

# When Difficult Times Come, Keep Bearing Good Fruit

The Bible talks about bearing good fruit and how that is God's purpose for our lives. In John 15:5 (AMP), Jesus says, "I am the Vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in Me and I in him bears much fruit, for [otherwise] apart from Me [that is, cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing."

And Psalm 1:3 tells us the person who follows God's ways is "like a tree firmly planted [and fed] by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season; its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers [and comes to maturity]."

When we understand what it means to bear good fruit, we can fulfill our destiny as ambassadors of Christ in the world (2 Cor. 5:20). This happens in two ways: by working with the Holy Spirit to develop the fruit of the Spirit in our lives (Gal. 5:22-23), and by displaying that fruit as we help others.

Many people want the "fruit" of more money, more opportunities in their career, more material possessions or being more well known. Having these things is not wrong. But these things alone won't fulfill us or make us permanently happy and peaceful.

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We need to go deeper than that! The good fruit God wants us to have is peace, joy and mental and emotional stability when the storms of life come. The Bible teaches that we can grow to the point where we are so deeply planted in the love of Christ that when the life's storms come, we still bear good fruit

(Ps. 1:1-3 and Eph. 3:16-19).

The real fruit of Christianity is seen in our lives when we can bear good fruit when hard times come—and we all have difficulties in life. It may be an unexpected illness, the stress of financial debt or being betrayed by someone you thought you could trust. The Lord wants us to be peaceful under pressure and have a good attitude in the midst of pain because when others see us behaving differently, they'll want to know why we can be that way and want to have what we have too.

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