

The Abiding Life (Part 1) John 15:1-17

"For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit.

The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart."
Luke 6:43-45

1. The Gardner is God the Father. Vs 1
2. The Vine is the Lord Jesus Christ. Vs 5
3. The Vine-Branches are Followers of Christ. Vs 5
4. The Vineyard is wherever God is at work. Vs. 16
5. "Abiding" is resting in our dependency in Christ & yielding to His complete control. Vs. 4-5, 7-8

To walk by the Spirit is to live with moment-by-moment dependency on and sensitivity to the initial promptings of the Holy Spirit.

As the branch draws its life from the vine, so we draw life from Christ.

"Meno" – to remain, dwell, stay put.

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?
Galatians 3:3

And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God...
Galatians 2:20

6. Individuals who bear "no fruit" reveal they have never been transformed by grace.

- A. They will be "thrown away."

John 6:37

- B. They will "dry up."

"Some seed fell on rocky places, where there wasn't much soil. The plants came up quickly, because the soil wasn't deep. When the sun came up, it burned the plants. They dried up because they had no roots."
Mark 4:5-6

C. They will be "gathered."

...First collect the weeds. Tie them in bundles to be burned. Then gather the wheat. Bring it into my storeroom. Matthew 13:30

D. They will be "cast into the fire."

"The Son of Man will send out his angels... They will also get rid of all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace. There people will sob and grind their teeth. Matthew 13:41-42

E. They will be "burned."

"Then they will go away to be punished forever..."

Matthew 25:46

7. "Fruit" is Spirit-created Character & Conduct.

Vs. 8

Charles Stanley quote

"Fruit is a public testimony to a believer's sensitivity to and dependency on the Holy Spirit. It is the telling sign. Fruit sets the abiders apart from the producers. ...When we see fruit in a life, we know without a doubt that the Holy Spirit has custody over that particular child of God.

The closer you get to believers who are truly walking in the Spirit, the better they look. There is nothing plastic about them. You don't get the impression that they are hiding something. They radiate integrity. You get the impression you could trust them with your most intimate secret. You may even find yourself opening up to them in a way that is uncharacteristic for you.

Intimidation is not their game. They don't rely on personality and trumped-up enthusiasm to win you over. They seem to be at peace with who they are. ...For that reason, you may feel drawn to them. They are the people you find yourself wanting to be like, not because of a particular skill or talent, but because of the depth of their character.

We are not talking about perfection. In fact, you will hear more apologies from the lips of those who walk by the Spirit than any other group of people. Their sensitivity to the Spirit provides them with an uncanny ability to know when they have offended or hurt someone. Their internal security allows them to respond quickly once they realize their sin or error in judgment. They are not afraid to admit their faults... However, they are aware that they have within them the power to rise above their fleshly appetites and desires.

The thing that sets the fruit of the Spirit apart from its counterpart is that the fruit of the Spirit is not environmentally sensitive. This counterfeit fruit has its root system deeply embedded in the surrounding environment... when the environment

changes, the fruit withers and dies...That explains why "wonderful Christian people" can turn into such ogres. ...As long as a person's character is tied into their surroundings, the character is fragile at best... Those people really are not in control of their lives. They are slaves to their environment. " Charles Stanley