

FARMERS FOR THE LORD

Day Five: THE HARVEST

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES - BEARING FRUIT HEAVEN

John 15

This lesson will focus on the end result of having an honest and good heart. We will talk about bearing fruit for the Lord. Finally, we will study the harvest that awaits the faithful – a home in Heaven.

Introduction:

1. The Parable of the Sower teaches us about the kinds of hearts that men may possess.
2. These types of hearts are illustrated by four different types of soil onto which seeds fell.
3. The success or failure of the planted seed was dependent upon the kind of soil in which it was planted.
4. By learning about these soils, we can learn the kind of heart (mind) that is needed to bear fruit for the Lord.
5. The first type of soil was the **wayside ground**.
6. The second type of soil was the **stony ground**.
7. The third type of soil is the **thorny ground**.
8. The fourth type of soil is the **good ground**.
9. The harvest will be reaped when the Lord returns.

I. The Importance of Maturing (Galatians 5:22-23)

- A. After a seed is planted, with time, patience, and work, it will grow into a plant that produces a harvest of fruit.
- B. When the seed of God's Word is planted in an honest and good heart, it will produce a harvest of spiritual fruit.
- C. But, in order for that harvest to be reaped, patience and effort must be used to cause growth and maturity in the Christian.
- D. Part of the way a child of God bears fruit is by adding and maturing in the character traits called the "fruit of the Spirit."
 1. Love
 2. Joy
 3. Peace
 4. Longsuffering (or, Patience)
 5. Gentleness (or, Kindness)
 6. Goodness
 7. Faith (or, Faithfulness)
 8. Meekness
 9. Temperance (or, Self-Control)

- E. The Christian should also grow by adding and maturing the “Christian graces” (2 Peter 1:5-8).
 - 1. Faith
 - 2. Virtue
 - 3. Knowledge
 - 4. Temperance
 - 5. Patience
 - 6. Godliness
 - 7. Brotherly Kindness
 - 8. Love (or, Charity)
- F. By developing these characteristics, we produce fruit in our lives that is pleasing to the Lord.
- G. Yet, we must remember that it takes time, effort, and patience to mature in these spiritual fruits.

II. The Importance of Bearing Fruit

(John 15:1-8)

- A. It is important to produce the fruit of maturity in our lives as Christians.
- B. However, it is just as important to bear fruit by teaching others the Gospel of Christ.
- C. Jesus taught that He is the true vine and that Christians are the branches that are attached to and that grow out from that vine.
 - 1. Think of the process of growing grapes.
 - 2. The grapes are produced in bunches on individual branches.
 - 3. However, those branches can only produce grapes if they are attached to the vine.
 - 4. The vine grows from the ground where it has access to the water and nutrients needed to give life to the branches and the grapes.
 - 5. Without the vine, there would be no branches or grapes!
- D. As branches, Christians must make sure they remain connected to Jesus, the vine.
 - 1. This requires study of His Word.
 - 2. This requires faithfulness to His Word.
 - 3. This requires walking in the light (1 John 1:6-10).
- E. As Christians, it is our responsibility to evangelize – teach others the Gospel (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; 2 Tim. 2:2; etc.).
 - 1. When someone obeys the Gospel, a new Christian is produced.
 - 2. Thus, we have borne fruit for the Lord.
 - 3. Yet, we must remember that all of the glory goes to Him – for He is the vine, the source of the Gospel and salvation.
- F. We should want others to know of the salvation that we have found in Christ.
- G. We should want others to know of the hope that we have found in Christ.
- H. We should want others to know the way to have the same blessings and promises that we have in Christ.
- I. Therefore, we must teach others the Gospel of Christ!

III. The Harvest of Heaven

(1 Corinthians 3:6-8)

- A. Paul wrote of the work of men as planting and watering – helping the seed to find good soil and to take root and grow.
- B. This they did by preaching and teaching the Gospel of Christ.
- C. He also wrote that each person would receive a reward based upon their own individual labor.
- D. Ultimately, this reward is eternal life in Heaven.

1. Colossians 1:5-6 – When the Gospel produces fruit in our lives, we have the hope of Heaven.
 2. Colossians 3:23-25 – We should give our best in all that we do because we labor for the Lord and will receive an inheritance from Him.
 3. Matthew 5:12 – When we produce the fruit of the beatitudes, we have a sure reward in Heaven.
 4. Romans 2:6-7 – Faithful lives are rewarded with eternal life in Heaven.
 5. 2 Corinthians 5:1-2 – We have a new body that will live eternally in Heaven.
 6. 1 Peter 1:3-5 – The faithful have an inheritance reserved in Heaven.
- E. We must ever remember the inspired description of our home in Heaven – the new heavens and earth (Revelation 21 – 22).

Conclusion:

1. In order to bear fruit for the Lord, we must have an honest and good heart – good soil that will receive the seed of the Word of God.
2. In order to bear fruit for the Lord, we must patiently work to grow and mature as we live the Christian life.
3. In order to bear fruit for the Lord, we must teach the Gospel to others – that they may have the opportunity to find salvation and hope of Heaven.
4. If we do these things and bear fruit for the Lord, we have the assurance of an eternal home in Heaven.