



John's Schedule

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What matters most in life is that which will survive our earthly pilgrimage, as is clearly seen in John 15. This series leads you to the feet of the One we need to know, the One we need to hear, and the One who alone can make us ready for the greatest day of our lives! You will be introduced to the Vinedresser --- the heavenly Father who is always watching over each of us.

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Sermons in this series (click to see details):

- Part: 52 Are you marked in the Ear and the Foot by the Good Shepherd?
- Part: 51 Blind Eyes Made to See by Jesus
- Part: 50 Listening to the Master
- Part: 49 Jesus the Evangelist
- Part: 48 Believers are Worshippers
- Part: 47 Are We Like the Woman at the Well?
- Part: 46 Snakes, Sinners and the Savior
- Part: 45 Starting Life Over Again
- Part: 44 What a Wonderful Change has been Wrought in Your Life
- Part: 43 DO YOU BELIEVE AND HAVE THIS LIFE?
- Part: 42 Triumphant Living
- Part: 41 Where Are You On The Spiritual Map of Your Life?
- Part: 40 Are You Enjoying an Endless, Overflowing, Victorious Life?
- Part: 39 How to Have the Endless Joy -Filled Life
- Part: 38 Jesus Is the Lamb of God?
- Part: 37 Jesus Is the Son of God
- Part: 36 Jesus in All the Gospels
- Part: 35 Hearing the Voice of Jesus
- Part: 34 ARE YOU READY TO STAND BEFORE CHRIST'S THRONE?

Secrets of Fruitfulness-1



Part 26 (020120AM)

[Return to previous Page](#) | [Print](#)

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Please open to our wonderful Lord Jesus Christ's final, and perhaps most vital introduction of Himself to us His children. It is located in [John 15:1-8](#).

Before I read these precious verses again with you this morning, may I remind you of the incredible challenge each of us have this morning. 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, stand with me and follow along please in [John 15:1-8](#).

[John 15:1-8](#) "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit **He lifts up**; and every branch that bears fruit **He prunes**, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

"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. 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. 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."

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?

Over the last weeks we drove by the great orchards and vineyards of NY and New England. It was amazing to see the lengths they go to insure fruitfulness. There was evidence of cultivation, pruning, new plantings and so on. In Florida we saw the smudge pots to protect from fruit loss to frost. Earthlings are focused on fruit bearing, are we for Heavenly fruit?

GOD WANTS TO MAKE EACH DAY OF OUR LIFE FRUITFUL

We were in John 15 last time as we studied the Gospel by John. I challenged you to Abide in Christ our Vine and be fruitful. This morning Jesus invites us to live in Him like He is all we need, Jesus is all I need, Jesus is all you need!

- Remember we who belong to Jesus Christ all share an uncommon passion: we want to bear fruit. This comes as we know Him more, serve Him more, love Him more, and please Him more.
- Remember that that God wants us not merely to hear His what His Word asks, but to DO what He asks.
- How can we bear more and more fruit to glorify God this year?

Let me answer that by reminding you of where we have been.

Part: 33 Do Troubles Push you Toward God?

Part: 32 Are You Pushed Toward God?

Part: 31 Is It Chastening or Pruning?

Part: 30 Our Father the VINEDRESSER

Part: 29 Fruit Bearing 101

Part: 28 Are You Cleansed, Clipped and Christ-like?

Part: 27 Secrets of Fruitfulness-2

Part: 26 Secrets of Fruitfulness-1

Part: 25 A Life Useful for Jesus

Part: 24 Starting Over in Newness in Jesus

Part: 23 Jesus: I Am the Vine

Part: 22 Secrets of the VINE

Part: 21 How to Get Christ's Well Done

Part: 20 How To Walk Through The Valley Of Death's Shadow

Part: 19 The Race and the Crown

Part: 18 Finishing Well With Christ's WELL DONE

Part: 17 I Go To Prepare a Place

Part: 16 In My Fathers House

Part: 15 Who is the LORD - Jehovah or Allah?

Part: 14 Are You Secure for Eternity?

Part: 13 Mormonism Is the Wrong Way to God

Part: 12 Are You Ready to Die?

Part: 11 Jesus: I AM the Resurrection and the Life

Part: 10 Is Your Cup Overflowing

Part: 9 Following Jesus as My Good Shepherd in the Hard Times of Life!

Part: 8 Is Your Head Oiled?

Part: 7 Following Jesus As My Good Shepherd

Part: 6 I AM THE DOOR: Entering Life Through Jesus

Part: 5 Have You Given Your Life to Jesus?

Part: 4 Jesus: I AM the Bread of Life

Part: 3 Jesus: I am the LIGHT in the Wilderness

Part: 2 Jesus: I AM the Light to follow

Part: 1 Jesus: I AM the Light to Trust

1. **WE ARE FRUITFUL WHEN WE ABIDE.**
2. **ABIDING IS LIVING DAILY LIKE JESUS IS ALL I NEED.**
3. **ABIDING STARTS WHEN WE BELIEVE THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS**

Now the summary of our Jesus who is all we need. Jesus inspired John the Apostle to write this gospel around a seven sign frame. We learned that in chapter one Jesus is introduced by a seven-titled "calling card". What are the seven titles, and their significance as recorded in John chapter one? Jesus is recorded as being:

- We listen to Jesus as the **Word (John 1:1)**,
- We follow Jesus as our **Light (John 1:7)**,
- We worship Jesus who is **God the Son (John 1:18)**,
- We have identified by faith with Jesus who is God's **Lamb (John 1:29)**,
- We accept Jesus as God's **Messiah (John 1:41)**,
- We yield to Jesus as our **King (John 1:49)**, and
- We hold to Jesus as the **Son of Man (John 1:51)**, *Jesus the Christ is the "living link" between heaven and earth.* Christ is God's "ladder" between heaven and earth. "No man cometh to the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6).

By this seven-titled "calling card" Jesus reveals to them and to us that the Christ, who is the Messiah, who is the only way to God is here!

When we believe the truth about Christ we are never alone, never isolated, never hopeless, never out of touch, never useless, never worthless, never aimless, never on a dead end road, never trapped, never outcast!

4. FRUITFULLY ABIDING IN JESUS IS THE BEST LIFE THERE IS!

Now what else does it mean to find Jesus as all I need? That is what we learn next in this book. By seven clearly described miraculous signs, Jesus describes the wonders of the salvation all who come to Him experience. This is the best part of the book in my opinion. John wrote in 20:31 **"These** (seven miraculous signs) **are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ** (the living link, the only ladder, or way to the God of Heaven) **and that believing you may have life** (the overflowing joy filled life of endless new beginnings) **in His name."**

- **HE TURNS** water into wine (2:1-11)— The Powerful New Life Jesus offers us is **always Miraculous**;
- **He heals** the nobleman's son (4:46-54)— The Powerful New Life Jesus offers us is **only by faith**;
- **He heals** the paralytic (5:1-9)— The Powerful New Life Jesus offers us is **only by grace**;
- **He Feeds** the 5,000 (6:1-14)— The Powerful New Life Jesus offers us brings **inexhaustible satisfaction**;
- **He Stills** the storm (6:16-21)— The Powerful New Life Jesus offers us brings **complete peace**;
- **He heals** the blind man (9:1-7)— The Powerful New Life Jesus offers us brings **light to our souls**;
- **He Raises** Lazarus (11:38-45)— The Powerful New Life Jesus offers us brings **an endless life**;

5. How do we live fruitfully for Jesus in 2002?

If your life is anything like ours you probably are operating at capacity. So any new idea, or old idea I am reminded of – like abiding – has to be a concept that I can grasp without too much complexity. In other words it has to be simple. For me, I have found that if I can find something in the Bible and do what it says, that is about the best way to go. So, here is a simple plan I follow to be fruitful that God has spelled out in His Word. This plan is to start living right now the way we want to have Him find us at the end when He comes (at the rapture) or calls (through our death). I call this some specific Plans for Growing in Fruitfulness, and all of these are found in Psalm 71.

If you can find some space on your bulletin or somewhere else, you may even want to jot these in your Bible to remember them! Let's turn ^[1] to Psalm 71 and conclude there.

1. ABIDING IN CHRIST MEANS THAT I CHOOSE TO **flee to God for hope** as my troubles threaten to drown me. v. 1 Just like David did in **1 Samuel 30:6** over 3,000 years ago and just like John Paton did 150 years ago, we can do today!
2. ABIDING IN CHRIST MEANS THAT I CHOOSE TO **cry out to God for help** before I give in to temptations. v. 2b Saying with Joseph that God sees me whether it was 4,000 years ago in Egypt from **Genesis 39:9** or today – it is always true!
3. ABIDING IN CHRIST MEANS THAT I CHOOSE TO **trust God's Word over my fears** before I get paralyzed by them. v. 3a Remember Paul and Silas in prison in Acts 16!
4. ABIDING IN CHRIST MEANS THAT I CHOOSE TO **seek the Lord about my hurts before I get bitter**. v. 4 As Paul was in prison writing Philipians, he never lost sight of the goodness of God in spite of our problems. As in Job, etc.
5. ABIDING IN CHRIST MEANS THAT I CHOOSE TO **keep reminding myself** of God's faithfulness for all of my life to this moment. v. 5, 17 Jacob at the end of Genesis says the Lord has led, fed, and forgiven him all his life long!

[1] Adapted from "Reflections on an old Psalmist" by John Piper, A Godward Life, p. 134.

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