

Secrets of the Abundant Life-2

The Secret of Bearing Fruit is Abiding

TEXT: John 10:10; John 15:8, 4

INTRODUCTION:

- A. THE SECRET OF AN ABUNDANT LIFE IS BEARING FRUIT.
 - 1. A life of meaning and purpose.
 - 2. Acknowledged by God as serving its purpose.
- B. THOSE WHO DON'T BEAR FRUIT WILL BE CUT OFF(**John 15:1-2**).
- C. HOW CAN WE BE SURE THAT WE WON'T BE CUT OFF?

WHAT IS THE SECRET OF BEARING FRUIT?

I. DISCERNING THE SECRET OF BEARING FRUIT.

- A. JESUS USES THE WORD "ABIDE." A LOT(**John 15:4, 5, 6, 9, 10**).
- B. THIS IS BECAUSE THE SECRET OF BEARING FRUIT IS ABIDING!
 - 1. In the Christian life, we experience first a **union**.
 - a. This union as taking place in baptism(**Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3**).
 - b. Our union with Him is like that of a branch to a vine(**John 15:5**).
 - 2. Then a **communion** or very close **fellowship** with Christ(**John 15:13-14; John 14:20; Heb. 2:11; Rev. 3:20**).
 - 3. This **communion** strengthens the branches to bear fruit!(**John 15:4-5**).
 - 4. Paul wrote of this strength in his own life(**Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:29**).
 - 5. That great power is available to us(**Eph. 1:18-20; 3:20**).
 - 6. He often gave examples of how this power could transform people
 - a. The Corinthians(**1 Cor. 6:9-11**).
 - b. Even himself(**1 Tim. 1:12-16; 1 Cor. 15:9-10**).
 - 7. What is that power?(**1 John 5:4-5**). **Our Faith!**

II. EVIDENCES OF ABIDING IN CHRIST.

- A. BEARING MUCH FRUIT(**John 15:5**).
 - 1. Bearing fruit is certainly good evidence of a close relationship with Christ!
 - 2. The lack of fruit indicates either there never was a "union" to begin with, or there was a union, but no "communion" leaving one in jeopardy, or there was a union but the branch has already been cut off!
- B. THE FATHER'S PRUNING(**John 15:2**).
 - 1. One way that the Father does this is through the Word.
 - a. **John 15:3**, "clean" **katharos** is closely related to "prune" **kathairo**.
 - b. The Word is a very powerful instrument(**Heb. 4:12-13; Eph. 6:17**).
 - 2. Sanctification is cutting off(**Eph 1:4; 2 Tim 2:21; 2 Cor. 7:1**).
- C. A GROWING SENSE OF DEPENDENCE(**John 15:5c**).
 - 1. We must realize that apart from Christ we can do nothing of lasting value.
 - 2. The true source of strength: union with Christ!(**2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 4:13**).
- D. OUR PRAYERS BEING ANSWERED(**John 15:7, 16**).
 - 1. Of course, such answered prayers will depend upon several factors:
 - a. That we keep His commandments(**1 John 3:22**).
 - b. That our requests be according to God's will(**1 John 5:14**).
 - c. That our requests not be for selfish gain(**James 4:3**).
 - 2. Those abiding in Christ can look back and see evidence of answered prayers.

3. Sometimes the answer is "no"(**Matt. 7:7-11; Rom. 8:28**)
- E. LOVE FOR CHRIST AND HIS PEOPLE(**John 15:9, 12**).
 1. Those who abide in Christ will abide in love(**1 John 4:7-8**).
 2. Indeed, Christ commands us to love one another(**John 15:17**).
 3. Those who don't love God's children, don't know God(**1 John 4:8, 20-21**).
- F. AN INNER JOY(**John 15:11**).
 1. Not the absence of trial or trouble(**John 15:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:6-7**).
 2. Joy borne of assurance that we can overcome the world through Christ (**John 16:33; Phil. 4:4**).
 3. A sign of backsliding is loss of joy(**Psa. 51:12**).

CONCLUSION:

- A. NOT EVERYONE WHO ABIDES IN CHRIST WILL HAVE ALL THESE BLESSINGS TO THE SAME DEGREE AT THE SAME TIME.
 1. But they will be present and be strong enough to be evident.
 2. And they should always be INCREASING!(**John 15:2; 2 Pet. 1:8**).
- B. ARE WE ABIDING IN CHRIST(**2 Cor. 13:5**).
 1. For the secret of the abundant life is bearing fruit.
 2. And the secret of bearing fruit is abiding in Christ.
 3. So if we are not abiding in Christ, we cannot enjoy the abundant life!