

WHAT DOES IT MEAN "TO BEAR FRUIT"?

John 15:1-5

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Jesus uses an illustration of how grapes are produced by reminding His disciples of the process. First there is the vine, then there are the branches, then the fruit grows on the branches. He then compares a Christian's life with fruit bearing with Him being the true vine and believers are attached to Him as branches and they are to therefore produce "fruit." So every Christian is attached to Jesus and is therefore to be productive for Him. Producing "fruit" for Jesus is part of living an abundant life in and through Jesus.

I. WHAT KIND OF "FRUIT" IS A CHRISTIAN TO BEAR?

1. Winning people to Jesus and then helping them to grow is a kind of fruit.
 - Paul speaks of this kind of fruit in Romans 1:13
 - A branch can only produce fruit like the branch itself.
 - A disciple of Jesus bears fruit by producing another disciple (believer).
2. Helping those who are in need is a kind of fruit.
 - Contributing to the poor is a kind of "fruit." - Romans 15:25-28
 - Jesus did this many times when He fed so many at a time - 2 Corinthians 8:9
 - If the vine, Jesus, helped those in need, so should His branches, Christians, do the same.
3. Developing a Christ-like character is a kind of fruit.
 - The fruit of the Spirit is developing certain graces - Galatians 5:22-23
 - To develop graces is to be growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ - 2 Peter 1:5-8
 - To develop a Christ-like character is to become the image of the Lord Jesus - Colossians 3:9-11
4. Praising God and giving thanks is a kind of fruit.
 - Hebrews 13:15
 - Jesus praised God and gave thanks, being the Vine, so should the branches attached to Him.
 - Luke 10:21; John 11:41

II. THERE ARE BENEFITS IN BEARING FRUIT

1. There is much "joy" for those who win people to the Lord.
 - There is no greater joy - 3 John 3-4
 - The converts of Paul were his "pride and joy" - 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20
 - Any Christian involved in witnessing and bringing people to the Lord finds great joy as they see the "fruits" of their labors.
2. There is great "happiness" for those who share their possessions (help others).
 - They learn by actual experiencing what Jesus taught.
 - Jesus said "*...It is more blessed to give than to receive...*" - Acts 20:35
 - There is greater happiness in giving than in receiving.
3. There is a great "assurance" for those who develop a Christ-like character.
 - They are free from any condemnation of the law - Galatians 5:23b; Romans 8:1
 - Abounding in the "knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ" are assured of an "abundant" entrance into the everlasting kingdom of the Lord Jesus - 2 Peter 1:8-11
4. There is a great "peace" for those who are given to being thankful.
 - An attitude of gratitude brings about the peace of God - Philippians 4:6-7
 - It is a peace which surpasses all understanding.
 - It is a peace that will guard one's heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

CONCLUSION:

1. Producing "fruit" for the Lord Jesus brings joy, happiness, assurance and peace.
2. Every Christian is a "branch" of the true Vine, Jesus and is to bear "fruit" as Jesus did and wants.
3. Are YOU a branch of the True Vine? Are YOU producing "fruit" ?