

KINDS OF FRUITFULNESS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

(March 2000 – EKB)

Readings: *Jn 15:1-8, Mat 3:7,8,10, Lk 3:7-14, Jn 15:16, Mat 7:15-20, Is 5:2,4,7, Mat 21:33-43, Lk 13:6-9, Mat 25:14-30, Lk 19:11-26.*

1. As we read these scriptures it becomes clear that God **requires good fruit**, of all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and God. As we bear much fruit we glorify God, *Jn 15:8*, and live as disciples of Christ. The aim of our lives as believers is to glorify God in all that we do, by bearing much good fruit, *Mat 5:16, Phil 1:11*.
2. So now it is important to take another look at the **kinds of fruit God is expecting us to produce**.
3. Firstly there is the **fruit of Christ-like character** mentioned in *Gal 5:22,23*, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, patience and endurance, gentleness, goodness, faith and faithfulness, meekness of a Holy Spirit controlled temperament, and self control, *Eph 5:9*. (No 32 Pastors' Notes.)
4. Secondly there is the **fruit of the Word** which God has sown in our heart. **The parable of the Sower** in *Mat 13, Mk4, Lk 8*, teaches us to avoid being like the wayside, the stony ground, or the thorny ground which fails to produce good fruit but to be **good ground producing thirty, sixty or one hundred fold fruit**. As we hold to the rhema scriptures that God has sown in our hearts by faith, and walk in obedience to them, God's will, plans and purposes for our lives will be fulfilled with great fruitfulness.
5. Then there is the **fruit of our lips giving praise and thanks to God** in all things, *Heb 13:15,16, Col 4:17, 1Thes 5:18*. We **enter into His gates with thanksgiving** and into His courts with praise, *Ps 100:4*. **The joy of the Lord** is our strength, *Neh 8:10*. **God is seeking for us to worship Him** in Spirit and in truth in this way, *Jn 4:23,24*. If we will not praise Him then **the stones will cry out** His praise, *Lk 19:40*.
6. **Also there is the fruit of reaping souls** in the harvest field. Jesus said, "Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life.....," *Jn 4:35,36*. *Verse 39* says, "**And many of the Samaritans of that city believed** in Him because of the word of the woman who testified." Also in *verse 41* it says, "And **many more believed** because of His own word."

Paul desired to visit Rome so that he might have **some fruit among the inhabitants of that city** by the preaching of the Gospel, as he had had among the Gentiles of other places, *Rom 1:13-16, Mat 4:19, Lk 5:10, Ac 1:8, Jn 15:16*.

7. Furthermore there is **the fruit of caring for the people around us who are in need**, *Lk 3:8-14*. We are to be, as it were, **trees bearing good fruit**, *Ps 1:3*. If we have two coats, we are to give one to the neighbour who has none, *v11*. Likewise we are to share our food with those who have none, *v11*. **The Good Samaritan bore the good fruits of mercy**, compassion, kindness, generosity and helpfulness, *Lk 10:29-37*. The tax collector was instructed to **bear the good fruit of fairness and honesty**, *Lk 3:12,13*. The soldier was told to treat the people with respect, be truthful and content with His wages, *Lk 3:14, Mat 25:35,36, Gal 6:10*.

8. There are many different kinds of good works and the Word exhorts us to **be fruitful in every good work**, and fully pleasing to God, *Col 1:10, Eph 2:10, Tit 3:1,14*.
9. There are **seasons of fruitfulness**, *Ps 1:3*, in our lives.
10. The ministry of the Spirit and the anointing that was upon Jesus, is at work through us, so that we, and those we minister to, may be trees of righteousness **bearing much fruit to glorify God**, *Is 61:1-3*. As trees, planted by the river of God's Spirit, God causes us to be **bountifully fruitful**, *Ps 1:3, Ezk 47:7,12*.