

Pruning and Bearing Fruit

After singing, "I am the vine, you are the branches" (Jn 15:5)...

If we are not pruned it means that we are not His disciples. Why are we pruned? So that we would bear much fruit for a long time. If you don't prune a vine for one year the fruit decreases and eventually it might die. It is very difficult to recover it. If we don't produce much fruit it means we are not His disciples. Jn 15:8 — Disciples bear much fruit because they are being pruned consistently. Our Father is the vinedresser.

How do you know you are being pruned? When a plant is pruned it goes through a kind of shock. It takes a while to recover. When will it bear fruit again after it has been pruned? Next season. It produces fruit every year. But it goes through some crisis after pruning. When you prune it in spring, it produces some device to stop the sap from running, otherwise all the sap would drain out.

How do you feel when you are pruned? It cuts off these ways in us, like inadvertent ways, ways that will keep us from producing fruit later on, hurtful ways.

Sometimes it refers to individuals, sometimes it refers to whole tribes. A branch could be a tribe. Our Master was talking to the twelve apostles. Judah had to be pruned because there were things in them that almost destroyed the whole tribe. Manasseh, too. They were almost dead, but they had life in them (Gal 4:19-20). There might be things in Reuben. The underground in Judah in the children almost destroyed them.

1 Cor 10 — If we complain or murmur we'll be cut off. You hear no one complain or murmur. If they do they are cut off. Like Kepha — he was cut off. *Kirby died*. 1 Cor 10:9-11 — If you complain and murmur then the sap is not going into you — some other sap is. How do you know that a branch needs to be pruned? Is it obvious? Is it automatic, or do you see something in the branch? It would develop a lot of little branches that are not very strong. You only need a few strong branches. How does it apply to us? We get puffed up. Our flesh has to be cut off. We get proud, then we get cut back and are being humbled. He'll cut off from us

what won't endure the hard times, those errant, deceitful, inadvertent ways. What is the last time you have been pruned? Judging yourself right is pruning. How do you know you are bearing much fruit? You are required to bear at least 30 times as much, or 60 times, which is twice as much as 30 times. Some bear 100 times.

Mt 13:23 — The people who bear 100 times as much are really being pruned. They can judge themselves. This is in order to fully please Him. They hear the word, understand it, take it in and then they put it into practice. Can you imagine bearing 100 times as much? Anything less than 30 times, and Jn 15:8 says you don't prove to be a disciple. You bear fruit by hearing the truth and understanding it. Mt 7:23-24 speaks about those who hear His word and do it. You see who will enter the kingdom and who won't. Col 1:10 speaks about bearing fruit in every good work. We bear fruit in doing these works.

Col 1:10; Rev 3:2 — “You are a dead branch, because your deeds are not complete in My sight.”

Col 1:10 — You have to go into all pleasing Him (Greek). *All* means wholly, completely. *Pleasing* means to give Him pleasure. Right now we are not there but, the Greek says that we are to go into all pleasing Him. You have to go into it.

How do you bear much fruit, like 100 times, as a mother or father? It's by doing those works that we have been saved for, those works that have been prepared for us before we were born (Eph 2:10). Why were you born? You have to give your whole heart and strength to do these works. If you don't do it you are not walking in those works.

How much fruit did our Master bear? 100 fold. We are supposed to walk in a manner worthy of Him. What would keep us from walking like He did? Not walking in His strength and having His sap flowing into us. Or there are some inadvertent ways in us. Like for example, you hear the alarm clock or you hear them sing in the morning and you just don't get up. Your subconscious is being judged. Because if your subconscious is alert, you will get up. These are the ways we have to cut off. We have to please Him in every way of our personality — socially, mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. If we turn the alarm clock off, is that 30 fold?

No. What if you never come into all pleasing Him? What if you only produce 20 fold? It wasn't proof that you are a planting of His.

We have a man in Island Pond who is not a believer. He lives with his wife. He is doing things, working in the community, but he doesn't even claim to be a disciple. He is not baptized. But then we have some people coming in, they are being baptized, you fertilize them, you lavish words on them, but they never put them into practice. They never produce 30 fold. So what does that mean? If you are not a disciple, you don't have eternal life. Our Master wants to tell us that there are many people who are not disciples.

A person *proves* to be a disciple. They are always in communion, loving our Master. Their activity is directed towards the Body. Other people in the Body do good things, but they never build up the Body. They come and go. They come and get wet. They don't produce a lot of fruit. There are still a lot of people in Judah that don't produce a lot of fruit. "Don't cut it down, Master; leave it one more year; we'll cultivate and encourage it." All He is saying is that if we abide in Him we will produce much fruit.

If you grew up in the community you know the ropes. You know just exactly what and how much to say to just get by. But people like this are not producing much fruit. They will be cut off and thrown into the fire because it is a worthless branch. They think the Holy Spirit is not even worth their work.

There are so many things in us that choke out the fruit. He wants us to be disciples, judging ourselves, cutting those things off, come into all pleasing Him, trusting Him in all of our ways.

There is no doubt in your mind about someone who abides in the vine. You have no doubt about them. You love them, and they love you reciprocally. You don't have any doubt. Where there is faith there is no doubt. You don't doubt them to be disciples. You are not afraid that they might be not a disciple because you see certain things in them. You can count on them.

Lebanah: The way we can bear 100 fold is by sharing the word. The more we hear and it goes into us the more we can practice it.

Yacob Israel: When we hear something it gives life to our spirit. We need to share and encourage. Just a “shalom” is enough sometimes to wake us up.

Isa 50:4 — You can wake up physically in the morning, but unless He wakes us up we are not really awake, connected to life. Wouldn't that be the most marvelous thing that He would wake us up morning by morning. As a result of that there would be much life in the community because we would have much to share with the weary ones in our midst.

Let's give our bodies as a living sacrifice so that we would not in any way be conformed to the world.