

LIVING A LIFE OF MUTUAL ABIDING IN CHRIST FOR FRUIT-BEARING

Message One

God's Desire for Fruits as Seen in the Scriptures

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:11, 28; 49:22; 2 Kings 19:30; S.S. 4:12-15; Gal. 5:22-23; John 15:16; Rev. 22:2

I. In Genesis 1:11 God said, "Let the earth sprout...fruit trees bearing fruit," and Genesis 2:9 speaks of "the tree of life in the middle of the garden":

- A. The fruit trees bearing fruit are types of Christ—1:11; 2:9; Exo. 15:23-25; S. S. 2:3; 5:15; Isa. 11:1; John 15:1; Rev. 22:2.
- B. The tree of life signifies God in Christ as life to be our portion—Gen. 2:9; John 1:1, 4; 14:6; Col. 3:4; 1:12.

II. In the Old Testament, God commanded His people to be fruitful and multiply—Gen. 1:28; 9:1, 7; 28:3; 35:11; 47:27; 48:4; Exo. 1:7; Lev. 26:9; Jer. 23:3; Ezek. 36:11:

- A. "And God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it"—Gen. 1:28a.
- B. "I am the All-sufficient God: / Be fruitful and multiply"—Gen. 35:11a.
- C. "I will turn My face toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you"—Lev. 26:9a.

III. Genesis 49:22 says, "Joseph is a fruitful bough, / A fruitful bough by a fountain; / His branches run over the wall":

- A. Joseph as a fruitful bough typifies Christ as the branch (Isa. 11:1) for the branching out of God through His believers as His branches (John 15:1, 5).
- B. Christ as the embodiment of God is the producing tree; Christ is truly fruitful—John 15:4 5; Judg. 9:8-13 and footnotes; Rev. 22:2.

IV. The firstfruits offered to God for His satisfaction typify Christ and the church—Exo. 34:26; Lev. 2:12, 14; 23:10, 17, 20; Num. 18:12-13:

- A. Exodus 23:19 says, "The first of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of Jehovah your God".
- B. Leviticus 23:17 says, "And you shall bring out of your dwelling places two loaves as a wave offering; they shall be two tenths of an ephah of fine flour, baked with leaven, as firstfruits to Jehovah".

V. The Old Testament speaks of God's people taking root and bearing fruit—2 Kings 19:30; Psal. 1:3; Isa 37:31; Jer. 17:7-8; Hosea 14:5-7:

- A. Second Kings 19:30 and Isaiah 37:31 speak of Israel taking root downward and bearing fruit upward, and Hosea 14:5 and 7 speaks of Israel sending forth his roots like the trees of Lebanon and budding like the vine.
- B. Jeremiah 17:7-8 says that the man who trusts in Jehovah will be "like a tree transplanted beside water, / Which sends out its roots by a stream, / And will not be afraid when heat comes; / For its leaves remain flourishing, / And it will not be anxious in the year of drought / And will not cease to bear fruit".

VI. In Song of songs, through the seeker's living in Christ's ascension as the new creation in resurrection, she becomes mature in the riches of the life of Christ so that she becomes a garden to Christ—S.S. 4:12-15:

- A. Full of the choicest fruit and the chief spices with their beauty and fragrance—vv. 13-14.
- B. She wants her Beloved to come into His garden and eat His choicest fruit—v. 16b.

VII. In the New Testament and according to our experience, God's life within us produces two categories of fruit—Gal. 5:22-23; John 15:4-5, 16:

- A. The first category of fruit is the category of Christian virtues—Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 5:9; cf. Titus 3:14:
 - 1. Galatians 5:22-23 speaks of the fruit of the Spirit.
 - 2. In Ephesians 5:9 Paul speaks of the fruit of the light.
 - 3. In Philippians 1:11 Paul speaks of "being filled with the fruit of righteousness, which is through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God".
 - 4. Hebrews 12:11 speaks of the peaceable fruit of righteousness.
 - 5. Second Peter 1:3-11 shows the fruit of Christian virtues.
- B. The second category of fruit is saved persons regenerated with the divine life—John 15:4-5, 8, 16; cf. Rom. 1:13; 15:28; 16:5:
 - 1. John 15:16 says that the believers "should go forth and bear fruit".
 - 2. We Christians should bear both the fruit of virtues and the fruit of regenerated persons—John 15:4-5, 16.
- C. If we do not bear the first category of fruit, the fruit of virtues, we will not be prevailing in the gospel regardless of what way we use:
 - 1. We must be persons who live by the divine power within us, walking by and with the Holy Spirit; we must be persons living by Christ as our life to bear much fruit of virtues—v. 13; Gal. 5:16, 22-23:
 - a. The Greek word for go forth means to depart, implying to leave for another place; hence, it is rendered go forth.
 - b. The fruit borne by going forth in this way does not denote the virtues of the fruit bearer's character, such as the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the believer's living, mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23, but it denotes the believers produced by the fruit-bearer.
 - c. To bear ethical and moral virtues as fruit does not require us to go forth; but to bear the fruit of persons regenerated through our dispensing of the divine life requires us to go forth to contact and reach people.
 - 2. Then when we speak Christ in the preaching of the gospel, the second category of fruit will be there, the fruit of persons—John 5:16:
 - a. If a fruit tree in an orchard does not bear any fruit, the farmer will want to cut it down; there is no beauty in a fruit tree that does not bear fruit—Luke 13:6-9.
 - b. We need to bear not only the fruit of virtues as the beauties of the divine life but also the fruit of solid persons—John 15:16.
- D. Colossians 1:6 speaks of the word of the truth of the gospel "bearing fruit and growing," and verse 10 speaks of "bearing fruit in every good work":
 - 1. The love for the saints is the fruit borne by the gospel; when the gospel is preached in reality, it bears fruit; in those who receive it, it produces love for all believers—vv. 6, 8.
 - 2. Bearing fruit in Colossians 1:10 refers to living Christ, growing Christ, expressing Christ, and producing Christ in every respect.
- E. We need to bear these two kinds of fruit for a rich entrance into the coming kingdom—2 Pet. 1:11.
- F. The book of Romans speaks of "fruit unto sanctification" (6:22) and bearing fruit "unto God" (7:4).

VIII. Hebrews 13:15 says, "Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name".

IX. "On this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations"—Rev. 22:2.