

If You Want to Follow Jesus – part 5

Jn. 15:1-5, 8

Luke 9:23—Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life.

--For Two weeks now we have been looking at what a disciple does.

--We saw that a disciple learns, loves and lives the Word of God, and that Disciples make disciples.

--Today: If we follow Jesus, He will make us **fruitful**.

--**Jn. 15:1-5, 8**—Vines and grapes are one of the most consistent illustrations of God's people throughout Scripture.

--**Ps. 80:8; Jer. 2:21**—He rescued them so that they could bring Him glory through the way they acted, thought, treated others, and so that they could bear witness to the nations around them of the excellencies of God.

1. Since God has rescued us, it is important for us to know why.

--God saved us through the sacrifice of Jesus so that we could be His; He so loved us, foreknew us, predestined us, recreated us in the image of His Son.

--Now that we are His, He has planted us here for a purpose

--Saved us so we could be His, left us here to bear fruit.

--**Eph. 2:8-10** – This is our purpose in life; not being happy, not growing old, making money, owning your own home, relaxation, having a family.

--These are nice but they may not be the path God has for those who follow Him and who have laid their lives down for Him to do whatever He wants with them.

--Your purpose is God-ordained good works, bearing fruit.

2. God has Grape-expectations of us!

1. Our entire purpose of being here is this fruitfulness that God planned for us.

--There is this predominant thought among believers that God is just fine with us being saved and doing nothing else.

--Here's Jesus' advice: Don't buy that! it's a very bad bargain **Lk. 9:24**

“all I really need to do is pray a prayer, accept Jesus and then just keep living my life as I know it” No!

--Holding on to what you have, your ways, your plans, your dreams is a huge mistake because you'll be missing what Jesus wants to give you.

--This verse has a dual application: one, you lose your life for eternity—You must repent of, let go of whatever you thought would save you and turn to Christ for salvation, but if you try to save your life yourself—you will lose it forever.

--The second application is the main thrust here: It is possible to lose even as a believer “**I'm going to heaven, how can I lose?**” – You're going to heaven but you lose your entire purpose for being planted here—You lose your life here. don't buy that!

--God planted you for one purpose—to bear fruit.

3. Understanding what God expects helps us understand the Christian life a whole lot better.

1. **Jesus is the True Vine – V.1**—being a vine in the spiritual sense is what Jesus does for believers whom He has planted here.

--The word for vine here actually is reference to the relatively ugly trunk or stump of a grape vine.

--**Isa. 53:2** – This is who Jesus came to be for us as He planted us here, so if we don't know this about Him, we will have a harder time relating to what He's doing in our lives as Christians.

--[“I thought Jesus was here to make me happy; I thought He would fulfill all my dreams and do whatever I want”](#) --think again!

--The whole issue of discipleship begins with the mentality that we are here to serve Him and not the other way around.

--Until you work for Him, it won't work so well for you!

--You're losing out, you're missing your purpose, you're wasting this part of your eternal life Jesus has left you to lead down here.

--Jesus is going to relate to you as a vine does to a branch. [Jn. 15:16](#)
we have an appointment and purpose we will be held accountable for.

2. The Father is the Vinedresser – This is the farmer, the gardener.

We have to Understand God's purposes-- His primary task is to grow grapes.

--“What is God up to!” fasten your seatbelts because it's not what most believers think.

--God's purposes and plans are very clear cut; no mysteries or ethereal connotations.

--If Jesus had said that His Father was sugarcane grower, we'd know our purpose was to be sweet.

--If Jesus had said His Father was a flower grower, we'd know our job was look pretty.

--God has saved us and planted us not so we can look pretty or be sweet, He's planted you to produce fruit.

--Fruit is only produced one way.

3. We are the Branches – The branch's job is to produce fruit (technically this isn't exactly true).

--Notice: Jesus doesn't say “I'm the vine, go and produce fruit” – So, this isn't “turn over a new leaf and try harder”

--Notice: Jesus does say, “[Abide in Me and you will bear much fruit](#)”

Where does fruit grow on a branch? Near the end or tip.

--Where do branches attach to a trunk? Near the beginning or base, the opposite end from where the fruit is.

--Jesus doesn't say “go and produce fruit” because branches can't produce fruit. (If you don't believe it, just cut one off and through it on the ground and see if any fruit appears on it).

--The Vine produces fruit through the branch.

--The Branch's sole job is to hang onto the Vine.

--This why the emphasis in Scripture is toward our commitment and surrender to Christ.

--**Follow Me** – is the answer to questions like “what is my purpose?, how do I live?, who am I?”

[“if you love Me you will keep My commands”](#) not [“if you keep My commandments, you love me.”](#)

[“If you follow Me I will make you fishers of men”](#)

[“If you abide in Me you will bear much fruit”](#)

[“If you are correctly oriented to Me”](#) – Denied yourself so you can follow My agenda; died to yourself you can live for Me, then you will do these things as a result.

--Notice: Jesus says [“Follow Me”](#) not a list of rules or set of doctrines or dogmas.

--[“Abide in Me”](#) Again, where you abide is where you live—we saw this when we saw that a follower of Jesus abides or lives in the Word.

--So, we abide in the Word not so that we can just get smarter and be able spout Bible truths, but so that we can Abide in Jesus, a real person in a real, ongoing, lifechanging relationship.

--As this happens we fall under the Father's Cultivating Hands and He prunes, manages, fertilizes and waters us so that we can be all that He's created us to be.