

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!