

Bears (Bearing Fruit)

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. 9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

*16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bear fruit.
John 15:2-9,16*

The Basic Bible Truth

Jesus informed His disciples that their responsibility was to share their faith with others and treat others with the kind of concern and respect that Jesus had modeled for them. Jesus called it “bearing fruit”. We are told to abide in Christ, and, that when we do that, we will produce fruit. Leading others to Christ is the ultimate goal, but producing fruit carries with it the idea that everything we do, every aspect of our lives shows those around us what and who God is. Ultimately it is all about God, not us.

The Object

As Many Bears As You Want To Give Away



I purchased hundreds of these bears online and had them shipped to the local Dollar Tree store. They cost \$1 each and are an amazingly soft, plush toy, and a very cheap gift to give away for any occasion to a child.

I inform those listening that any time they hear a word containing any form of the word bear, bare, or a word that sounds like those two words their job is to raise their hand, I will call on them and they can then inform me “I heard a bear”. For example, words like mulberry, barrister, and barricade all fit that criteria. They will often miss some, and when they do, I just keep repeating the same phrase over and

over again until someone catches it and raises their hand and says, “I heard a bear”. For each bear “sighting”, I hand out a bear to a person in the audience, simply starting at one end of a row and working my way around the entire room. The idea is for everyone to go home with a bear.

The Lesson

This is an outline I use to give me a reminder of when to use a “bear” word during my talk. I usually have 40-50 people in class and I want have enough bear “sightings” that everyone gets a bear. You can fill in the “in between” stuff.

John 15:2-16

A. The Context:

1. The following day, Jesus laid His life down on the cross.
2. He paid His blood for us. We are now His fruit and His fruit-bearers.
3. It is no accident that Jesus commanded us to go forth and bear fruit...and then He himself went and died on a cross.
4. The only fruit that will last is fruit that grows out of the cross.

B. We Are Chosen:

1. We would not have chosen God if He had not revealed Himself to us.
2. God’s choices have the weight of eternity on them.
3. God’s choice is resurrecting, recreating, life giving. Our choice is in response to His call.
4. He will not abandon us, leaving us barefoot and barehanded with nothing.
5. Isaiah prophesied that one day God would bare His mighty arm. We see that arm sticking out of the manger.
6. We need to bury our fears and hesitations and trust Him to supply what we need.
7. We have been chosen for a purpose—to serve.
8. He will remove the barricades and obstacles.
9. “No one is granted an experience with God without being subsequently sent.” *Robert E. Barron*

C. To Bear Fruit:

1. First, what is fruit-bearing?
2. And what is the fruit that we have been called to bear...that we must bear.
3. It is loving others, and leading them to Christ. Imagine a pallbearer opening the casket and talking to the corpse. The unsaved are spiritually dead.
4. Too often, the thought of what comes after this life for the unsaved barely enters our minds.
5. The picture is of a vine dresser pruning to ensure that the branch bears the most fruit possible.
6. He has a personal, intimate involvement in our lives.
7. We are to abide not only in Him, but in His love. When all is stripped away and laid bare, love is premier.
8. Imagine a branch on a mulberry, or a strawberry plant. We are to bear the fruit of love—for all to enjoy.
9. We are not talking just bear hugs here. Real love was demonstrated for us when Jesus went to the cross.
10. And if we don’t bear fruit, we are going to be pruned—and thrown into the fire.
11. Bearing fruit also includes making disciples—teaching others, and letting them see God flowing through out lives.

12. Our best witness to the world is to follow the commandment to love one another. That is what the world will see.
13. Example and description of a barrister file. The glass front doors show everything inside them.
14. And when they see that we are not barbarians like the rest of the world, but that we, as the Bible requires, forbear.

D. But How?

1. The second question answered by this passage about bearing fruit is: how fruit-bearing is accomplished.
2. The answer He gives is repeated 7 times. "Abide"
3. Bearing fruit is going to be impossible without a close connection to the vine.
4. We must remove all barriers that keep us from spending time with God.
5. We cannot expect to see fruit if we are barely connected to the vine.
6. Our connection with God is based around His Word.
7. Without it, bearing good fruit is impossible.
8. We are to abide in His love. God's love for us is so complete and perfect that He will do nothing that is not ultimately good for His child. That means that I can rest in the knowledge that He will take care of me, no matter how bad the circumstances may look. Being a child of God, closely connected with Him, is far more than barely bearable. It can be a joyful experience always.

E. For Whom?

1. Bearing fruit is ultimately for the glory of God.
2. God is glorified when we bear much good fruit. That means it is His reputation at stake in all that we do.