

# Legacy (1)

## The Legacy of Lasting Fruit

Once a year during the month of December we come together as a church family to bring a special offering the Lord. This offering is one that requires sacrifice and unity... it is one that builds a legacy for future generations. This offering enables us to take a giant leap forward in fulfilling the big opportunities God has placed before us.

Legacy: What people remember when we're gone.

- Psalm 112:5,6 TNIV Good will come to those who are **generous** ... *they will never be shaken; they will be remembered forever.*

Legacy: What God remembers when we're gone.

- Hebrews 6:10 NIV God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.
- **Jesus said**, Mark 9:41 ESV For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward.

Really? rewarded for giving a cup of water? Wow!

Think about it everybody... Jesus said the **smallest offering** to help just **one person who belongs to Christ will be rewarded!**

So, if you are thinking, **let the big givers give**, I can't afford this right now, you will be missing out.

Next year I am calling our church to a **Discipleship Focus**. We will be **learning, training, growing** in us the **Heart** and **Life-style of a Disciple**.

One major characteristic of a Disciple is this: They **Produce** what Jesus calls **Lasting Fruit!**

Context: Jesus is in the upper room with His disciples bearing his heart with them around the table of what has been called **His Last Supper (John 13-17)**. These words would seem to have **extra special importance**.

- **Imagine if last Thursday was your very last meal** with your Children and Grandchildren.
  - He begins the evening by **washing their feet** and teaching them to do likewise.
  - He gives them **new commandment to love one another**.
  - He promises them a **new power Holy Spirit**.
  - He speaks of the **Father** 52 times in these. (study – what does Jesus say about the Father here)
  - In **chapter 15** **He commissions** them to **stay planted in me** and produce **fruit** --- **Lasting Fruit**

John 15:1-2 NIV "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. **2** He cuts off every branch in me that bears no **fruit**, while every branch that does bear **fruit** he prunes so that it will be even **more fruitful**."

**Catch the Metaphor.** A grape vine has a trunk with branches and during the growing season its produces new branches which bud out and then produces grapes. At the end of the harvest the fruitful branches are pruned back, and the old dead branches (usually on the bottom) are cut off entirely. **The goal of the gardener is Fruit!**

John 15:3-5 **NLT** You have already been **pruned** and **purified** by the message I have given you. **4** Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce **fruit** if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be **fruitful** unless you remain in me. **5** Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce **much fruit**. For apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:8 **NIV** This is to my Father's glory, that you bear **much fruit**, showing yourselves to be my **disciples**.

**Legacy Verse:** John 15:16 **NIV** You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—**fruit that will last**—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

Jesus came to the planet earth with a two-fold mission:

1. Take care of the sin problem that separated us from God. He did that by taking our sins on his sinless body, and then paid the death penalty for us on the cross. The resurrection proved to all creation that the Father, had accepted that sacrifice as a legal substitute for the penalty of our sins. All those who believe and receive by faith the work of Jesus on the cross are saved from their sin.
2. **New** Jesus came to call, change, train, and commission world changing disciples who extend and multiply His kingdom not only geographically but generationally by producing lasting fruit.

**New** John 15:16 **TPT** You didn't choose me, but I've **chosen** and **commissioned** you to go into the world to bear fruit. And your **fruit will last**, because whatever you ask of my Father, for my sake, he will give it to you.

This Call to Discipleship has been extended through the generations all the way down to us!

**We are Chosen**

1) **We are chosen too!**

- a) Note: the 12 disciples were not the only ones chosen in Christ.
- 2) **Christ has Chosen Generations of followers.**
    - a) 1 Pet 2:9 **NKJV** But you *are* a chosen generation...
    - b) Eph. 1:4 say God chose us in Christ before the foundations of the world were even formed.
      - i) **NEW** Eph 1:11 **NLT** Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he **chose us in advance**, and he makes everything work out according to his plan.
  - 3) **How do you know if you are one of the Chosen?**
    - a) (**Mt 22**) After telling the Parable of the Wedding Feast where many unworthy guest were invited... all they had to do was put on the wedding robe that the Father had provided for them. But when one of the attendees refused to wear the wedding garments Jesus said he was removed and cast into outer darkness.

Jesus concluded **many are called** (invited) **but few are chosen** (**Mt 22:14**).

The chosen, are the ones who are **not only invited**, but they have **accepted the invitation, clothed themselves with Christ**. Those who clothe themselves with their own self-righteousness are not the Chosen

- b) Matthew 7:15-17 NIV **15** “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s **clothing**, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. **16** By their **fruit** you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? **17** Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

*Chosen...*

### We are Chosen and Commissioned to Produce Lasting Fruit

- 1) **What is lasting fruit?**

Jesus answered it clearly: John 4:35,36 NLT You know the saying, ‘Four months between planting and harvest.’ But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest. **36** The harvesters are paid good wages, and **the fruit** they harvest is **people brought to eternal life**. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike!

**People are eternal --- Only People Last Forever!** Not your possessions, awards or accomplishments...

- 2) **Lasting fruit is everything you do to invest in the people being brought to eternal life!**

**Fruit is great for consumption**, it is **to be enjoyed!** But fruit the last, possesses the **seeds for multiple generations**.

*Think about Legacy...*

**What we do for ourselves usually dies with us... what we do for others, lives beyond us.**

*Another thing Jesus taught his disciples at the last supper was the importance of prayer...*

### We are Chosen and Commissioned to Pray for Fruit Bearing Resources.

- 1) **Prayer is an important element for Legacy Minded Disciples.**

**KEY VERSE:** John 15:16 TPT You didn’t choose me, but I’ve chosen and commissioned you to go into the world to bear fruit. And your fruit will last, because **whatever you ask** of my Father, **for my sake**, he will give it to you.

- i) “Whatever we ask” ???
  - ii) Three times during the last supper teachings Jesus tells them **whatever you ask the Father in my name, or for my sake He will give it to you**
- b) **This is one of the most twisted scriptures in the bible.**

- i) This is **not a blank check** to people who can pray whatever they want into existence!
- ii) **ILL.** When I was in Bible College in Texas we had an outbreak of terrible tornadoes.

In the students prayer gathering one of my classmates supposedly got a word... He used the this verse to say if we pray to the Father whatever we ask He will give it. So He proudly got up and said I am asking the Father to never, ever allow another tornado to touch down in the state of Texas!

The next day, another line of thunderstorms came through Texas and more tornados... more damage!

When asked what happened? He blamed it on US not having enough faith to believe God with him!

iii) Note: This is how the Prosperity Doctrine got out of hand. True Disciples don't Twist the Scriptures.

c) The context here is aligning ourselves, in prayer for resources that produce eternal fruit!

2) Legacy minded disciples will come into alignment with the Lord's heart of lost people and they will pray for miraculous resources that produce lasting fruit.

**NEW** Matthew 9:35-38 ESV And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. **36** When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. **37** Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; **38** therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Harvesting is a huge job! It takes a lot of resources! A lot of Labor.

I believe the Father want you to have all the resources for Lasting Fruit...

- Accept your calling
- Come into to alignment with the Lord's Heart for people.
- Pray for the continuous flow of Legacy Resources.
- Give what you have to give!

Legacy Lanes (slide)

1) Global

- a) 12000 in Asia and Europe
- b) 6000 in mental health for Missionaries through Lisa Green
- c) 30,000 plus in Wolof and West Africa
- d) You gave nearly 4000 dollars to help Christians in Ukraine.

2) Local

- a) Over 10,000 helping our military families in America.
- b) Over 4000 for Renewed Life Ministry, helping men get free from addictions.
- c) 12,000 dollars was given to Operation Saving Life
- d) Homeless Outreach has really grown (2500 was invest in feeding the hungry)

3) Next Gen

- a) You gave nearly 20,000 dollars to cover to help with the cost of summer camp for 48 students and 81 volunteers.
- b) This investment has had an incredible impact.

#### 4) CL Families

This year we were able to help our church families in so many ways:

- a) Marriage counseling
- b) Over 20 families were helped with Emergency assistance... food, clothing, housing, hospital expenses.

What

Two Big Questions:

1. What to give and where to give It?

2. What is one big impossible breakthrough can we pray with you about for next year?