



"MUCH FRUIT"

Jesus said: "Apart from Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5

*"He that abideth in Me, and I in Him,
the same bringeth forth much fruit."
John 15:5*

Our Lord had spoken of fruit, more fruit. He now adds the thought: *much fruit*. There is in the Vine such fullness, the care of the divine Husbandman is so sure of success, that the much fruit is not a demand, but the simple promise of what must come to the branch that lives in the double abiding—he in Christ, and Christ in him. *"The same bringeth forth much fruit."* It is certain.

Have you ever noticed the difference in the Christian life between work and fruit? A machine can do work: only life can bear fruit. A law can compel work: only love can spontaneously bring forth fruit. Work implies effort and labor: the essential idea of fruit is that it is the silent natural restful produce of our inner life. The gardener may labor to give his apple tree the digging and [fertilizing], the watering and the pruning it needs—he can do nothing to produce the apple: *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy."*

The healthy life bears much fruit. The connection between work and fruit is perhaps best seen in the expression, *"fruitful in every good work"* (Colossians 1:10). It is only when good works come as the fruit of the indwelling Spirit that they are acceptable to God. Under the compulsion of law and conscience, or the influence of inclination and zeal, men may be most diligent in good works, and yet find that they have but little spiritual result. There can be no reason but this — their works are man's effort, instead of being the fruit of the Spirit, the restful, natural outcome of the Spirit's operation within us.

Let all workers come and listen to our holy Vine

as He reveals the law of sure and abundant fruitfulness: *"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."*

The gardener cares for one thing — the strength and healthy life of his tree: the fruit follows of itself. If you would bear fruit, see that the inner life is perfectly right, that your relation to Christ Jesus is clear and close. Begin each day with Him in the morning, to know in truth that you are abiding in Him and He in you. Christ tells that nothing less will do. It is not your willing and running, it is not by your might or strength, but *"by my Spirit, saith the Lord."* Meet each new engagement, undertake every new work, with an ear and heart open to the Master's voice: *"He that abideth in me, beareth much fruit."* See you to the abiding — He will see to the fruit, for He will give it in you and through you.

O my brother, it is Christ must do all! The Vine provides the sap, and the life, and the strength —the branch waits, and rests, and receives, and bears the fruit. Oh, the blessedness of being only branches, through whom the Spirit flows and brings God's life to men!

I pray you, take time and ask the Holy Spirit to give you to realize the unspeakably solemn place you occupy in the mind of God. He has planted you into His Son with the calling and the power to bear much fruit. Accept that place. Look much to God, and to Christ, and expect joyfully to be what God has planned to make you, a fruitful branch.

Much fruit! So be it, blessed Lord Jesus. It can be, for Thou art the Vine. It shall be, for I am abiding in Thee. It must be, for Thy Father is the Husbandman that cleanses the branch. Yea, much fruit, out of the abundance of Thy grace.

