together.

This is a time for us to remember several things. It helps us remember that Jesus Christ gave Himself fully so that we may have this new life. It helps us focus on the fact that our source of life and victory comes through Jesus Christ. Communion reminds us of the sacrifice that Jesus made to bring cleansing, healing, and salvation to our dead and sinful souls. As they were eating, Jesus took bread and the cup and gave it to them and said: "This is My body and this is My blood." He wanted every believer who participates in the communion meal to know that He is the source of life. Just as with His illustration of the vine and the branch, Jesus wants you to know that when you partake of Him, you will receive life.