

What Really Matters: Simplicity

“Followers of Jesus are people who are committed to partnering with God to make this world, the world that we live in, the kind of place that God originally intended it to be.”

John 15:8 My true disciples produce much fruit. This brings glory to my Father.

John 15:16 You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce fruit that will last.

Four Kinds of Fruit

The fruit of..... repentance

The fruit of.....the Spirit

The fruit of..... another Christian

The fruit of..... ministry

the seriousness of not bearing fruit

Luke 13:7 Finally, he said to his gardener, "I've waited three years, and there hasn't been a single fig! Cut it down. It's taking up space we can use for something else.

4 Conditions for Simplicity

1. Cultivate some roots

Jeremiah 17:7-8 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

Proverbs 12:3 "... the righteous cannot be uprooted."

How to Grow Roots:

Psalm 1:2-3 But they delight in doing everything the LORD wants; day and night they think about his law. They are like trees planted along the river bank, bearing fruit each season without fail. Their leaves never wither, and in all they do, they prosper.

How to Grow Roots: (con't.)

Colossians 2:6-7 And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to live in obedience to him. Let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment from him, so you will grow in faith, strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught.

Colossians 3:22 "Obey your masters... not only when their eye is on you... but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord."

2. Eliminate what is not essential

Luke 8:11, 14 "The seed is the Word of God... The seeds that fall among thorn bushes stands for those who hear; but the worries and riches and pleasures of this life crowd in and choke them, and their fruit never ripens."

Luke 14:16-20

3. Cooperate with God's pruning

John 15:1-2 "I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Gardener. He lops off every branch that doesn't produce. And He prunes those branches that bear fruit for even larger crops."

Do Fewer things in order to make a greater impact

Hebrews 12:11 "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

4. Wait for the Harvest

John 12:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life will lose it..."

John 15:5 "Jesus: "I am the Vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit. Apart from Me, you can do nothing."

"May you be the kind of person who, when you live this way, the very trees of Paradise are being planted."