

# (John 15 #3) the Husbandman

by Ed Miller

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*In this sermon, Ed Miller explores the profound truths of John 15, emphasizing the role of God as the husbandman who prunes us for greater fruitfulness in our spiritual lives.*

**Duration:** 49:10

**Scripture:** Psalm 45:1-2, Matthew 6:33, John 15:1, John 15:16

**Topics:** "Fruit Of Obedience", "Soul Winning"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the last words of Jesus before His crucifixion, as recorded in John 15. He emphasizes the importance of these words and how they reveal how to live, grow, and produce lasting fruit that brings glory to God. The preacher shares a verse from Psalm 45 that describes his heart overflowing with a good theme and his desire to address his verses to the King. He also discusses the significance of fruit in the context of reproduction, evangelism, and soul-winning, highlighting how every living thing leaves its imprint on its offspring.

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## Transcript

I'll ask you to turn please to John chapter 15. Before we apply our indispensable principle of all Bible study, I want to share a verse with you that describes my heart this morning. It has many times described my heart, but I don't remember a time when my heart felt more like this passage.

It's in Psalm 45, and it's verses, actually it's verse 1, but the first part of verse 2 takes off and tells where I'll be heading. Psalm 45, 1, my heart overflows with a good theme. I address my verses to the King.

My tongue is the pen of a ready writer, and then looking up to the Lord, you're fairer than the sons of men. And from there, we're just going to praise Him. But that, I feel that this morning so much, that my heart is overflowing with a good theme.

And that my text is addressed to the King, and I'm ready to speak. I'm going to ask you please to apply with me that indispensable principle of all Bible study, total reliance upon the Holy Spirit. Though you know this, I'll tell you again, we do not enter God's presence when we bow our heads.

We have already been in the presence of the Lord. We are this moment in the presence of the Lord. As we sang, we acknowledge that presence when we bow.

So I'm asking you to acknowledge His presence with me, commit our time unto Him. Our Father, we do thank You that You're the one that has filled our hearts with a good theme. Thou art fairer than the sons of men.

And we pray that Thy fairness might be seen this morning. That we might meditate again upon the beauty of the Lord, the wonder of our Savior, and the grace that brought us into intimate union with Him. We thank You that the Holy Spirit is present to unveil the Lord to our hearts.

We would ask Thee to take the veil away, give us eyes that we might behold the Lord. We thank You that You're already doing it, and You're going to continue to do it, because we ask it in the precious and all-prevailing name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

John chapter 15. Let me just get before your hearts again very briefly. We won't review, especially since it is on tape, and I guess you can borrow those tapes and hear it, or get the tapes, or whatever.

So I'll just get it again before your hearts. We've been meditating on some precious truths from John chapter 15. These are some of the last words our Lord Jesus spoke the day before He died.

People listen to last words, final things. What are you going to say just before you leave? And as our Lord addressed His precious children, He unburdened Himself of some of the great truths that were on His heart. He had come from heaven to reveal how to live, how to grow, how to produce fruit that remains and brings glory to God.

Those were the things that were on His heart. In our little look at the precious things here, the first night we addressed that great statement in verse 1, I am the true vine. Our Lord Jesus, the true vine.

I suggested it probably includes at least these two things. I am the vine. You are not the vine.

I'm the true vine. Man is not the vine. I'm the source of life.

There is no life center in us. There's only life in Him. He's the true vine.

And the other thing it means is that everything God created divine to picture, everything in the natural creation, He is the divine original of that. That's just the shadow. The vine's just a picture.

It's just an illustration. And behind that, and when God created that, He intended, this will picture me in this way. And basically, we reduced it to this.

The vine is the environment of the branch. The vine is the sufficiency. It is the element.

It is the everything for the branch. And we talked about how the Lord is the Christian's environment, His very element. Last night, we looked together at the second truth.

What does it mean to abide in Christ in order to produce fruit? Abiding is the essential condition for all fruit-bearing. There's no exception to that. Although we didn't nail down, and I promised you we would today, the how.

How can I abide? We did hint at the two characteristics that are always present in the truth of abiding. Distrust of self. Proverbs says, he that trusts himself is a fool.

He that trusts his own heart is a fool. Well, don't get discouraged, because Psalm 103 says, fools cried and the Lord delivered. So, praise God, we can cry to the Lord.

And then the second is, abiding in the vine not only means a distrust of self. Without me, he can do nothing. But it also is a partaking of the life of the vine.

It's a partaking of the divine life, Christ Himself. That brings us this morning to another wonderful topic, and may God grace us. Verse 1 again, my father's the husbandman.

What does it mean? He prunes the fruitful branch. That's what we want to look at today. John 15, after what Jackie said, I think you'd all stampede me if I said.

So I'll read a few selected verses. You follow along in your Bible. Chapter 15, verse 1. I'm the true vine, my father's the husbandman.

Every branch in me that bears not fruit, he takes away. Every branch that bears fruit, he cleanses it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Already you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Verse 6, please. If a man abides not in me, he's cast forth as a branch and is withered. They gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will and it shall be done to you. Herein is my father glorified, that you bear much fruit. So shall you be my disciples.

And then one other verse, please. Verse 16. He did not choose me.

I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide. That whatever ye ask the Father in my name, he may give it unto you. Now let me suggest the lines that I'll follow this morning and sort of help you to see where I'm going.

For those that enjoy logical connection, I want to look at three things this morning. I want to look at the great truth. My father is the husband.

Then I want to look a little bit at fruit. What is... Then I want to look at what it means that he prunes the fruitful branch. And we'll end up again with looking at fruit.

In the way he prunes the branches, the secret is the key to how to abide. And so we'll touch on that and trust God to minister unto us. Alright, chapter 15, verse 1. I'm the true vine.

My father is the husbandman. I want to focus on that second phrase. My father is the husbandman.

My father is the vine dresser. I did a little research on the job. The ministry of the vine dresser.

I not only had that personal interview with a real live vine dresser, but I went to the library and I did some research, the public library, on pruning and vineyards and vine dressers and so on. He had a lot to do. I was amazed at how much a husbandman has to do.

It's his job to engraft the branches. It's his job to guard and protect the thing as it grows, to watch out for insects and mildew and all kinds of enemies, weather and animals and all that kind of thing. It's the vine dresser's job to dung the plant.

God ever dung you? He's dung me a few times. It's very precious when it's over. It's not exactly precious at the time.

The vine dresser's job to prune the plant. Now, John 15 doesn't get into all of those responsibilities. In fact, it only mentions two.

And so though the vine dresser does many things more than is mentioned here, God wants us to see these two. Verse 6, his ministry is to rid the vine of the dead wood. That's one part of his ministry.

Every branch in me that bears not fruit he takes away. We're going to focus on the second part, to prune the fruitful branch. I'm quite sure if you've studied this passage, one thing I appreciate about family ministries is that they do study in advance and read over these things.

And that's so precious to me, because I know God's preparing your heart and preparing my heart. And it doesn't scare me at all that you might know more than I do. I know you do, and that's fine.

Going over these things together, we just proclaim them, right? We've heard them. So what? They still thrill our spirits because they're true and they're real. But I'm sure if you've studied this, the branches that are cut off, that's a provocative section, you know, and you stop there and think, well now, what are those branches? And there's so many commentaries, and everybody's got their own view on that kind of thing.

I'm not going to straighten you out on that. But I'm just calling attention to the fact, you know, they're in the vine. Are they cut off? Can I lose my salvation? Can I be in the vine, cut off, and end up in the fire and all that kind of thing? I'm not going to settle the Arminian-Calvinistic debate, but here's a principle of Bible study that not only applies to this verse, but all Bible study, especially parables.

When you come to a story, an allegory, find out the main point that God the Holy Spirit is making. You come to a chapter like this, He is not talking about eternal destiny. He's not talking about heaven and hell.

He's talking about abiding and fruit-bearing, and fruit-bearing through abiding. When you get the main truth that the Holy Spirit is talking about, then take the facts of the allegory and tie them into the main truth. I don't know the full answer to the branches cut off.

I think I know a little bit. But I know by principle it means this. Any branch that does not abide in Him is worthless as far as fruit-bearing is concerned.

That teaches that much. You've got to admit that. It at least teaches that much.

And the idea of being cut off and bound in bundles and burnt is a wonderful picture of worthlessness. And I'll go that far. I think that's at least one thing it means.

Here's another suggestion. Apply the same principle to the dead branches that you apply to the fruit-bearing branches. Here's what I mean by that.

You say, if God prunes a fruitful branch, let's say God prunes a fruitful branch in your life, you wouldn't say, I'm done. He cut me off, boom, I'm done. That's the end.

You would say, hell no, I've got a few other branches, you know. And maybe He's going to work on a couple other branches. But we look at the first part, He cuts off the dry branches, and we say, oh, that poor guy, he's done.

He might have other branches. I have an idea. Maybe we all have both kinds of branches, and God cuts off those, and prunes these.

I'm not so sure that every Christian is one branch, and then whatever happens, it's gone. I think that we are in the vine, and we are branched out. Every Christian is branched, and the body is branched out all over the place.

And I have an idea that every Christian has his branches that are cut off, found in bundles, and burned up. And that will find its final manifestation at the judgment seat of Christ. Some would suggest maybe that it's the sin unto death, a Christian actually taken home.

I don't know all about that. But for our discussion this morning, let me suggest a double ministry of the husbandman. He cuts off the deadwood.

And by deadwood, whatever, if you don't abide in me, you can do nothing. Anything that comes from Ed Miller, anything that comes from flesh, anything that comes from self, I don't care what it looks like. It's deadwood.

It has got to go. Now, the Bible uses a word that describes all of that. The Bible calls it chastening.

Don't confuse chastening and pruning. It's not the same thing. Chastening is God dealing with the deadwood.

Chastening is God dealing with self. Chastening is when I'm not abiding in Christ. I'm doing it in my own energy, in my own strength.

That's got to go. That will go. And God is going to cut that off.

We've all seen those branches. Hebrews 12, 5 and 6. Those whom He loves, He chastens. And He chastens every son He receives.

That verse teaches this. As sure as God loves you, you will be chastened. That's what it is.

Everybody is going to have that. As sure as their love, as sure as their sons, they're going to be chastened. Hosea 2, 15.

I will give the valley of trouble as a door of hope. How do you like that verse? The valley of trouble as a door of hope. That's God chastening.

That's God dealing with the deadwood. Lamentations 3, 3. He does not afflict willingly the sons of men. Every time God chastens, He does the absolute minimum necessary in your life or mine to bring us to the place where we can produce fruit.

So chastening is one side, but we're not going to look at that. I want us to look at this, the other side. Pruning.

God prunes the fruitful branch. Chastening without a question. Psalm 119, 75.

In faithfulness thou hast afflicted me. We look back at the times He's chastened us, and we praise God. He cut off that limb.

He cut off that leaf. Dealt with that lumber in order that we might have fruit. But now, this other part.

If any branch bears fruit, implied fruit that comes from Christ, if anyone abides in such a way that they produce fruit, He said, sometime I have to cut that off. What is that all about? Pruning is not chastening. What happens in the crucible, what happens at the potter's wheel, what happens as the sparks fly upward, what happens in the smelter's furnace, that's chastening.

That's different. It needs to be studied, but not this morning. The amazing thing is that pruning has to do with those who are doing well.

Those who are doing, they're abiding in the vine. They're seeing Jesus. They're distrusting self.

They're growing in the Lord by the Spirit of God. Pruning is for the victorious. Pruning is for the overcome.

Pruning are for those who triumph in Christ Jesus every day. What is it? What does He do, and how do we understand what this is? Before we talk of the how of pruning, let me say a word about verse 1 again. My father is the husband.

I call attention to that statement because it's dripping with comfort for my heart, and I hope for yours too. I went to the library to do some research secular side of this whole idea of pruning. I found this wonderful book on pruning.

Oh, it's a wonderful book. But I opened the first page and I wanted to go home. Because the first page, it started with a picture.

The first page was a picture. And on the top it said, Pruning Instruments. That's how a book opens.

Knives. All kinds of knives. All shapes.

Curved knives. Big knives. Little knives.

Scissors. Big scissors. Little scissors.

Lopping scissors. Two-handed scissors. There were saws.

Axes. Hatchets. Hoes.

Amatics. Hooks. Shovels.

And I went, I don't want to be pruned. I just saw the first page. And I thought, Oh, Lord.

Pruning. And I came back and I opened the Scriptures and I read that first verse, I am the husbandman. And my heart thrilled that those tools were not in your hand.

The pruner better know what he was doing. I was amazed to read about pruning. A lot of damage can be done by mispruning.

A plant can be dwarfed forever if it's mispruned. Fruit trees can be set back 20 years if they're mispruned. Timing is so important.

If the tree is dormant, you prune it one way. If the sap is flowing, you prune it another way. Sometimes it's total amputation.

Cut it off. Other times, it's just sort of thinning out and heading back and pulling off the suckers. I read a chapter on pruning roots.

Roots. They dig in the soil and they cut away some of the roots. It's all part of pruning.

There's a way to prune saplings and a way to prune older trees. Sometimes nothing is cut off. Sometimes it's just cut.

It's not cut off. It's just cut to let the spray in. Sometimes it's a round cut.

Sometimes it's an elliptical cut. I'm not pretending I learned how to prune by reading that book. But after my trip to the library, I came back my heart rejoicing.

My father is the husband. He knows when to prune. He knows how to prune.

He knows where to cut. He knows when to cut. He knows how deep to cut.

I'll tell you one thing. I wouldn't feel safe if the shears were in my hand. If God said, alright, Ed Miller, I'm going to give you the scissors.

Now, you've cut off everything superfluous in your life. That's not going to work because I love my lumber and leaves too much. I'm going to be so gentle with me.

I'm too stupid to know what has to go. And as I suggested, I love you, but I'm glad that God has not given the pruning shears to the church. He has kept the pruning shears in His own hands.

I love... I am the true vine, but I also love... My father is the husband. He is the... Whatever pruning is, and we'll look at it, but whatever it is, it's from His hand. And you can feel safe when you're being pruned.

Only God knows how to prune. This idea of pruning in order to bring forth fruit, what is the end toward which the husbandman moves as he prunes the vine? What is the goal in his heart? Where is he heading as he goes after the vine and prunes the vine? John just says, fruit, more fruit, much fruit, remaining fruit, fruit that abides and brings God glory. Fruit.

What's fruit? It depends on who you talk to. You know, Christians have their own ideas about everything. You get with one group of Christians and they say, fruit, are you bearing fruit? And they register, am I leading souls to Jesus? That's fruit.

Evangelism, soul winning, bringing people to Christ. I did a little word study and it was interesting. Sixty-seven times in the New Testament, the word fruit is used never once for bringing souls to Jesus.

Just throw that out there. What is fruit? Some say, well, Galatians 5, that's easy. Galatians 5 tells us what fruit is.

Galatians 5.22, the fruit of the Spirit. Our sister shared this morning. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

That's what fruit is. Some say, well, you know, it includes that, but it's not really that. It's works.

Because a tree is known by its fruit. By their fruit ye shall know them. Their behavior, by their actions, by what they do.

Their works. What's fruit? Is it soul winning? Is it the fruit of the Spirit? Is that why He proves us? Is it behavior? Is it our probity, our carriage as we walk, our conversation in the world? Is it all of that? I'm suggesting it's far more wonderful than that. Let me state it right out so we don't play games and then try to develop it for you.

It's not only here in John, but later the epistles as they begin to unfold this. If divine is Christ, if the life is the Holy Spirit, Christ in terms of the life of God, what do you think the fruit is? Listen to Galatians 4.19. Paul, my little children, I labor like a mother. I labor like a woman in travail until... Can you finish the verse? You're good.

The fruit. Until Christ be formed in you. And as the husbandman looks at the vine, he says, that's good, but it's not Christ.

Not yet. That's good, but it's not Jesus. He puts you back.

One of the things I learned from my great neighbor, my vineyard keeper, I asked him. In fact, I got frightened when I saw pruning. I saw the results of pruning.

That thing looked like a tomato plant just standing up there. Everything was cut off. But he patted the vine on the bottom.

He said, look how fat. The branches were getting thin, but the vine was getting fat. He said, I'm going to get a good harvest.

That's pruning, man. Cut you back to the vine. Cut you back to the vine.

Let me take you back, if you'll bear with me, to science a little bit. God creates this organic world all as a picture. He creates every living thing to depend upon its environment.

Whether it's a bug, or whether it's a fish, or whether it's a bird, or whether it's an animal, or whether it's a plant, whether it's man, everything depends upon its environment. But the scientists say, it's not only the organism and the environment. There's something else that needs to be studied.

And God has written it in nature. It's not just the organism and the environment, but the scientist also looks at the heredity, the genetics of the organism. In fact, in our society, there's a great battle raging among the psychologists on the behavior of people.

What affects them more? Is it their environment, or is it their heredity? Is it their genetics? And that whole thing is raging. There's no question in all of life. Every living thing that God has ever made.

And you can look at my grandson if you don't believe it. The image of the parent is stamped upon the child. The image of the parent is stamped upon the fruit.

All life tends toward one end, and that is to be conformed to its parents. That's where life is moving. That's what it's all about.

Every living thing that ever came into the world was compelled to stamp its life, its image upon its offspring. That's how God made it. I was amazed to read when life begins, even to the most trained scientific eye, it all looks the same.

I was so amazed to read that. That little blob of protoplasm looking like the white of an egg, transparent, just a jelly made up of hydrogen and nitrogen. And that mystery called life.

When it first forms, at the beginning, under the most powerful microscope, they can't tell if it's going to be a carrot or a mushroom or an oak or an elephant or a turtle or a man. At the beginning, it's just... But inside that protoplasm, God has put a seed. God has put a stamp.

And amazingly, bird life goes toward the birds, and turtle life goes toward the turtles, and bug life goes toward the bugs, and mushroom life goes toward the mushroom. Sort of like what God said in the beginning, will bring forth after its kind. God has written that in nature.

God has put that in nature. I call attention to that because we just sort of read these things la la la. People get all upset about the first part of 1 John 3.9. Forget the first part of 3.9. Look at the second part.

1 John 3.9. No one who is born of God practices sin. He cannot sin. See the reason? Because His seed.

You know what that word is? You know what that word is. His seed. His semen.

His sperm. God's seed remains in Him. We talk about receiving the Lord and we get life.

When you receive the Lord, God's seed was put in you and you have been stamped with the image of God. The image of God has a name. It's Jesus.

You have been stamped. He is the image of God and all life will bring forth after its kind. Am I ever going to be conformed to Christ? Yes, you are.

You know why? Because you have the seed of God in you and life produces life. Bird life produces birds and feathers and beaks and lily life produces lilies. You have God's life.

You don't have to concern yourself another moment from now until you go to heaven about whether you'll be conformed to Christ. You will indeed. Life moves, develops, and that's what the fine dresser is about.

He knows that life is in there and he's waiting for that life to become manifest in his son. Brothers and sisters in Christ, you are born of God. You are born from above.

You are begotten of God. God's workmanship. His seed is in you.

And that's what it means that you're being changed from one degree of glory to another, being conformed to the image of Him who is in you. As I abide in Jesus, as you abide in Christ, the life begins to flow and we begin to change until Christ is formed. Christ is grown too.

And someday He'll stand in you as this great cluster. Christ in full stature in your life. Glory.

Christian life is not chasing after a few gifts. It's not struggling to be holy. It's not some army that God sends out to win the world.

Christian life is abiding in Jesus Christ so that the Holy Spirit can work in me and produce Christ in my life. Christ in your life. Precious truths.

Now what does the husbandman lop off then? If I abide in Christ and He brings fruit, then what's to prune? That looks good. That's Christ. Leave it alone.

Husbandman, let me teach you how to do your work. May God teach us. Why would God cut off His own fruit in order to have fruit? And what is the fruit that He cuts off? You see, the end toward which the husbandman moves is to see His Son.

To see Christ. And as he moves toward the vine, God, of course, He chastens those. All those tools, by the way, on page 1 are for chastening.

There's only one tool for pruning. And I'll show you what that is. But anyway, when I abide in Christ and I'm trusting the Lord, God begins to work in my heart.

Have you noticed as you go on in the Lord you love more than you used to love? Love is a wonderful thing. It's not Christ. Notice you're more patient than you used to be? Sometimes.

Patience is a wonderful thing. You pray to the Lord as you're growing in the Lord. Say, Lord, please, send help.

You ever pray that? Send help from the sanctuary. Help me, I need help. Does He send help? Oh, He does every time.

That's fruit. That's fruit from abiding in Christ. He sends help.

But that's different from I am your help. And after a while, He's not going to send help anymore. Because He wants you to know I am your help.

And you begin to see Christ and He lops off those things that are not Him. They're good. They're blessings.

He's lopping off the blessings. You pray, Lord, give me strength. Does He give you strength? He gives you strength.

That's not the same thing as Christ is my strength. Did you ever pray for a song in the night? Did He give it to you? Sure He did. Bless God, He gives you a song in the night.

But that's not the same thing as Christ is my strength and my song. And He's become my salvation. And as you go on in the Lord, all those wonderful things God gives is fruit.

He must later lop off so that you'll know the sufficiency of Christ. He gives deliverance. But He is the deliverer.

Greater than deliverance is the one who delivers. Greater than healing is the one who heals. Greater than the gift, than any gift, is the giver, the bestower of the gift.

And as you go on in the Lord, sometimes you get confused. You say, Lord, I don't understand. You said, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask and God will give it.

So I did and I got wisdom. Now you lop it off. He said, I know my child because I am made unto you wisdom and righteousness and sanctification from God and redemption.

Lord, give me peace. He said, alright, I'll give you peace. Peace that passes understanding.

Enjoy it. Clip, clip, clip. Because He is our peace.

Oh, I tell you, you don't have peace until you have it in Christ Jesus. You don't have righteousness until you have it in Him. Or health or strength or deliverance or any other thing.

Praise God for His blessings. I couldn't say this everywhere, but I can say it here. I trust I can.

Praise God for His blessings. But His blessings are only suckers. They're suckers.

Preparing you for the real fruit. And He's going to nip those in the bud. He's going to clip them off.

He has to clip them off. Contrary to the library book in page 1 that scared the tar out of me, pruning is not scary. In fact, it's fun.

Let me mention the pruning scissors that God uses and get ready to wrap all this up. Did you notice as you read this that there's verses He said, what in the world? He just threw that in the middle. That doesn't belong.

Like verse 3, you're clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you. Verse 7, if my words abide in you. What's all this with the Word? Pruning and the Word? I'm suggesting that the only tool God will ever prune His fruit from your life.

Here's the scissors. Here's the lopping shears. He prunes you, listen, by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

This Word that is a two-edged sword, sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing the soul, the Spirit coming. You begin to study the Word. Now look, pruning.

Here's pruning. You study the Bible to see the Lord. I remember the day God pruned me.

I had certain blessings in my life. And He revealed Christ as the end of the law to everyone that believed. I could almost hear the limbs hit the floor.

My life was changed. You know how you're changed? By seeing Him. You're cleaned through the Word.

That's His scissors. And every time you see Christ in the Word, something goes off. And you get more and more like Christ.

I love pruning. I was scared when I saw it. Now, what is pruning? It's seeing Christ in the Word of God, and every revelation of Christ liberates you and sets you free.

I remember when I saw Him as the mediator of the new covenant. Half my prayer life went out the window. When you see Him, you're changed.

And these things drop off. What drops off? All those things that are from Him, but not Him. Because He wants you to have fruit, more fruit, much fruit, abiding fruit.

And the men of God, the elders in this church, labor in love until Christ be formed in you. That's what it's all about. Pruning is glorious.

One final point. This idea of fruit, I told you it's so easy. Just don't trust yourself.

Just trust the Lord and drink from Him and forgive His life and let Him work in your life and cut off the dead wood and prune the blessings until finally it's just Him. Fruit is redemptive. You know the last thing in the

world an apple tree wants? Apples.

What in the world is an apple tree going to do with apples? What's a grapevine going to do with grapes? A grapevine probably hates the grapes. And I don't mean that. But fruit is for somebody else.

It's not for the plant. The plant produces for somebody else. It's not for them at all.

It's redemptive. I think one reason God chose grapes, the grapevine to show fruit, is because it contains in it a corporate picture. You don't go to a grocery store and say, Lily, Lily, come here, look at this grape.

You're not too impressed with one grape of grapes together. And then when the grapes, this is the real church, when the grapes are mashed together to become jelly and jam, see that's the local church, and they're put together and they become wine for the community, that's the testimony. That's the glory of the vine.

That's the reputation for the vine. And it's for others. You know the purpose of fruit, according to my good botany book? I almost shouted hallelujah when I read that botany.

It's not the Bible, but I'll tell you, it sure opened my eyes to a lot. The seed is in the fruit. And the fruit is the womb of the seed.

It's the future of the plant. It's the next generation. It's reproduction.

It's evangelism. It's soul winning. When is the fruit ripe? And the answer is when the seed is ready.

That's when it's ripe. And that's why the vine dresser is so anxious that you produce not just the blessing, but when Christ is there, you're full of seed. You're full of life.

And everywhere you go, you drop life, you drop life, reproduction, and then that's evangelism. You know why it's so stupid to fake it, to fake fruit, to be plastic, to be imitation, to play a game, because fake fruit doesn't have the seed. Fake fruit doesn't have the life.

You play your game, you try to impress one another. The goal of it all is that His seed is in you and His seed will. You don't have to worry about growing.

You don't have to worry about fruit bearing. You don't have to worry about being conformed to Christ. His seed is in you.

Drink Jesus. Enjoy Jesus. Draw from that life.

Live that life. And Christ will be produced in you. And understand when God comes into your life, nothing goes that is not gained to lose and lost to keep.

Everything that goes needs to go. And don't be too surprised when you've said, I've been praying for strength and He just doesn't give it anymore. I look for help and where was it helped? Don't get confused.

God is pruning you so that you might come to know Him who is your help, who is your strength, who is your patience, who is your song. It's Him. And you begin to live in Him.

And you're going to bless everybody that comes into your shadow. They're going to touch your life and they're going to touch fruit. Fruit is life.

Don't play games. Don't imitate. Don't be a hypocrite.

Don't fake fruit. Plastic fruit is nothing. It's not fruit.

I don't even want to eat a seedless grape. It doesn't exist. It's not real.

Fruit has seed. Seed is life. Life is Christ Jesus.

I've discharged the burden that's on my heart to share with you. Christ is divine. The Holy Spirit is the life.

The manifestation of Christ is the fruit. God work it in our hearts. Let's pray.

Father, thank You for Your wonderful Word. And we just pray that You might make these things so real in our life as our sister suggested so that we can feel it. We ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11435.mp3>

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