

May 9th, 2021
Pastor Matthew Ude
INI - SDG

Chosen to Bear Fruit

Chosen Seed - Diligent Work - Expected Fruit

John 15:16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

What do farmers expect from their crops when they plant them? What is a mother's hope for her children? What does God want from us?

The answer is the same to all three. That they, we, may grow and bear fruit.

First you choose seed.

I would imagine that choosing seed is not so simple as a city kid like myself might imagine. First of all there is the question about what you are going to plant. There is the choosing between variations of the plant and probably options in the variations. Then there is the question of quality versus cost and what company you are going to trust. In general, though you probably want good quality seed.

Yet God's grace and love is seen first in this that he did not choose good quality seed but rather he choose us.

As Jesus himself says the purpose, the goal is to plant seed which will produce good fruit. It would be foolish indeed for any of to pretend that the outside of our package is a label saying, "guaranteed to produce a good crop."

This is great good news which gives us comfort in our sins.

The Apostle Paul, even when he knew that he had messed up badly, or when he was worried about his own ability to preach the gospel would often find strength and comfort in the knowledge that Jesus specially chose him.

1 Corinthians 15:9-10 ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain;

Eph 3:8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

1 Timothy 1:15-16 ¹⁵ This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. ¹⁶ However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering,

In his failings, in his inability, in his insecurities Paul found comfort in the knowledge that despite his sin Christ had chosen him and in the knowledge of God's grace which strengthened him for the task set before him.

Today is Mother's Day, and those of you who are mothers, may well need this same encouragement. If it seems as though you are insufficient for the task of motherhood, be assured that it is Christ who choose to give you those children and who choose you to be their mother. If your children are a particularly difficult challenge, for some reason, it may well be that Christ choose you in particular for that child. That it is not a punishment but a measure of his confidence in you.

Remember too that his grace and his strength is sufficient in our weakness.

But more than this that he chose you to be his child and gave you faith and made you a member of heaven.

God would have indeed been wise to choose better seed than us, nevertheless in his grace he chose you to be his.

Ephesians 1:4 ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

Second you give it all that it needs to grow.

Having chosen and planted the seed you try to give it everything it needs to grow. Whereas you probably have quite a bit of control over which seed you choose, you do not have as much control over what happens after you plant it. There are things that you can do and things you cannot do anything about it.

Jesus however has more control. I choose you and I want you to bear fruit he tells us in our text. Therefore ask. Whatever you need, whatever stands in your way, whatever is stopping you from producing fruit "ask the father in my name and he will give it to you."

Jesus told numerous parables to drive home to us this lesson that he will give whatever is needed that we might bear fruit, therefore we ought to ask when there is need.

In the parable of the vineyard Jesus emphasizes that he will and does give whatever is needed that those whom he has chosen, us, will produce fruit.

In the parable of the talents, one man buries his money because he is afraid, he will not be able to use it well. Jesus rebukes him. If we are afraid we won't be able to use our talents, rather than bury them we ought to ask him for what we need. Whatever we need God will provide.

In the parable of the friend at midnight he reminds us to keep asking, again and again. Never to give up.

"I want you to have everything you need to bear good fruit," says Jesus, "therefore ask."

It would be nice if our plants could let us know what they need. If the corn could talk, "we need more nitrogen." Plants of course can't talk and most farmers already know what they need. Our father knows what we need as well but still encourages us to ask.

Mother's don't usually choose their own children, generally they take what is given to them. But they certainly do often give all that their children need. Love, time, money, attention, even often most of their hair. Whatever the child needs to grow and prosper.

So also has God done for us giving us everything even his own son.

Third you expect it to bear fruit

God did all this, chose us, gave us all that we need to grow, so that we might bear fruit.

Eph 1:4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Titus 2:14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.

1 Peter 2:9 But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

It would be a very miserable child who never bears any fruit at all after all that their parents and especially their mother gave them. Even a child with extreme disabilities will still produce fruit, and often maybe even more, laughter, love, kindness. You do not need intelligence or a doctorate to do these things.

One child does not go to college but is kind and considerate and loving. One child travels the world and brings back stories. One child makes money. One child because a famous reporter. Just about anything a child does when they grow up, is fruit. They have taken what was given by their parents and used it to produce. And most of them we parents, especially mothers, love to brag about.

And yet God has given us everything and we so often fail to produce for him any fruit at all.

No wonder Jesus is so angry with that third servant in the parable of the talents. I gave you so much, and you could not even invest it in a bank. You could not even try to do something with it. Even if you had failed at least, you would have tried.

Remember your mother and give back to her a hundred fold the love which she gave to you.

Remember your savior and all that he has done for you and yield fruit to God

Luther says in his catechism, "He did all this that I should be his very own and serve him in everlasting righteousness innocence and joy."

We do not have to worry that our mother's will stop talking to us because we are not famous enough or because we do not make enough money. Neither do we have to worry that we will lose out on salvation or will not make to heaven if our works are not good enough. God our father loves us despite our many sins and sent his son to die for us and save us. We are his own dear children.

But having become his children we pray that we might bear fruit to him.

Amen