

branches. So often I have viewed fruitfulness in the Christian life as activities such as teaching Sunday school or leading a Bible study. These acts of service are good and worthwhile, but Jesus said that being fruitful is allowing His life to flow through me: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me" (v.4). No one can bear "grapes" without being connected to Christ, the Vine. Fruitfulness is not primarily a matter of what I accomplish. It's the result of my being in close fellowship with Him.

Whenever you wonder if you're being a "fruitful" Christian, ask yourself, "Am I like Jesus? Is His life flowing through me in the ordinary activities and relationships of each day? Do the 'grapes' of my life point others to the Vine?" —David McCasland

*Closer let me cling, my Saviour—
You're the all-sufficient Vine;
You alone can make me fruitful,
Blessed source of strength divine. —Bosch*

Fruitfulness for Christ depends on fellowship with Christ.



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Central Mountains Baptist Church

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Bearing Grapes

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. —John 15:4

As I read John 15:1-8, I began to reconsider my concept of what it means to be a fruitful Christian. Jesus said, "I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. He cuts off every branch of Me that doesn't bear grapes. And every branch that is grape-bearing He prunes back so it will bear even more" [paraphrase]

Grapes—they're the result of the life of the vine flowing through the





Discipleship Series

The Good Farmer

(John 15:1) "'... and My Father is the vinedresser."

The Scripture describes three kinds of orchardist:

1. The _____ orchardist, 1 Corinthians 3:5-9, 1, 3

(Proverbs 24:30-34) "I went by the field of the lazy man, And by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; {31} And there it was, all overgrown with thorns; Its surface was covered with nettles; Its stone wall was broken down. {32} When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction: {33} A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest; {34} So shall your poverty come like a prowler, And your need like an armed man."



(Proverbs 20:4) "The lazy man will not plow because of winter; He will beg during harvest and have nothing."

(Proverbs 15:19) "The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, But the way of the upright is a highway."

(Proverbs 18:9) "He who is slothful in his work Is a brother to him who is a great destroyer."

(Proverbs 10:26) "As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, So is the lazy man to those who send him."



2. The _____ orchardist, 1 Jn 2:1, 4:4, 5:21, 2:28, 3:7, 18

(Luke 15:11-32) "Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. {12} "And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. {13} "And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. {14} "But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. {15} "Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. {16} "And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. {17} "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! {18} 'I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, {19} "and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your



hired servants." {20} "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. {21} "And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' {22} "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. {23} 'And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; {24} 'for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

{25} "Now his older son was in the field.

And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. {26} "So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. {27} "And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' {28} "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him.

{29} "So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends.

{30} 'But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'

{31} "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. {32} 'It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.'"



- 1. Yes/No 2. Yes/No 3. Yes/No 4. Yes/No 5. Yes/No 6. Yes/No 7. Yes/No 8. Yes/No 9. Yes/No 10. Yes/No 11. Yes/No 12. Yes/No 13. Yes/No

3. The _____ orchardist, 1 John 2:13, 14

