

“Relying On The Holy Spirit” by Charles F. Stanley

Chapter 7

Review: Ch. 1 “The Spirit-Filled Life is For Every Believer”, Ch. 2 “Who Exactly is the Holy Spirit?”, Ch. 3 “Relying on the Holy Spirit’s Power in Us”, Ch. 4 “Relying on the Holy Spirit’s Presence”, Ch. 5 “Relying On The Holy Spirit in Prayer”, Ch.6 “Avoiding Sin Against The Holy Spirit”.

Ch. 7 “Reproducing Christ’s Character In Us”

Why did Christ leave behind with us the Holy Spirit?

Mathew 7:20-23 – Jesus said: “Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

What is Jesus telling us here? What is a Christian’s fruit? How are we to do the “will of the Father”?

“Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’”

What is “that day” that Jesus is referring to? Why would Jesus be speaking with them on “that day”?

“Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’” Why are they considered “evildoers”?

John 15:1-2 – Jesus said: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 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.”

The vine is frequently used in the OT as a symbol of Israel. When it is used, Israel is often shown as lacking in some way. Why does a gardener prune a branch that bears fruit?

Isa. 5:7 – “The vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the garden of his delight. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.” What does this mean? How did the kingdom of Judah, which came to an end in 586 B.C., disappoint the Lord?

Isa. 11:1 – “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.” Who is this shoot? We see in the OT and the NT the analogy of pruning branches. How are they related?

Peter Was A Fruit-Bearer

Acts 2:22-23 – Luke wrote quoting Peter’s speech after they had been filled with The Holy Spirit: “Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.” Peter was bearing good fruit by not being timid but rather being bold in his proclamation of the truth. Do you find it difficult to be bold for Christ in your daily life? Why?

Two Types Of Fruit

The Bible teaches there are two types of fruit:

1. The Fruit of Works and Deeds – **Math. 7:16** – “By their fruit you will recognize them.”
2. The Fruit of Character – It is most important “as what we do is always a natural overflow of who we are.”

Gal. 5:22-26: Paul wrote: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” What does it mean that “there is no law”?

“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.” What does this mean? “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.” What does it mean to “keep in step with the Spirit”?

What is the difference between the fruit of works and deeds and the fruit of character? Why is character so important?

The Nature Of Fruit Bearing

1. Bearing fruit is not an option, it is commanded. Are you bearing fruit in your life?
2. We are to bear “good” fruit only through the Holy Spirit. Do you recognize good and bad fruit in your life?
3. We are to bear “much” fruit. The fruit of the Spirit is singular. We receive all of it, not just a portion. Are you putting forth a maximum effort to bear much fruit when the Lord leads you?

Gal. 5:16-17 – Paul wrote: “So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature.”

What power does the Spirit have? Do you recognize the contrast in your life between the sinful nature and the Spirit?

What About The Unfruitful

Those that don’t abide in Christ are subject to:

1. Being lifted up by confessing Christ as their savior and made fruitful.
2. Being removed by death.

Pruning in your life can be very painful. If God is active in your life and you are seeking His guidance through the Holy Spirit, you may experience discomfort and stress as He prepares you to do His will. Be patient and know that His glory is great and that he wants to use your life in a special and unique way.