

John 15:1-5 & 8

Luke 9:23 - Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life.

1. John 15 is one of the most succinct descriptions of the believer's life and how God is shaping it to be pleasing to Him.

- ✓ -Some of the dearest and most significant events and teachings of Jesus' earthly ministry happened on the night He was betrayed, and this teaching of the Vine is one of them.
- ✓ **Verses 1-2, 5, 8** - This explains the believer's purpose here: **To Bear Much Fruit.**

2. It is imperative that we understand this metaphor if we are to understand our purpose in life and what God is up to with us.

- ✓ Ever wonder what God is up to in your life? This metaphor will help you greatly.
 - 1) Jesus is the Vine!
 - 2) The Father is the Vinedresser. He has really only one task and one goal, to make His plants as productive as possible.
 - 3) We are the Branches; the branches are the focus of the vine dressers efforts because they produce the fruit.
 - ✓ The Vinedresser lovingly cultivates each branch so that it produces the most fruit.
 - ✓ The branch that has as its goal to grow long or lush or high is in for some heart ache because fruitfulness is God's goal for us.
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3. So, what is fruit?

- ✓ Fruit is a broader term and covers everything that could be classed as good works. **Titus 3:14**
- ✓ Producing good works is how we bring glory to God in this life. **Verse 8**
- ✓ **Galatians 5:22**

4. How important is fruit in a believer's life?

- ✓ **Ephesians 2:10, Verse 16** - God is not in the business of making our dreams come true.
- ✓ Our dreams are too small: We are here to fulfill God's dream by bringing Him glory through a remarkably abundant life.

5. There are four distinct levels of fruit bearing here in John 15.

- 1) No Fruit **Verse 2**
 - 2) Some Fruit **Verse 2**
 - 3) More Fruit **verse 2**
 - 4) Much Fruit **verse 5**
- ✓ We are going to focus on the branch with no fruit notice:
 - It is withered.
 - It is attached to the vine.
 - ✓ We would assume that a withered fruitless branch is not attached to the vine, but this one is.
 - ✓ Similarly, it should shock us to find a believer (one who is vitally attached to the Vine) who is withered and whose life is fruitless.
 - ✓ Is it possible to be a believer and have no fruit?
 - ✓ **2 Timothy 2:22, Ephesians 4:22b, Romans 6:11b-12, John 15:5**
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6. Believers with little or no fruit. Could that be you?

- ✓ Let's take a look at a single Greek word otherwise translated: "take away", "cut off" can mean "take, raise or lift up".
- ✓ Which is it? It is determined by the context.
- ✓ What is the context? Among other things "every branch **in Me**".

Many places in the New Testament the believer is said to be "in Christ": **Ephesians 2:20, 2 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Corinthians 5:17**

- ✓ Clearly it is possible to be "**in Christ**" and your life be **unfruitful**.
- ✓ We know that salvation has nothing to do with our performance. **Ephesians 2:8-9**
- ✓ "take up" or "lift up" – Not only fits the context of Scripture but it also fits the context of grape agriculture.
- ✓ God cleanses us: **Ephesians 5:25-26** - Sin is like dirt on us!
- ✓ God lifts us up: worldly way of living has us down on the ground.

How does He lift us up to a place fruitfulness? **He intervenes in our lives to discipline us.**
