



**The Pursuit of Being Useful To God
(John 15:1-8)**

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A Christ-Centered Life— a life that is devoted to knowing Jesus Christ intimately, becoming like Jesus Christ in character, conduct, and conversation, and being useful to Christ in all aspects of life. If we are going to understand and develop a Christ centered life, we must embrace **the pursuit of being useful to God.**

Bearing Fruit— the consistent display of Christ-likeness, along with the consistent demonstration of the love of Christ to others.

- I. **If we are going to be useful to God, we must learn the *Structure* for bearing fruit (v1-v2).**
 - A. Jesus Christ is the **true vine**— the source of spiritual life and productivity
 - B. God the Father is the **vinedresser (gardener)**— the nurture of believers in Christ; the one who prunes believers so that they may be productive in Jesus Christ
 - C. Believers in Christ are the **branches**— those who have been placed in genuine union with Jesus Christ by God the Father

- II. **If we are going to be useful to God, we must learn the *Specifics* about bearing fruit (v1-v2).**
 - A. Unbelievers will experience **eternal judgment** because they show themselves not to be a Christian by their lack of genuine productivity in Christ-likeness and demonstration of the love of Christ to others.
 - B. As believers are **productive** for God in displaying Christ-likeness and demonstrating the love of Christ to others, God works a continual work on them and through them so that they may be **more productive** for Him in displaying Christ-likeness and demonstrating the love of Christ to others.
 - C. Believers have already been cleansed from the **penalty** of sin and **power** of sin and have been set apart as **Saints** as a result of believing in the Word of Jesus Christ. Therefore the pruning they experience is so that they may display more Christ-likeness and demonstrate more of the love of Christ to others.

III. If we are going to be useful to God, we must learn the *Strategy* to bearing fruit (v4-v5).

- A. Christians must stay in genuine fellowship with Jesus Christ so that His life may work *in us* so that we may be *much more productive* in displaying Christ-likeness.
- B. Christians must stay in genuine fellowship with Jesus Christ so that His life may work *through us* so that we may be *much more productive* in demonstrating the love of Christ to others.
- C. It is impossible for Christians to *be productive, more productive, or much more productive* in displaying Christ-likeness and demonstrating the love of Christ to others without staying in genuine fellowship with Jesus Christ.

IV. If we are going to be useful to God, we must learn the *Significance* of these statements (v6-v8).

- A. Those who do not walk in *genuine fellowship* with Jesus Christ show that they are *not believers* and will experience *eternal damnation* in the lake of fire.
- B. As Christians stay in genuine fellowship with Jesus Christ through obedience to His Word, they will experience God responding with a “yes” to their prayer request.
- C. The *greatness of God’s character* is revealed to the world when *Christians* prove to be *productive at the maximum level of productivity* for Jesus Christ in displaying *Christ-likeness* and demonstrating the *love of Christ* to others which affirms the reality that they belong to Jesus Christ.

V. If we are going to be useful to God, we must learn the *Steps* to bearing fruit for God.

- A. Productivity for God cannot begin until one has *Salvation in Christ*– a genuine faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to save us from the penalty of sin and the power of sin unto a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ.
- B. Productivity for God is developed through *Sanctification in Christ*– a genuine submission to the commands of God so that we would begin to reflect the very character, conduct, and conversation of Jesus Christ.
- C. Productivity for God is shown through *Service for others through the love of Christ*– genuine love for our brothers and sisters is demonstrated through bearing burdens and meeting needs as well as reaching out to unbelievers with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We become ambassadors to unbelievers and builders of believers into the image of Jesus Christ.