

Bethany Bible Church  
March 4, 2018  
Dr. John Vawter, Interim Pastor

**We are Not Our Own: Gifts & Talents**  
“What Are We? Who Are We”

**God Expects Us to Bear Fruit**

John 15:3-8

**Our Giftedness Bears Fruits in Others**

Dr. Charles Ryrie

**Our Giftedness Must be Exercised, Developed and Unleashed**

2 Timothy 1:5-6

**Have a Fair Estimation of Our Abilities...of Who We Are**

Romans 12:3-4

**The Principle of Talents**

Matthew 25:15

**The Honor of God's Commendation**

Matthew 25:21

## **Personal Application**

1. Lord, help us know who we are... and what we are.
2. Lord, help us to be committed to bearing fruit.
3. Lord, help us to have a fair estimation of who we are... how you made us.
4. Well done.

## **Questions for Discussion and Further Reflection**

1. Why are spiritual gifts meant for the body of Christ and not for ourselves?
2. What exactly is spiritual fruit?
3. Why is developing Christian character foundational in the exercise of spiritual gifts?
4. Are you a *fruitbearer*? How is God using you in the lives of other people?
5. Do you have a “roadmap for life”? Have you intentionally identified your spiritual gift(s), and a plan to use them for the benefit of the church?

# What is Fruit?

What is fruit? Actually, the question ought to be phrased in the plural: What are fruits which a Christian can bear? The N. T. gives several answers to the question.

1. A developing Christian character is fruit. If the goal of the Christian life may be stated as Christlikeness, then surely every trait developed in us that reflects His character must be fruit that is very pleasing to Him. Paul describes the fruit of the Spirit in nine terms in [Galatians 5:22-23](#), and Peter urges the development of seven accompaniments to faith in order that we might be fruitful ([2 Peter 1:5-8](#)). Two of these terms are common to both lists: love and self-control. The others are joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, virtue, knowledge, endurance, piety, and brotherly love. To show these character traits is to bear fruit in one's life.

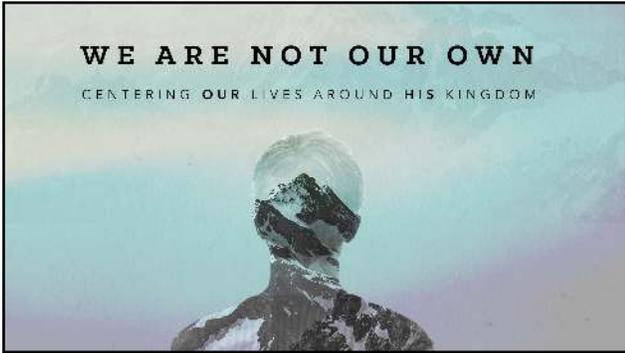
2. Right character will result in right conduct, and as we live a life of good works we produce fruit ([Colossians 1:10](#)). This goes hand in hand with increasing in the knowledge of God, for as we learn what pleases Him, our fruitful works become more and more conformed to that knowledge. When Paul expressed how torn he was between the two possibilities of either dying and being with Christ or living on in this life, he said that living on would mean fruitful labor or work ([Philippians 1:22](#)). This phrase could mean that (a) his work itself was fruit, or (b) fruit would result from his work. In either case, his life and work were fruit. So may ours be.

3. Those who come to Christ through our witness are fruit. Paul longed to go to Rome to have some fruit from his ministry there ([Romans 1:13](#)), and he characterized the conversion of the household of Stephanas as the firstfruits of Achaia ([1 Corinthians 16:15](#)).

4. We may also bear fruit with our lips by giving praise to God and thankfully confessing His name ([Hebrews 13:15](#)). In other words, our lips bear fruit when we offer thankful acknowledgement to the name of God. And this is something we should do continually.

5. We bear fruit when we give money. Paul designated the collection of money for the poorer saints in Jerusalem as fruit ([Romans 15:28](#)). Too, when he thanked the Philippians for their financial support of his ministry, he said that their act of giving brought fruit to their account ([Philippians 4:17](#), KJV).

So Great Salvation, Charles Ryrie, Victor Books, 1989, pp. 49-50.



"I am the true vine, and My Father is the gardener. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples."

*John 15:3-8*

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"I am reminded of your sincere faith,  
which first lived in your grandmother  
Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I  
am persuaded, now lives in you also.  
For this reason I remind you to fan into  
flame the gift of God, which is in you  
through the laying on of my hands."

*2 Timothy 1:5-6*

"Do not think of yourself more highly than  
you ought, but rather think of yourself with  
sober judgment, in accordance with the  
faith God has distributed to each of you. For  
just as each of us has one body with many  
members, and these members do not all  
have the same function..."

*Romans 12:3-4*

**Brad Pellish  
Cathy Morgan**

**The Principle of Talents**

"To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey."

*Matthew 25:15*

## Personal Application

## The Honor of God's Commendation

1. Lord, help us know who we are...and what we are.

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'"

*Matthew 25:21*

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