

the fruit of the vine

John 15:1-11 / David Drury

WHO AM I?

?? Hippie Parents: Salvation Army Camp

?? Church Planting with Dutch West Michigan Wife

?? Two Kids/one on the way

?? Always loved the church and writing / a part of a church that lets me love it and still write :-)

"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." – John 15:5

Quick reference to John 15 — Jesus is describing what his relationship to God and their relationship to him should look like.

?? He picks this idea of a vineyard and spins it like a prism... refracting into all these separate ideas, shedding light on so many dynamics that it's a joy to unpack them all.

?? I've taken a bath in the concepts for about 18 months and I'm still trying to figure out all the depth of what he was saying!

?? At it's fundamental level I think Jesus was saying that fruitfulness is his goal for us.

?? Jesus never talks about evangelism without talking about discipleship or vice-versa. They don't seem to be divisible to him as so many in the church think of them today. The most often quoted verse we cite when talking about "evangelism" even showcases Jesus saying we should go and "make disciples." We've divorced these ideas and I want us to rediscover their reunion through Jesus' concept of fruitfulness.

PRAYER

a history of unfruitfulness...

Israel

What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? Is. 5:4

I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine? Jer. 2:21

?? The grand story of Israel in scripture seems to be of an intended fruitfulness that never came to fruition.

“Put your ear down to the Bible, and hear Him bid you go and pull sinners out of the fire of sin.

Put your ear down to the burdened, agonized heart of humanity, and listen to its pitiful wail for help.

Go stand by the gates of hell, and hear the damned entreat you to go to their father's house and bid their brothers and sisters and servants and masters not to come there.

Then look Christ in the face -- whose mercy you have professed to obey -- and tell Him whether you will join heart and soul and body and circumstances in the march to publish His mercy to the world.” -- William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army

love

?? I begins and ends with love. There are three chapters in this book directly about love — it felt really weird for me to do that — but I just keep coming back to how much Jesus talked about love.

?? Jesus paints a beautiful picture here... but he gives one command. He makes one appointment. He wraps up by saying here's the main thing: **LOVE EACH OTHER**. That's your ultimate fruit. That's the ultimate fruit of your congregations. That's the ultimate fruit our communities need: LOVE

**What will I be remembered for?
Fruit?
Or Nothing?**

the church

SLWC's journey

?? *40 Days* experiences/8 years (prayer, worship, freedom)

?? *Purpose Driven Life* experience (550 people getting in small groups in one week)

?? We needed to rethink the way we live our lives in the world

?? We needed to relanguage evangelism in terms that were relevant and applicable to daily life

?? We needed to reimagine the true results of discipleship — is the way we are living really going to matter... that's the essence of the key question = **What will I be remembered for?**

?? The result: *The Fruitful Life* (birthed out of the needs of the church serving Christ & the community, not the needs of a publishing house)

ALL CHURCHES?

Along the way — many are telling us that they have the same needs.

a picture of fruitfulness...

?? Something had gone wrong . . .

?? True Vine

?? Jesus paints a new Picture in John 15. . .

Read John 15:5-8

“We have been called to be fruitful—not successful, not productive, not accomplished. Success comes from strength, stress, and human effort. Fruitfulness comes from vulnerability and the admission of our own weakness.” — Henri Nouwen

a lifestyle of connection...

abiding

?? Law-abiding? I can't abide that person?

?? Abiding/Remaining — it's all about connection.
Abiding is the lifestyle of connection

?? Is this only for super-xians? - NO

?? We're in the gardening business — the head Gardener has enlisted you to help tend his garden (perhaps you need to move from strictly a sheep/shepherd model to a vineyard/vinedresser model — sheep are led / plants are cared for)

?? But before you get too deep into applying the gardener model remind yourself that you are to be at-

tached to the vine. Your congregation and community is your fruit and your attachment to the vine is what most directly effects the way it honors God.

dependence

?? ILL = Power Drill Story

?? You need a simple full-time connection to Christ

pruning

?? Branches that are dead—cut off

?? Branches that don't produce fruit—pruned/adjusted

?? ILL = suckers on a tree:
parts of a life
parts of my church
parts of the church
DON'T = “you're a sucker”

results

?? Results aren't everything

?? But lack of results should make us wonder

?? **Fruit is not optional**

?? But fruit is natural