

THE FRUITFULNESS OF CHRISTIANS

Lk. 13:6-9

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Shrubs, trees, bushes have different uses: lumber, ornament, shade, cork, resin, fruits, etc.
 - 1. What would our reaction be to a tree which was serving no purpose whatsoever?
 - 2. Wouldn't it be about the same as the reaction of this man who owned this vineyard?
- B. What is Jesus teaching in Lk 13:6-9?
- C. Is he teaching a lesson on horticulture, or a lesson dealing with spiritual truths,
- D. Look now at the fruitfulness of Christians

DISCUSSION:

I. GOD EXPECTS HIS PEOPLE TO BE FRUITFUL

- A. Israel produced sour grapes instead of valuable fruit Isa 5:1-7
- B. Parable of the sower blesses the productive persons Matt 13:18-23
- C. Jesus destroys the unfruitful tree Matt 21:18-19
- D. The vine and the branches teaches the necessity of fruit bearing Jhn 15:1-8

II. WHAT FRUIT IS TO BE PRODUCED?

- A. Convinced that we must be productive of fruit or perish, let's now determine Just what fruit is to be produced.
- B. Fruit bearing, as here used, is a metaphor meaning that God's people are to develop Christian character and perform the works of God
- C. Fruit bearing defined by Scripture:
 - 1. Fruit of the Spirit Gal 5:22,23
 - 2. Add these things - be not unfruitful 2Pet 1:5-8
 - 3. Bearing fruit in every good work Col 1:10
 - 4. Fruit from work Phil 1:20-26
 - 5. Fruit in goodness, righteousness and truth Eph 5:9
- D. Difference in individual ability Note: Matt 25:15

III. HOW IS SUCH FRUIT PRODUCED?

- A. There must be a **determination** to be productive
 - 1. Fruit is not produced accidentally
 - 2. The farmer must commit himself to the task through obtaining proper equipment, preparing land, buying seed, planting, cultivating, harvesting the crop.
 - 3. So must the Christian resolve within himself to do whatever is necessary to produce good fruit
- B. Prayer is a prerequisite to fruit bearing
 - 1. The farmer cannot do it all; God provides the soil seed, sunshine and rain.

- 2. The Christian cannot be fully productive without depending on God for His help Note: Jas 1: 5 and Jesus' attitude in Jhn 5:19,30
- C. A growing knowledge of God's word is necessary
 - 1. The branch cut off from its source of supply dies and a tree cut off from its roots dies.
 - 2. The Christian who cuts off or seriously limits his intake of the spiritual milk, the bread of life and the meat of the word cannot be productive of proper fruit 1Pet 2:2; Jhn 6:35,48; Heb 5:12-14
- D. Active, aggressive work is necessary
 - 1. The farmer who determines the kind of crop, asks God's help, secures his seed and knows how to plant; yet rest in the house and leaves the seed in the barn never produces a crop.
 - 2. So with the Christian. We must commit what knowledge and ability we have to action and will thereby find it increased and producing fruit.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Fruit is a result of planning, prayer and hard work. We must not be discouraged if full fruit is not produced overnight. Note the patience of the dresser of the vineyard in our text.
- B. Fruit is our HOPE - next year's harvest is in this year's seed. Only by such perpetual fruit production can the individual or the church grow.
- C. A tree is known by its fruit Matt 7:15-20.
- D. What kind of fruit are you producing now, or are you producing fruit?
- E. If you are producing fruit or if you are not producing fruit, what will you do about it?