

BEARING FRUIT

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit

(John 15:1-6).

I don't know how many of you plant a garden, but it is one of my favorite things to work on outdoors! In the spring we have to work up the soil and get it ready. . . then the fun begins, planting season is upon us, and it is a wonderful time of year! After the planting we watch and wait for the first sign of life from underneath the cool dark ground. Pretty soon little green leaves start to poke through and grow. There is great satisfaction in knowing that things are growing and that the harvest is coming!!

A few weeks ago, I looked at our garden and took a picture of it. This was probably the most beautiful our garden would look this year. Everything was in bloom and so lush and green.

Once the harvest of the fruit of the vine begins, things start to look a little messy and not nearly as beautiful as they once were. Last week I picked green beans and as I went through the bushes I would flip them to the right and to the left looking for all the beans that like to hide underneath. After I was finished with them it looked like a windstorm had gone through. But the beans, the fruit of those bushes, were some of the best beans I have grown in a while. There were not many places where the bean beetles had eaten and not any mold or mildew on them. I got 3 five-gallon buckets of beans and I was so thankful for the harvest!!

What fruit are we, as believers, to bear? We are to bear fruit of the Spirit of the Lord. When we begin our Christian walk, we start out beautifully, we start out fresh and lush. Everything is well for we have found our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and it is so exciting to be growing in Him!! So, we grow and grow, and fruit starts to happen in our lives. We start to see others beside us growing and it is a wonderful thing!! Then the harvest!! The harvesting of our fruit! When the Lord begins to look for the fruit in

our lives, flipping us to the right or to the left, checking us out, leaving us looking like a windstorm has come through!!

The great thing about beans is that you can get a second picking and even a third picking from one bush!! They are terrific fruit bearers!! Sometimes I can get 30 to 40 gallons of beans off of two rows!!

Bearing fruit for the kingdom is not as easy. It can leave us looking like a mess. It can leave us wondering what just happened!! The Lord is looking for fruit in our lives, He is looking for those who know what they are here for, those whose main purpose in life is to bear much fruit for His kingdom! He is looking for us to take the gospel of His Son Jesus to all the world!!

Scripture says that if the branch does not bear fruit the Lord takes it away. There are many in churches today who are just plain comfortable sitting in their seats and listening to the preacher, going home and not even thinking about what they need to do with the Word they just received. How sad to think that there are those who call themselves Christians and have no personal relationship with Christ and through their choice are cut off from the Father.

Scripture goes on to say that if we do bear fruit, He prunes us so that we bear MORE fruit!! How about that!! How does the Lord prune us?? Sometimes by allowing us to be flipped from side to side, allowing us to go through tests and trials. Sometimes we look pretty messy . . . but that will cause us to bear more fruit if we can hold steady to what we know is true. If we abide in Christ, as it says in **John 15:4, "Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in ME!"**

ABIDE IN ME!! Jesus says we cannot bear fruit without Him. We must have a close personal relationship with Him. We must KNOW HIM!! We, as God's children were not meant to just sit. We were meant for more than that. God calls us to go and make disciples, to bear fruit, to feed the world with the WORD OF GOD!!

Have you examined the fruit of your walk with Christ lately?? Have you even thought about it? Remember what you are here for. Remember what our Lord created you for: bearing fruit . . .

allowing the fruit of the Spirit to be on display in your faith walk (**Galatians 5:22-23**).

Telling others about His great love and sacrifice and sharing your testimony with others so that the Holy Spirit can work in their lives and bring them to a saving knowledge of Jesus. We want them to be in eternity with Him and you!!

Abide in Christ, live in Him, trust in Him, believe in Him and be the **fruit bearer** that He has called you to be!!