

Leadership 301

Lesson Eleven

Principles of Fruitfulness

This lesson belongs to: _____

Lesson Eleven

Principles of Fruitfulness

Key Verse: *“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.”* John 15:16 NKJV

Purpose: The purpose of this lesson is to help the disciple /leader learn basic principles on how to bear fruit that remains.

1. The will of God is that we be _____ and _____.
 - a. Genesis 1:28 (NKJV) *“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it.’”*
 - b. John 15:8 (NKJV) *“By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”*
2. God has designed His creation so that everything will bear fruit after its own _____.
 - a. Genesis 1:11 (NKJV) *“Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth’; and it was so.”*
3. In the beginning God created man according to His _____ and _____.
 - a. Genesis 1:26 (NKJV) *“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to our likeness.’”*
4. Through Jesus Christ God is bringing many _____ to glory who will ultimately bear His image.
 - a. Hebrews 1:3 Jesus is the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of His person.
 - b. Hebrews 2:10 God is bringing many sons to glory
 - c. John 1:12 (NKJV) *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”*
 - d. Romans 8:29-30 (NKJV) *“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”*
 - e. Romans 8:19 (NKJV) *“For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.”*
5. Not only does God want us to bear fruit, but He wants us to bear fruit that will _____.
 - a. Sons and daughters are not raised to stay at home but are raised and released to begin new families that will raise up new sons and daughters in the next generation.
 - b. Spiritual “fruit” that remains are godly sons and daughters who bear, raise, and release other spiritual “sons” and “daughters.”
 - c. Bearing fruit that remains is the fulfillment of the Great Commission that commands us to proclaim the gospel and make disciples who will lead others to do the same.
6. The foundation for a fruitful life begins with a relationship with the _____.
 - a. John 5:19 (NKJV) *“Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.”*
 - b. John 12:49 (NKJV) *“For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave a command, what I should say and what I should speak.”*
7. The source of life and power flows through an _____ and _____ relationship with Christ.

- a. John 15:4-5 (NKJV) *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”*
- b. 1 Corinthians 3:6-7 (NKJV) *“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.”*

8. Bearing fruit that remains

- a. _____: Abiding in the Vine of Jesus
- b. The right _____: The Gospel of Jesus.
- c. _____: Preaching and proclaiming the Seed.
- d. _____: Believing and accepting the Seed.
- e. _____: Receiving the breath (Spirit) of life.
- f. _____: Supplying for and promoting the healthy development and growth of spiritual sons and daughters.
- g. _____: Developing character in spiritual sons and daughters through consistent personal involvement and lifestyle example.
- h. _____: Addressing and correcting character flaws while enforcing boundaries and parameters for healthy growth.
- i. _____: Strategically cutting away unproductive relationships and activities from the lives of spiritual sons and daughters so that divine energies may be concentrated in areas of fruitfulness.
- j. _____: Activating destiny and the spiritual empowerment in the lives of spiritual sons and daughters.
- k. _____: Giving spiritual sons and daughters the knowledge, job skills, tools, and weapons necessary for success.
- l. _____: Timely liberation of spiritual sons and daughters from the restraints of the maturing process and into the freedom, function, and responsibility of fulfilling their destiny in God to also go and bear fruit and that their fruit should remain.
- m. _____: Reactivating the above cycle of multiplication to bring forth more “fruit” unto God.
- n. _____: Supporting the process of fruitfulness in the lives of spiritual sons and daughters through continual transgenerational involvement (spiritual grandparenting, great grandparenting, etc.)

9. The Causes and Cures of Spiritual Barrenness

The Bible sites different examples of why we may experience spiritual barrenness and how barrenness might be cured.

- a. _____: (Romans 4:13-21; Hebrews 6:11-12) This form of barrenness was God allowed. Sarah experienced not only barrenness but also deadness of the womb until God was ready for Isaac to be born. This barrenness was overcome through faith and patience in the promises of God.
- b. _____: (Genesis 24:60; 25:21). Rebekah received a blessing from her family so that she might be *“the mother of thousands of ten thousands.”* Yet she was barren for over nineteen years after being married to Isaac. Although God gives us many promises, it wasn’t until the burden of His wife’s barrenness came upon Isaac and he began to intercede on

her behalf. In this case barrenness was broken through the burden and power of intercessory prayer.

- c. _____: (Genesis 29:31-32) Leah was an innocent party in her father's fraud in giving her rather than her sister Rachel in marriage to Jacob. She experienced a form of rejection from her husband as a result along with a time of barrenness. Out of her affliction she cried to the Lord who in His great mercy opened her womb and gave her children. God's love and compassion can break the power of rejection and barrenness in the lives of those who have been afflicted.
- d. _____: (Genesis 29:31) Jacob loved Rachel and not his first wife, Leah. God could not honor this obvious partiality. God loves us all regardless of color, gender, age, or social status. When we begin to show preference to those we like and do not demonstrate the unconditional love of God, barrenness is the result.
- e. _____: (Genesis 29:31; 30:1-2, 22-24). Rachel became jealous of her sister's fruitfulness. She began to compete with Leah by giving Jacob her maidservants to bear children. She blamed Jacob for her barrenness: "Give me children or else I die!" Jacob replied, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" It was not until Rachel had experienced humility in her heart that God opened her womb and gave her a son. In humility she now proclaimed, "God has taken away my reproach." Barrenness can be caused by competitive jealousy when we expect others to promote us rather than God. Humility and trust in God alone are the only cure for this type of barrenness.
- f. _____: (Judges 13) As a result of rebellion and idolatry Israel abandoned their destiny in God and came under the control of the Philistines. Manoah's wife was barren, but God sent the Angel of the Lord to prepare her to bear a son that would deliver of Israel. The Manoah and his wife agreed, and God raised up Samson, a man of destiny, to deliver Israel. As we repent of idolatry and seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, God can break the power of barrenness and bless us again with children of destiny.
- g. _____: (1 Samuel 1:10) Hannah was barren and tormented by her rival. Only after making a vow to God to give up any claims of ownership did God open her womb and give her a son, Samuel. Desiring fruit for selfish reasons can cause God to withhold His blessing. God desires fruitfulness for His glory. Heartfelt intercession and laying aside selfish attitudes of ownership were necessary to break the power of barrenness.
- h. _____: (2 Samuel 6:12-23) David was the King of Israel and he had plenty for which to be thankful and to praise God. He praised the Lord with complete abandonment much to the dismay of his wife Michal. She was more concerned with social status and appearance and despised David and became critical of his worship of the Lord. As a result of her critical and judgmental attitude in despising the things of the Lord, Michal was struck barren.
- i. _____: (Luke 1:5-25) Zacharias and Elizabeth were both righteous before God, yet they had no children. They were faithful in duty and service to the Lord. When it looked like their life was almost over without any fruit to show, God gave them a son, John the Baptist. God had a special purpose and plan for this child and the timing of his birth was according to God's purpose. A faithful walk with God and in His divine timing will keep us in a position to bear fruit at the right time and according to His divine purpose.
- j. _____: (2 Kings 2:19-21) In Elisha's day, barrenness was connected to diseased waters. Ezekiel 47 speaks of the River of God flowing out of the house of God. This River brings healing and life wherever it goes. The move of God should bring healing, life, and fruitfulness. If the spiritual river that flows through the house is not pure, spiritual sickness and barrenness can result. We must ensure that we do not allow our spiritual rivers to become polluted by the flesh or to stagnate and breed disease.

10. Rebuking the devourer

- a. Malachi 3:10-11 (NKJV) "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this, says the Lord, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and

pour out for you such a blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field, says the Lord of hosts."

- b. We must honor God in the first our fruitfulness. In doing so God can release even greater blessing in fruitfulness and rebuke the enemy that destroys fruitfulness in our lives.
- c. The devourer devours our fruit in two ways:
 - 1) Spiritual _____: Willful sin, disobedience, moral failure, forced delivery outside of God's timing.
 - 2) Spiritual _____: Death of a vision caused by sorrow, fear, guilt, discouragement, hopelessness, etc.

11. Preparing for Growth

- a. Isaiah 54:1-3 (NKJV) *"Sing, O barren, you who have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, you who have not labored with child! For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married woman, says the Lord. Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; do not spare; lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes. For you shall expand to the right and to the left, and your descendants will inherit the nations, and make the desolate cities inhabited."*
- b. _____ for growth.
- c. _____ growth.
- d. Make _____ for growth.
 - 1) 2 Kings 4 The widow made room for the miracle of oil to take place.
 - 2) Luke 9 Jesus brought order and structure in the multitudes before the miracle of multiplication took place.
 - 3) John 2 Jesus turned the water into wine after they made preparations
 - 4) How do you make room for growth?
 - a) Obey God
 - b) Proclaim vision, not duty
 - c) Open space
 - d) Raise up workers and leaders
 - e) Provide for the practical needs of the people (staff, parking, youth and children's ministry, etc.)
 - f) Focus on expanding ministry more than buildings. Buildings are great servants but lousy masters.
- e. Growth comes by _____, not by _____.
 - 1) Victory never comes without strategy
 - 2) Don't fight every battle at once. Fight and focus on one battle at a time.