

4 February 2018

**Essential ingredients for Christian growth
Pt 6 Abide in Christ & bear fruit of the Spirit of God.**

This is our sixth study on our topic the essential ingredients for Christian growth. In our previous teaching we established the need to forsake not the gathering together. In this study we cover the need to abide in Christ to bear fruit of the Spirit as evidence of spiritual growth.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. Our spiritual growth is linked to the fruit that the Spirit of God bears in us.

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jn.15: 2), c.f.– Mk.11:20 & 21 "And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away."

When a tree is withered away it is dried up and there can be no growth and no fruit, whereas the opposite occurs when a tree is fed and nourished – it grows and bears fruit. The illustration of the Lord being the true vine in Jn.15 is given to show the importance of abiding in Christ for our spiritual health, just "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" (verse 4).

2. When we do not abide in Christ we bear no fruit and cease to grow spiritually.

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15: 6).

3. We grow spiritually when we abide in Christ and bear much fruit.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15: 5). See also Jn.15: 2.

If a vine is growing then it will bear fruit and the vinedresser prunes it to bear more fruit. The same is the case for Christians that bear fruit, God purges them (Jn.15: 2) and when they sin He chastises them which "afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Heb.12: 11).

Additional comments.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5: 22 & 23).

"(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)" (Eph.5: 9).

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col.1: 10).

An illustration to help us apply this instruction in our lives today.

The fruit of an apple is made up of a core, juice, flesh, skin and seeds. The seed by itself is not identified as an apple, and neither is the skin, and therefore the apple tree bears a whole apple.

Question to think about.

Why would a Christian not bear fruit of the Spirit of God, or only parts of the fruit?

My answer to our question from the scriptures.

1. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2Cor 13:5, and "unless ye have believed in vain" (1Cor.15: 2).

2. "(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)" (Eph.5: 9).

Therefore, if we are not walking in goodness, righteousness or truth we cannot bear spiritual fruit. E.g un-repent sin could cause a Christian not to bear fruit of the Spirit of God.

3. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered" (Jn.15: 6). Therefore, an essential ingredient for Christian growth is to abide in Christ and bear fruit of the Spirit of God.