

“How to Glorify God, part 4”

John 15:1-8

INTRO:

In our study of the glory of God, we have made several important discoveries. We learned that it is supremely important that we glorify God. Then we talked a little bit about what it means to glorify God. Essentially, we discovered that we glorify God when we make His attributes and perfections known. The last several Lord’s days we have considered how we glorify God.

In this series of studies we have discovered that we glorify God **(1)** in doing His will at any cost, **(2)** in responding to our suffering properly. Tonight, with the Lord’s help, we are going to discover that we glorify God in bearing fruit. As we explore this concept together we will, **OUR** study will fall into two divisions.

I. THE MATTER OF FRUIT BEARING (v. 1-8)

II. WHAT KIND OF FRUIT DO WE BEAR?

I. THE MATTER OF FRUIT BEARING (v. 1-8)

A. As we arrive in **John 15**, we are tagging along after the disciples as they have left the upper room and are on the road to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus would be betrayed and soon after crucified. On the way, Jesus is still teaching His disciples and preparing them for the ministry that is ahead of them. In speaking the words that we find here, our Lord was giving His disciples and us an understanding of the principles of life and fruitfulness in His church.

1. So, Jesus begins to speak and to paint a word picture for them and us to see. He says in **verse 1**, ***“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.”*** The Lord Jesus is the vine and God, the Father is the one who cares for the vine and the branches.

2. In **verses 2 and 3** we learn that God, the Father’s care of the vine and the branches is not a passive care. He is involved in changing us so that we become all that we can be.

“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. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”

The fruitful branches the Father cleanses. He takes away all that would keep us from producing fruit. For the sake of time let me summarize. Every true believer produces fruit. If there is no fruit there may be no true connection to the vine.

B. Our job as branches in the true vine is to produce fruit. How do we produce fruit?

vs.4-5 ***“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. 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.”***

The key to fruit bearing is abiding. The first phrase is an imperative. This is a command that we abide or remain in Him. What does it mean to abide?

1. First, it means to live our lives aware that the source of our spiritual life is Christ Himself. Our life spiritually is a life of dependence upon the Lord. Abiding is fellowshiping with Him in His Word. If we are not feeding on the Word of God, we will not be abiding.

2. Second, abiding means recognizing without Him we can do nothing. Look at **verse 5**.

“He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”

Here are two promises and a principle. The first promise: if we abide in Him, He will abide in us! He is active in the matter of abiding. Second, He promises if we abide in Him, we will bring forth much fruit. It will happen. Now here is the principle. Without Him we can do nothing. The opposite is also implied. With Him we can do anything He wants us to do.

3. **Verse 6** is a warning. If there is no fruitfulness, there is no living connection to the Lord Jesus and there is no life.

C. We learn more about the importance of abiding in the Lord Jesus in **verse 7**.

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.”

Abiding involves drawing upon the Lord Jesus in prayer. This sounds a lot like another promise made in the Old Testament.

Psalm 37:4 *“Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.”*

If we are actively abiding and delighting we are also submitting to the leading of the Holy Spirit and God is changing us to be like Christ. Then, what we want is what He wants. And the ***“desires of our hearts”*** which He gives to us, is His perfect will.

D. Why is it important we abide in Him and produce fruit?

v. 8 *“By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”*

II. WHAT KIND OF FRUIT DO WE BEAR?

A. What kind of fruit do we bear? What does this supernatural fruit look like? The fruit we often think of first is the fruit of evangelism. This is the fruit of being the vessel through which God calls sinners to Himself. As we proclaim the Gospel, God the Holy Spirit calls some from death to life. God is glorified when we share the Gospel with someone else.

1. This is not the only kind of fruit in the picture here. We also bear fruit to the glory of God when we give to Him of our substance sacrificially. In **Philippians 4:17** Paul wrote concerning the gift that the Philippians gave to God by giving it to him for ministry.

“For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.”

Paul rejoiced because God was glorified in their giving.

2. We also bear fruit to the glory of God through our good works. We read in Paul’s prayer for the Colossian believers about this fruit.

Colossians 1:9,10 ***“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”***

B. The fruit we have just talked about are all external fruit that we can bear to the glory of God. There is also an internal fruit which is the foundation of all of the external fruit. **Galatians 5:22-23** says,

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. Against such there is no law.”

This fruit is produced in our lives as we allow the Spirit of God to have control.

Yielding to the Spirit of God is active obedience to what He wants us to do. As we obey, He takes control of our lives and begins to form Christ in us. This is when we exhibit, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The result is the reality that the Apostle Paul prayed for the

Philippians in

Philippians 1:11 ***“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”***

So, how are we doing on the fruit bearing front?

To bear fruit we must be actively abiding in the Lord Jesus. Are we drawing our strength from Him by letting Him have control in our lives? Are we communicating with Him? How is our devotional life? We need to grow in our relationship with Him so that we abide in Him.

Hymn #332 Without Him