

SERMON NOTES

Growing Up 5 - Fruitfulness

Introduction:

Just as children grow and have milestones that indicate their development, there are spiritual milestones that show our maturity as believers.

One of these is how PRODUCTIVE we are. A child exclusively consumes, and they contribute nothing. And one of the measures of their maturity is how much they contribute vs how much they consume. This is just ONE sign of maturity, but it is a real one.

In spiritual things this applies too:

FRUITFUL

Luke 13:6-9 (NKJV) - 6 He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.

7 "Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?'

8 "But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it.

9 'And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.' "

John 15:1-8 (NKJV) - 1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

8 "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Luke 8:14 (NKJV): "Now the ones [that] fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and **pleasures** of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

TYPES OF FRUIT

1. **Righteousness** / repentance / Of spirit -

Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV) - 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Matthew 3:8 NKJV — "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,

2. Exercising the **Gifts & calling** he has given you (compare the [POEMA course](#) and Eph 2:10)

Colossians 1:10 (NKJV): That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing [Him,] being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

3. New believers and **His work & His Church**

James 3:18 (NKJV) — Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
(TEACHING / DISCIPLING OTHERS)

Romans 1:13 (NKJV) — Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles.

4. **Contributing financially** to His work and with others -

Philippians 4:15-19 (NKJV) — Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities.

17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.

18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. 19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

ARE YOU A NET TAKER OR GIVER in all these areas?

GOD ALWAYS OUTGIVES

Acts 20:35 (NKJV) - 35 "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, '**It is more blessed to give than to receive.**'"

Luke 6:38 (NKJV) - 38 "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

Proverbs 19:17 (NKJV) - 17 He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, And He will pay back what he has given.

Matthew 6:20 (NKJV) - 20 "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 (NKJV) - 6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

9 As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever."

10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness,

11 while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

QUOTE

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat." - **Theodore Roosevelt**

OTHER VERSES

Mark 12:41-44 (NKJV) - 41 Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much.

42 Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans.

43 So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury;

44 "for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

2 Corinthians 8:7 (NKJV) - 7 But as you abound in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us--see that you abound in this grace also.

JESUS

Luke 14:12-14 (NKJV) - 12 Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.

13 "But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.

14 "And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

CONCLUSION:

Fruitfulness is a measure of Spiritual maturity.

Being fruitful means being a net GIVER or CONTRIBUTOR in all of these areas of fruitfulness rather than a net TAKER or CONSUMER.

You can never outgive God. He is looking for ways to bless and help you.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES

Remember that the aim of the small group is to foster discussion and community, rather than for the leader or one individual to preach to everyone.

1 - Often an **Icebreaker question** is a great way to start discussion. You could ask a question like:

- What were the highs or lows of your week?
- What is your earliest memory?
- If you had to describe yourself as one animal, what would it be and why?
- What is your favourite type of holiday destination?

2 - Next, **read the passage**. You can ask various people in the group to help by each reading a portion of the passage.

3 - These are the **main questions** to ask to understand the passage:

- What is the main message of this talk / passage?
Allow discussion and even diverging from the main topic if it is helpful.
- What did you find particularly helpful or challenging?
- What did you not fully understand?
- What can we do PRACTICALLY in response to this teaching?

4 - Close by offering **prayer** for each person.

- Ask, "how can we pray for you / each other now?"
- Ask each person to pray or you, as leader, pray for each person's need

The blessing and opportunity in Small Groups is the possibility for...

- Each person to contribute and/or ask questions,
- People to pray for each other and to ask for prayer,
- People to learn to use and grow in their gifts,
- Community, friendship and intimacy in relationships.

God Bless you in this very important ministry.