

FRUITFUL – Introduction Week 1

SERIES OVERVIEW/MESSAGE SETUP:

- Fruit is a major theme throughout the Bible.
- Fruit is a picture of what's coming out of our lives.
- No one talked more about fruit than Jesus, and His words were strong. Jesus said that if you want to know who a person is, look at their fruit.

John 15:1 (NIV)

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener."

John 15:16a (NIV)

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last."

What do we need to know about fruit?

- God is the source. Fruit is the result.
- We've all experienced the difference between activity and productivity. Busyness does not equal fruitfulness. (Joyce Meyer)
- If we are willing, there are proven principles that result in great fruit.
- In Scripture, the fruit of our lives is the measurement that reveals what's growing in us.
- It's more accessible than you think—God has designed you to bear fruit.

We're going to learn that fruit is a result of a long process. It grows over time and takes intentionality.

PASSAGE:

- One of Jesus' most well-known parables. Parables were designed to create intrigue and give you a different perspective.
- There's a large crowd. Jesus is on a boat, and He's using the water as amplification so more people can hear what He's saying (actual place often called "Sower's Cove").
- He tells the crowd that a farmer goes out to plant seeds... **[Give quick version of the story]**
- Later, the disciples ask Him, "What does this mean?" Mark 4 is Jesus' response.

Mark 4:13-20 (NIV)

13 Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? 14 The farmer sows the word. 15 Some people are like seed

along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. 16 Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. 17 But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. 18 Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; 19 but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. 20 Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

Understanding how FRUIT works is central to understanding how God works. Everything always starts with God’s Word. There’s resistance – an enemy is trying to steal your FRUIT. FRUIT always includes adversity, challenges, and persecution. Worry, anxiety, and fear ultimately make you UNFRUITFUL.

But here’s what Jesus was communicating: Hear the Word and accept it – participation leads to production.

APPLICATION:

What Do We Need to Know About FRUIT?

1) God is a fruit inspector, not a leaf collector.

It’s the first command He gave, and He’s never taken it back. It’s His expectation for all of us.

Genesis 1:28a (NIV)

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number.”

Revelation 22:2b (NIV)

On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month.

Psalms 1:3a (NIV)

That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season.

This theme is found in the first chapter of the first book of the Bible, the last chapter of the last book of the Bible, the first chapter of Psalms (middle of the Bible), and various times throughout. Fruit was a tangible picture of God’s blessing, abundance, and His favor on our lives.

2) When God is involved, fruit is inevitable.

The seed works every time, but the biggest determining factor is the soil. **God works in us and through us, and when He does, fruit comes out of our lives.** You don't have to strive for it or force it to happen.

3) What FRUIT is growing in my life, and where do I need God's attention?

Maybe you're asking yourself today:

- How do I get more peace?
- How do I strengthen my relationships with the people I care about the most?
- How do I help my kids grow and reach their potential?
- How do I become the best version of who God created me to be?

You can't see it yet...but the answer for all these things is the same – FRUIT!

Overview of the series:

Week 1: Jesus = Fruit

Week 2: The Fruit of the Spirit

Week 3: Good Fruit in Your RELATIONSHIPS

Week 4: Good Fruit in Your WORDS

Week 5: Good Fruit in ACTION

Week 6: Firstfruits

CLOSE:

[Inspiring story] For years, the world drank coffee without ever thinking about where it came from. But hidden behind every cup were Colombian farmers—faithfully tending plants that took years to grow. The work was slow and unseen. The value was overlooked.

Then they changed the way the world **saw** it by helping people see the **farmer**. **Their figurehead became Juan Valdez.** He wasn't a real person – but he became known around the world. Colombia went from an anonymous exporter to a premium coffee icon. **When vision changed, value followed.**

God sees value in the **seed**, the **process**, and what's growing **underground**. What you honor in process, God will reveal in fruit.