

Daily Devotional by Dr. Gloria P. Holmes

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"Gateway to God's Glory in the Midst of the Coronavirus Pandemic"

"FRUITFUL"

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. Apart from me, you can do nothing." St. John 15:5

I love reading conversations Jesus had with His disciples and I think of Jesus speaking directly to me in a one on one conversation. As usual, Jesus taught masterfully using clear illustrations that the disciples would understand. In our time and culture, many of the examples Jesus used may not be as familiar to us, but we are blessed to have many different translations of the Bible available to enlighten our understanding. These are life changing words Jesus spoke to His disciples and they also apply to us if we are disciples of Jesus; as disciples, we follow Jesus and learn from Him. Jesus used the common everyday example and fruit to emphasize that we must maintain close connections to Him to be fruitful. There is no doubt that Jesus spoke the truth; after all, He is the way, the truth, and the life. There is also no doubt that the disciples could trust Jesus to remain in them. However, the fulfillment of the promise of bearing much fruit depended on the disciples doing their part and remaining in Jesus. This is known as a conditional promise. We can certainly picture a vine with branches growing from it, and we have seen many dead branches lying on the ground. These branches, broken off the vine or tree, no longer grow fruit or flowers. The fruit is the product that occurs as an outgrowth of fertilization from its connection to the nutritional source. I think most people enjoy fruit; it is a main food group and considered to be good and healthy for our diet. In the same way, as we stay connected to Jesus, we provide productive service, ministry and good deeds which benefit our family, church, community, and world.

One problem we have had during this pandemic is that several of the fresh bags of fruit we bought from the grocery stores contained rotten fruit. Usually, it is hidden among the good fruit. Other fruit looks beautiful on the outside but when we bite into it, it is dried out or rotten. Obviously, the fruit had been off the tree or vine too long; therefore, it had become good for nothing. In St. Matthew 7:18, Jesus declares: **"A good tree cannot produce bad fruit. And a bad tree cannot produce good fruit."** Let us strive to stay intricately connected to Jesus so that we can bear much good fruit that will be for God's glory and beneficial to our society.

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,
We acknowledge that we can do nothing without abiding in You. Lord, help us to bear much good fruit that will bring glory to Your name. We thank you! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

How will you respond to today's message?
