**BETTER TOGETHER** in 2022

May 1, 2022

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**Reforesting Faith**

**Fruit Bearing**



Last week, we learned that Jesus is the tree of life … and all that the tree of life represents can only be accessed through a faith in Jesus Christ.

The **Tree of Life** is accessible only through faith in **Jesus**.

Everything God **created** has the ability to **reproduce** itself.

**Everything produces, increases and multiplies after its own kind.** If you plant rice, you are going to get rice. If you plant mangoes, you are going to get mangoes. **A human will produce a human**. **A dog will produce a dog**. It is God’s ordered system, instituted and established by Him in creation. **It is a law of life that everything produces after its own kind.**

We **reproduce** who we are.

The word or metaphor that is most often used to describe what our lives produce is called **fruit**.

**Literally –** It is a seed surrounded by edible pulp.

Various types of fruit are mentioned in the Bible; among the most common are grapes, figs, olives, pomegranates, and apples (perhaps to be identified with apricots or quince).

**Figuratively**

Fruit can mean **children**.

As in “the fruit of the womb,” a common expression for descendants.

*He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He will also bless the* ***fruit of your womb*** *…* Deuteronomy 7:13

*Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord,* ***the fruit of the womb*** *a reward.* Psalm 127:3

Fruit can mean **results**.

As in the Fruit of the Spirit - the result of the Spirit’s workings in our lives.

*But* ***the fruit of the Spirit*** *is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.* Galatians 5:22–23

Fruit can mean **manifestations** or expressions.

The fruits of **righteousness**

*filled with* ***the fruit of righteousness*** *that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.* Philippians 1:11

*And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.* James 3:18

The fruit of **repentance**

*But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* ***Bear fruit in keeping with repentance****. … Every* ***tree therefore that does not bear good fruit*** *is cut down and thrown into the fire. …* Matthew 3:7–11

The fruit of **light**

*for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (****for the fruit of light*** *is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.* Ephesians 5:8–10

Fruit sometimes has the sense of **reward**.

*Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat* ***the fruit of their deeds****.* Isaiah 3:10

*Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and* ***gathering fruit for eternal life****, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.* John 4:36

What fruit is your life **producing**?

*Thus says the Lord: “****Cursed is the man*** *who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength,* ***whose heart turns away from the Lord****. He is like a shrub in the desert, and* ***shall not see any good come****. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.* Jeremiah 17:5–6

*Blessed is the man who* ***trusts in the Lord****,* ***whose trust is the Lord****. He is like* ***a tree planted by water****, that sends out its roots by the stream, and* ***does not fear when heat comes****, for its* ***leaves remain green****, and is* ***not anxious in the year of drought****,* ***for it does not cease to bear fruit****.* Jeremiah 17:7–8

It begins with planting **Trust** – *“...blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord...”*

It leads to …

**Satisfaction** – *“…tree planted by the water…”*

**Stability** – *“… that sends out its roots by the stream …”*

**Strength** – *“… does not fear when heat comes ... not anxious in a year of drought”*

**Success** – *“… for its leaves remain green ... it does not cease to bear fruit.”*

A fruitful life is a **flourishing** life.

*You did not choose me, but I chose you and* ***appointed you that you should go and bear fruit*** *and that* ***your fruit should abide****, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.* John 15:16

Seeds are covered by fruit to insure they spread … just like the **gospel**.

Followers of Jesus produce **followers** of Jesus.

*I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. … every branch that does* ***bear fruit he prunes****, that it may* ***bear more fruit****.* John 15:1-2

*Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you.* ***As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself****, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him,* ***he it is that bears much fruit****, for apart from me you can do nothing.* John 15:3-5