

The Good Life – Bears Fruit Mark 4.8 & 20

God has a big plan for you and me; He wants us to make something out of our time. Time like electricity flows around us and remains unseen and useless -- unless it is captured and harnessed into usefulness.

What does God call time in our lives that is harnessed and used and deposited before Him in Heaven? FRUIT. Look at Mark 4.8 and 20.

Fruit is what is produced by my life that will last forever – prayers from a clean heart, worship from a consecrated life, time lived under the direction of the Holy Spirit, acts of devotion prompted by love, souls won to Christ, saints edified, suffering endured for Him, sacrifices made for Him. And on and on we could go. The emphasis is 'that which lasts forever produced by my life'.

Life for each of us contains a lot of time. Each day a river of moments flows all around us, eighty-six thousand seconds to be exact. But if measured in minutes life can be seen as a constant flow of time traveling by us minute by minute. Here is the summary of time we each get in our lives:

- One year is a ½ million minutes...
- The teen aged years last for just under four million minutes...
- A child from birth to heading off to college at eighteen was with you for 9 ½ million minutes...
- An entire average lifetime lasts for forty million minutes.

So before most of us head to Heaven 40 MILLION MINUTES will flow by us in a steady stream, day in and day out.

Before I read these precious verses again with you, may I remind you of the incredible challenge each of us have. According to what Jesus said in the verses before us, all that will last of your and my life on Earth will be the fruit that you and I produce while we are alive on this planet. Everything else of ours -- will either burn, rust, or rot. Have you paused lately and looked around all that fills up each of our lives?

All of our deeded income properties, all of our prized collections, all of our wise equity investments, all of our real estate, all of our awards, all of our beautifully built and decorated homes, all of our businesses we have built, all of our memory books, all of our electronic gadgets, all of our plants and pets and plans – everything will dissolve and go back to earthliness.

Everything we ever have will turn to rust and ashes except for what was transformed by our ABIDING in Christ into Eternal Fruit. Christ's rewards to us are based on what was GOOD or fruitful, all else attached to our lives Jesus Christ has promised He will burn away at the BEMA SEAT JUDGMENT.

With that in mind, please read Mark 4.8, 20

Mark 4:8, 20 But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred." 20 But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

Fruit is what is produced by my life when I capture and invest minutes of my days for the Glory of God, in the power of the Spirit changing them into that which lasts forever – prayers, worship, acts of devotion, souls won, saints edified, suffering endured for Him, sacrifices made for Him,

1. Fruitfulness expected Mark 4.1-20
2. Fruitfulness explained in John 15.1-8
3. Fruitfulness encouraged in Colossians 3.12-17
4. Fruitfulness examined in 2nd Corinthians 5.1-10
5. Fruitfulness eternalized Revelation 19.1-8

Now the question we need to ask ourselves is, how is my fruitfulness coming. Do you have fruit already sent up? Are you bearing fruit today? Are you living to protect your future fruitfulness?

Note that it is that which "comes from within". So just as a good heart has fruit that comes from within and that fruit is produced by God. So we should see from within us fruit that springs up, increases, and comes to maturity.

We are the company of the unworthy, doing the impossible for the Glory of Another.

Never was more asked of anyone than what Jesus Christ asks of you and me TODAY!

Fruitfulness expected Mark 4.1-20

One day, in one verse -- Jesus describes everyone in the world that will go to Heaven. On that day Jesus compared life to a field, people to soil, the Gospel to seed, and eternal life to a crop of harvested righteousness.

In Mark 4.1-20 Jesus said a heart that remains Trampled and Hardened Against God, Shallow With God, or Crowded Towards God will not enjoy the pleasures of God forever. Beware!

Jesus goes on to describe everyone on the planet that will be enjoying Heaven forever as being -- Good. Just as there are three types of lost Hell bound people types, there are also three different types of the Heaven bound. There are three levels, three categories, three degrees of fruitful lives. Basic, Better, and the BEST! Among the Good there are the 30 times over Good, the 60 times over Good, and the 100 times over Good.

Taken at face value, the message of the parable of the soils is clear: of four soils, only one is good. Only one produces fruit, and thus it alone is of any value to the farmer. This good soil pictures the believer. The weedy soil and the shallow soil are pretenders. The soil by the wayside is an absolute rejecter. Indeed, fruit is the ultimate test of true salvation. In the harvest, weedy soil is no better than the hard road or shallow ground. All are worthless. Seed sown there is wasted, and the ground is fit for nothing except burning (cf. Heb. 6:8). It cannot picture salvation.¹

The signs of a BAD HEAR are

Mark 7:20-22 And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

Fruitfulness explained in John 15.1-8

John 15:1-8 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot

¹MacArthur, J., F. 1997, c1988. *The Gospel according to Jesus : What does Jesus mean when he says "follow me"*. Includes index. (Electronic ed.). Academic and Professional Books, Zondervan Pub. House: Grand Rapids, MI

bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Fruitfulness encouraged in Colossians 3.12-17

Colossians 3:12-17 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Fruitfulness examined in 2nd Corinthians 5.1-10

Romans 14:10-13 But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? **For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.** 11 For it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God." 12 **So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.** 13 Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way.

1 Corinthians 3:5-17 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, **but God who gives the increase.** 8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one, **and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.** 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. **But let each one take heed how he builds on it.** 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 **each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.**

14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

2 Corinthians 5:1-10 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. 9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 10 **For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**

Fruitfulness eternalized Revelation 19.1-8

Revelation 19:7-8 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Revelation 19:7-8 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) (NIV)

Revelation 19:7-8 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."8 And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (NASB)

Fruitfulness explained in John 15.1-8

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples" (John 15:7-8).

The ultimate goal of discipleship is this: ". . . be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma" (Eph. 5:1-2). This is an ongoing, lifelong process by which the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God, to conform the child of God, into the image of God, for the glory of God. In so doing, He produces in us the fruit of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22). That fruit is manifested in a true disciple's life as an:

Galatians 5:22-25 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Jesus wants my Life spent intentionally on fruit bearing for His glory – that means I will Walk in the SPIRIT.

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