



Bearing Fruit

Part 3 of Vital Characteristics of a True Christian

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Read Matthew 7:18-20; Luke 6:45

These passages talk about the *source* of the things that come out of a person's life. Yet this is not a call to just start bearing good fruit. This is not possible if the tree is bad. No amount of fertilizer, rain, or even pruning will cause a bad tree to produce good fruit. What is the answer? We need to be changed. We need grafted into the True Vine, into Jesus Christ. Then, we can begin to produce the good fruit.

1. Christ-like Character – Gal. 5:22-25; II Pet. 1:5-8

- Singing loudest, or giving the most isn't the evidence of being a true Christian
- These are internal character traits God does when we are in Him

2. Christ-like Conduct – Col. 1:10

- Christ-like character will lead us to Christ-like conduct
- This goes hand in hand with increasing in the knowledge of the Lord

3. Those Who Come to Christ – Rom. 1:13; I Cor. 16:15

- Paul spoke of those who came to faith as *fruit*
- Have you been able to share your faith with someone? Have you been able to see this kind of *fruit* too?

4. Our Lips – Heb. 13:15

- Offer the Lord your lips as a sacrifice of *praise*
- Our lips should be always filled with thanks and praise for Him

5. Giving – Rom. 15:28

Questions:

1. How do we reconcile the teaching that we are saved by grace, totally apart from our works (deeds), and this idea that a *true* Christian will produce fruit? (True regeneration

is a gracious work of God in us and it is *that* which produces the change internally, leading to external change. To call people to merely perform is to introduce another religion of works).

2. Read Phil. 1:21-22. Why was Paul struggling between going home to be with the Lord and staying to continue to produce fruit?
3. Have you seen your lips as bearing fruit unto God? Is what comes out of your mouth constant praise, thanksgiving, edification and blessing?

Prayer: *“Father, thank You for your salvation and for changing us from the inside out. I pray my life will bear much fruit for you. Help me to bear fruit through the character changes that the Spirit began within me. Help me produce fruit through my conduct and the work that you give me to do. Help me bear fruit through being a faithful witness of the gospel itself, through the praise of my lips and even through the giving of my possessions for your purposes. Thank You that I can be called a child of God, in Jesus’ name, amen.”*