

Principles for a Productive Life

Jn 10:10 *"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"*

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Aug 21st

Reflection: Productive lives (like productive gardens) require:

- ➔ Proactive Planning. Pr. 29:18
- ➔ Practical Preparation. Hosea 10:12
- ➔ Purposeful Planting. Gal. 6:7,8
- ➔ Persistent Protecting. Job 1:10

Direction: Even if you do all of these things, your garden (life) will not produce it's potential without some Painful Pruning.

Part 5: Pruning for a Productive Life. (Lessons in the Vineyard) John 15

Jesus used the grape vine to remind us that God is actively at work in our lives seeking to enable us to become fruitful (Productive). The extent of our fruitfulness depends on our relationship with Christ.

Vs 4 *"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."*

- **The Picture:** Vs 1,5 *"I am the true vine, my father is the Husbandman...ye are the branches."*
 - **The Purpose:** vs 16 *"I have chosen you and ordained (tith'ēmi: appointed) you ...To bring forth fruit!"*
 - **The Process:** Vs 2-10 *"every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit"*
- God (as the "husbandman" vs 1) is in the fruit business and uses "all things" (Ro. 8:28) to help us develop an abundant harvest. (Jn 15:8) One critical condition of our fruitfulness is our Response to the Father as he seeks to prune and position us for maximum benefit.

1. There Are Two Dimensions Of "Purging." Jn. 15:2,3

Purge: (kathairo) actually has a double meaning:

A. To Cleanse: (Jn 15:3) from katharos: to make clean, clear, and pure.

1) The medium for this cleansing is God's Word. Jn 15:3; Ps 119:9; Eph 5:26

2) The Process for Cleansing involves:

- a) Exposure to God's truth produces conviction. 1 Tim. 3:16
- b) Conviction produces recognition. (1 Jn 1:6)
- c) Recognition leads to repentance. (1 Jn 1:7) (metanoe'o: change of mind, compunction)
- d) Repentance produces Confession. (1 Jn 1:9) *"If we confess our sins"* (hamartia: offence)
- e) Confession produces forgiveness & Cleansing. 1 Jn 1:9 *"Faithful to Forgive ... and cleanse us..."*

3) The longer we walk in unconfessed sin the greater the risk of:

- a) Self deception. 1 Jn 1:8; James 1:22-26
- b) Spiritual infection! 1 Jn 2:9-19; 5:19 *Requiring the next dimension of Purging.*

B. To Cut: Kathairo also means to "prune" or cut away.

1) "Cutting" is required to:

- a) To cut away dead or dying (infected) growth.
- b) Allow Sunlight to reach the other branches.
- c) Increase the size and quality of the fruit.
- d) Encourage new Growth (or growth in a new direction) and fruit to develop.

2) God's word is the primary medium for this "pruning". Heb. 4:12

2. There Are Two Motivations For “Purging”

A. TO DISCIPLINE (See Hebrews 12:5-13) Discipline deals with Sin in our lives.

1) Discipline is a Part of being a child of God. Heb 12:7,8 (He cares enough to correct! Rev. 3:19)
 a) You can't be a “disciple” without experiencing occasional “discipline.”

2) Discipline is Painful. Heb. 12:11 *'no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous:'*

3) Discipline is Purposeful. Heb. 12:10,11 *"yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness ..."*

4) God's Discipline is usually progressive.

a) Rebuke: (Heb. 12:5) (eleng'-cho) to convince or tell a fault. (Through God's word)

(1) This stage involves gentle verbal conviction.

b) Chastening (vs 5): paidei'a: correction, training; from paideu'ō: to educate.

This comes from “paiō” meaning “to sting or strike” with mild blow.

(1) Chastening implies increased “Pressure”, Often accompanied by some physical pain.

c) Scourging (Heb 12:6): mastigo'o: to flog or whip. (What the Romans did to Jesus John 19:15)

(1) This is the result of ignoring the other stages.

(2) It is increasingly painful and serious.

(3) Continued disobedience can result in being “cut off.” (See Jn 15:2,6; 1 Cor 11:30; Pr 29:1)

5) The length, breadth and depth of Discipline depends on our response to God. (Heb. 12:11)

The greatest judgment God could bring to a us would be to let us alone! (Pr 14:12; 16:25; Mt. 7:13)

Hosea 4:17-18 *"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone."* (yānah: let alone, withdraw) (Mt 15:8-14)

B. TO DIRECT: (Move us) Deals primarily with “self” in our lives. Vs 2 *“may bring forth more fruit”*

1) Pruning is necessary to deal with (direct) the “wild nature” of the vine.

(a) We want to “direct our own paths.” (Pr 3:5-6) Left alone, Grape branches tend to grow “wild” (Is 5:2), working their way down into the dirt or getting tangled between themselves. This blocks the leaves exposure to the sun, starving the branch of nutrients necessary to develop healthy fruit.

(b) We're too often content with leaves (looks) while God's looking for lasting fruit. (Mt 21:19)

Conclusion: Many confuse the pain of disciple with that of direction. (Heb. 12:1,2)

It's important to rightly discern what God is trying to accomplish, so that we can respond correctly.

How can we determine if the pain in our lives is due to discipline or direction?

Questions	Discipline	Direction
What is happening to you?	Pain	Pain
Why is this happening?	You're doing wrong. (Sin)	You're doing right.
What's your level of fruit?	None or very little	Some fruit
What is God working toward?	Fruit	More fruit
What needs to go?	Sin in my life.	Self rule in my life.
How should you feel?	Guilty, sad	Relief, trust
What should you do?	Repent and Confess.	Release and Cooperate.
When does the pain stop?	When You stop sinning.	When God is finished.

John 15:5 *“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”*

Are you in a season of Production or Pruning? Of cleansing or cutting?

What is the “Husbandman” doing in your life? (Trying to Discipline or Direct?)

How will you respond?