

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FRUITFUL? – PART ONE

THIS IS YOUR RADIO FRIEND, PASTOR AMARA UWAEZIOZI, BRINGING YOU: **“HEALING WORDS FROM THE MASTER”**, A RADIO PROGRAM OF THE MASTER’S VESSEL MINISTRY WHOSE AIM IS TO LET YOU KNOW THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND GOD’S UNSEARCHABLE RICHES AVAILABLE TO YOU.

Welcome, beloved friends, to another day. I hope the last series of messages have blessed your heart. Today, we will continue on the issue of fruitfulness. We talked about the biblical principles of fruitfulness. We will pursue it further today.

Today we will be talking on, What Does it mean to be Fruitful? What really does it mean to be fruitful?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FRUITFUL?

Let us pray.

PRAYER

Heavenly FATHER, the FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, we bless YOU for yet another opportunity to bring YOUR Word to YOUR people. And I pray, O GOD OUR father, that in this teaching YOU will motivate YOUR people to aspire to a life of spiritual fruitfulness that will glorify YOU...in JESUS’ Mighty Name we pray. AMEN!

Our bible reading will be taken from Galatians 5:22.

Galatians 5:22

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

So let’s see,

- i. The fruits of the Spirit. We can see fruitfulness in two ways: one way is to bear fruits of the spirit as stated in the verse we’ve read – Galatians 5:22 says, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.*

Fruits therefore refer to good deeds: good character.

The bible uses fruits and good deeds interchangeably. Good deeds depict the character – the attributes of GOD.

Titus 3:14 says,

¹⁴ *And let us also learn to maintain good works, for necessary uses, that that they be not unfruitful.*

That they be not unfruitful. When these things are not there you are unfruitful: when there is no love, when there is no joy, when there is no peace; when there is no patience, kindness – the person is unfruitful. It doesn't matter how rich he is – he is just unfruitful spiritually. So to be fruitful is to have the fruit of The HOLY SPIRIT.

- ii. Winning souls is also fruitfulness. We can also see fruitfulness in terms of ministry, especially our evangelistic efforts. Paul talks about his evangelistic efforts as fruitful labor: fruitful labor.

Philippians 1:22

²² *If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know!*

We are going to concentrate today on the second aspect of fruitfulness. We'd in the last message concentrated much on the first aspect of fruitfulness: the character of GOD – having the image of GOD in terms of character development and attributes.

HOW TO BE FRUITFUL

1. Allow GOD to prune you. Prune! Allow GOD to prune you. GOD prunes us so that we can bear more fruits. In John 15:1, reading from The New International Version, the Bible says,

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

JESUS says, I Am the true vine; MY FATHER is the gardener.

² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

So pruning is the removal of parts of plants, usually branches or branch tips, to relieve the burden on the remaining parts of the plants, to cut out diseased or broken parts, to increase the quantity and quality of flowers or fruit.

Removing unproductive parts of our lifestyle will be similar to pruning. When JESUS prunes us HE cuts out parts of our lifestyle that saps away our attention or energy that can be better channeled to bearing fruits for HIM.

For example, one may be addicted to a certain hobby that takes away so much of his time and energy: that you do not have time for GOD's work. When GOD prunes that person HE may take away that addiction – that desire to this hobby; or even make him never to have access to it again.

I've seen Christians who are so addicted to football, they are addicted to film. When you see where they are carrying away from their houses bags and bags of films they have bought and watched, you will wonder. But they don't have time to attend evangelism in the church. Whenever the church announces a day of evangelism they will not be there – and they are Christians!

2. Apostle Paul also speaks of the importance of laying aside all our hindrances so that we can serve GOD effectively. That's what we read in Hebrews 1.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles us. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,

“Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses”: referring to those who have successfully ran the race – the Christian race. They are at the grandstand watching us. We’re advised to throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, so that we can run with perseverance the race that is marked out for us.

Removing bad aspects of our character is our next subtopic under allowing GOD to prune us.

To prune us may mean GOD removing bad aspects of our character. Pruning is not just cutting off unproductive parts of our lifestyle. It can also involve cutting away the bad parts of our character so that we can be better witnesses for JESUS.

The bible tells a story about a person whose character was so bad. Nobody listened to him: and when he talks about GOD. His name is Lot; and he’s Abraham’s nephew.

Lot’s testimony was so bad that when he warned his relatives about GOD’s judgment they thought he was only joking.

In Genesis 19:14 the bible says,

¹⁴ So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, “Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!”

[But notice what the bible says,]

But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

If Christians will show that we have a higher standard of living, perhaps more people will be willing to become Christians. Very often we show that being a Christian is no different. We also gossip as they do; we

cheat as they do; we lie as they do. People look at our bad character and do not want to become Christians.

We need to ask GOD to prune away all those bad threats that we are having so that people can see the character of JESUS in us.

A family walked into a church, and they saw a sister: a supposedly sister, leading in worship, leading in choruses. They just packed their bags and baggages and left. When we inquired why they left they said, as long as that sister was in that church they will not attend. This particular sister that fights in the market, she insults people in the market – fights in the market. They come into the church, they see sister leading in songs, they walked away.

Allow GOD to prune the bad aspects of your character so that you can bear fruit.

3. Remain in JESUS or abide in JESUS.

John 15:4-6.

⁴ *Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.*

⁵ *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.*

So we are told many times if we want to be fruitful we have to remain in JESUS. It is only when we remain in JESUS that we draw on HIS strength and passion. This allows us to continue in HIS work; and this allows us to bear fruit.

Friends, we will terminate here today and we will continue next week.

Let us pray.

PRAYER

Heavenly FATHER, since it is YOUR Will to make us fruitful, I pray, Mighty FATHER, that YOU will motivate my hearers, especially those who have received salvation and are sanctified by the Word of GOD, that they will move up to the steps of being fruitful...in JESUS Mighty Name I pray. AMEN!