

Fruit Producer

Welcome to True Disciple message #26. This is Rod Nichols and I've got a question for you. Are you a fruit producer? That's what we're going to be discussing in this message.

In John 15:8 Jesus says, "When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father."

True disciples are to be fruit producers. So, what does this mean? Let's step back a few verses to the beginning of John 15. Here Jesus talks about being the true vine, we are branches off the vine, and Father God is the gardener. The gardener prunes the branches that bear fruit, so they can produce more.

Yes, Jesus did love His parables.

Okay, what does this mean in our lives? When we stay connected to Jesus, by reading, studying, and meditating in the Word of God and when we talk with Him every day in prayer, then we stay connected to the vine (Jesus). His Word is the life giving sap for us, the branches.

Now, as with all growing vines, they need to be pruned in order to produce more fruit. Father God does the pruning, by pointing out carnal or fleshly areas in our lives that we need to remove or He allows us to get into situations where we can readily see those fleshly areas that need pruning.

Let's go back to staying connected to the vine. In verse 10 Jesus says, "When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love." Part of remaining connected to the vine is to obey Jesus' commandments. So, what are those?

In Matthew 22:37-40, Jesus reveals them, "You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind." ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

As a true disciple of Jesus, we are to love God and love people. Back to John 15 for more on this. In verses 12-13 Jesus teaches a little more on loving others, “This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. ¹³ There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

So, we are to love other people in the same way that Jesus loved us. He loved unselfishly, willing to give up His own selfish wants and needs for those of others, to the point of dying on the cross for us. As true disciples, that’s how we’re to love others.

In John 15, verses 16-17, Jesus wraps up His message on producing fruit with, “You didn’t choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.”

This is confirmed in John 13:35, when Jesus said, “Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” The one another He was speaking of is the church, all believers in Jesus.

People will know that you are a true disciples of Jesus by your fruit of love for other believers. So, how do we produce this kind of love? Well, we can’t do it on our own. We need to first love God with everything we have and then let Him love through us.

Producing this fruit of love with other Christians will be difficult at times. I’ve had this love tested many times, as other Christians have gossiped about me, told lies about me, shared things that I shared with them in confidence, told me they would do something and then didn’t do it, didn’t honor contracts, got angry with me and said things that hurt, and so on. I have to say that I didn’t pass all of these tests and so Father God had to do some pruning and He is still at work in my life.

The pruning is sometimes painful, but worth the result of producing more and higher quality fruit. So, if you want to be a true disciple of Jesus, you must first, stay connected to the vine and second submit yourself to the pruning. When you fail to love God by sinning or you fail to love people by acting selfishly and self-focused, then ask God to prune you in that area and allow time for a complete pruning.

That's it for message #26. Just a reminder that all the other messages are available on the True Disciple site at www.TrueDisciple.Info. Just click on the Weekly Messages button under the current message on the front page. On the site you'll also find other video and audio messages, great worship videos, articles, and my blog. If you aren't receiving our email updates, click on the red starburst marked Email List in the header on the front page and we will notify you when new messages are posted. Also, we have a True Disciple Facebook page that you can follow @TrueDisciple2.

Have a great week and I look forward to talking with you again soon.