

Dear Friend,

In recent weeks the Holy Spirit has been teaching me new things from Mark chapters four and five about “The Sower Sows The Word.” The purpose of the word being sown is the production of “fruit.” All seed has a purpose. All seed is intended to produce some sort of fruit. You can tell that “fruit” is the purpose of sowing the word by reading the last verses of the parable:

Mar 4:20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

Later in the same chapter, Jesus sows the Word to His disciples when He tells them, “*Let us pass over to the other side.*” After arriving on the other side, they find the madman of Gadara. His deliverance from demonic possession was the intended “fruit.” The word sown that brought them to the other side had a purpose ... the deliverance of this demon-possessed man who was beyond all human help. His only hope was in the power of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Jesus intends for His disciples to also bear much fruit. Every time we receive an instruction from the Master, there is an intended result ... some fruit for the kingdom of God. Jesus had a lot to say about fruit in John chapter 15.

Joh 15:1-2 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. (2) Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

In this letter I would like to discuss some of the purging process. You have to go all the way back to the parable in Mark chapter four to understand portions of the process. There will be no hundredfold harvest of fruit unless the ground is first cleared of the rocks and thorns that prevent the seed from coming to maturity. Here is a list of the things in stony and thorny ground:

Mar 4:16-19 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; (17) And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. (18) And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, (19) And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

Affliction and persecution come against all Christians. Here are just two verses (of many) that validate that statement:

2Ti 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Joh 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

It is not the persecution and affliction that causes the word to become unfruitful. It is our thin-skinned, quick-to-be-offended emotions that cause us to forsake the word. By doing so, the intended fruit is never produced. Part of the Father’s purging process is to spend time praying in the Holy Ghost, allowing false motivations and pride

to be eradicated from our souls. Spending time in worship also allows the free flow of God's love between you and the Father, and in that process, you always receive more than you give.

When it comes to the cares of this world, it always amazes me that it took me so many years to learn to truly cast those very cares on Him ... for He cares for me.

1Pe 5:6-7 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: (7) Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

That does not mean we do not have to handle our responsibilities, but it does mean that if we humble ourselves under His hand, He will extend His grace to help us in our time of need. I have spent countless hours of worry in my life that were a complete waste of time because I did not go to my heavenly Father FIRST IN PRAYER instead of last regarding my "cares."

I also spent much of my early life trying to be rich. I know what it is to spend your life running after wealth. Praying in tongues had a lot to do with the Father pruning away those dead limbs within me. One time when I had been praying for an extended time period, I asked the Father, "*During this time of prayer, what have you been doing within me?*" Instantly I heard Him say, "*I am driving the money changers from the temple.*" I remembered the following passage:

Mat 21:12-14 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, (13) And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. (14) And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.

You cannot serve God and mammon. We are the temple of God. Jesus will not share His place as Lord with mammon. My desire to be rich had to be purged, lopped off as a dead limb, if Jesus was ever to take His place as Lord within me. Glory to God. Those long hours of praying in tongues had much to do with the pruning away of that most deceitful, dead limb.

Regarding "the lusts of other things" ... pastor Dave Roberson often said, "That's when you desire the esteem and praise of men more than you desire the approval of God." Jesus said,

Joh 5:44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

Paul said,

Gal 1:10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

I believe most of us have an innate desire to be honored by men. It is okay to be honored by men ... but only if that honor comes because you are FIRST ... the servant of Christ. This is also a great purging our Father does for us as we spend time in prayer, worship, the word, and fasting.

In this short letter I will barely mention the great pruning that is occurring now in those we call "revivalists." (Those seeking the end time revival). He is pruning away the dead limbs of UNBELIEF! After Jesus delivered a

young man from demonic power, the disciples asked why they had failed when they tried to do it? Jesus told them straight what the problem was,

Mat 17:19-21 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? (20) And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. (21) Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

What was the intended fruit? The deliverance of the young man from demonic possession. Why were they not able to produce that fruit? Their unbelief. What did Jesus say was the method for getting rid of the unbelief? Prayer and fasting. That means prayer and fasting are two of the most effective tools the Father uses to purge us from unbelief. No wonder the devil fights so hard against those who get serious about prayer and fasting. He fears that Christians will become purged from their unbelief and bring havoc on the kingdom of darkness. Above all else, Satan fears that believers will walk in this truth:

Joh 14:12-14 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. (13) And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (14) If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

We are in the edge-waters of the greatest revival the world has ever seen. If ever there was a time to give ourselves over to the husbandman for the purpose of purging, it is now. It is His will that we be purged so we can bear much fruit.

Your co-laborer for Christ,

GARY