

How to Bear Fruit in the Body of Christ

Right before Jesus went to the cross, He gave his last-minute instructions to His followers: *"Remain in Me, as I also remain in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, neither can you, unless you remain in Me"* (John 15:4, MEV).

Jesus says that being spiritually connected is like being attached to a vine. You're not going to have any fruitfulness or productivity in your life if you're out there on your own. You've got to stay connected.

In plants, a disconnected branch can't bear fruit. When you don't have the support, you not only start to wither and die, but you also don't have any productivity in your life if you're not spiritually connected.

I grow a lot of vegetables and fruit every spring. If I cut off a branch, those branches aren't going to produce any tomatoes or anything else. They've got to be connected in order to produce fruit.

What kind of fruit should you produce when you are connected to the body of Christ? *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control; against such there is no law."* (Gal. 5:22-23, MEV).

I don't know about you, but I'd like to be more loving. I'd like to be more joyful. I'd like to be more at peace, no matter what happens to the economy. I'd like to be more kind to people who are mean to me. I'd like to be a good person. I want to be faithful, not unfaithful. I want to keep my promises. I'd like to be gentle with people who are not very gentle. And I'd like to have more self-control.

That's called the fruit of the Spirit, and it's the evidence that you are spiritually connected. If you are not seeing yourself grow in all these things, guess what? It means you're not spiritually connected.

God says this is so important that you're not going to have any fruitfulness or any productivity in your life if you're out there on your own. I've got to be connected to the body of Christ. You've got to be connected to the body of Christ. We're simply better together.

Talk It Over

- What is the evidence in your life that you are bearing fruit?
- In what "fruits" do you need to grow? How are you going to do that?
- What benefits have you witnessed in your life from being connected to the body of Christ?

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