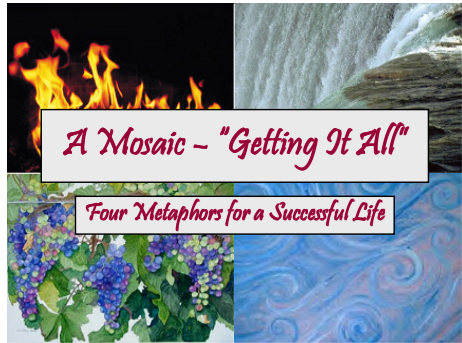


*"Discover
New Wine"
John 15:1-8*



INTRODUCTION

Kudzu was introduced to the United States in 1876 at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Countries were invited to build exhibits to celebrate the 100th birthday of the U.S. The Japanese government constructed a beautiful garden filled with plants from their country. The large leaves and sweet-smelling blooms of kudzu captured the imagination of American gardeners who used the plant for ornamental purposes.



Figure 1
Kudzu outside
of Atlanta, GA

Florida nursery operators, Charles and Lillie Pleas, discovered that animals would eat the plant and promoted its use for forage in the 1920s. Their Glen Arden Nursery in Chipley sold kudzu plants through the mail. A historical marker there proudly proclaims "Kudzu Developed Here."

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Soil Conservation Service promoted kudzu for erosion control. Hundreds of young men were given work planting kudzu through the Civilian Conservation Corps. Farmers were paid as much as eight dollars an acre as incentive to plant fields of the vines in the 1940s.

The problem is that it just grows too well! The climate of the Southeastern U.S. is perfect for kudzu. The vines grow as much as a foot per day during summer months, climbing trees, power poles, and anything else they contact. Under ideal conditions kudzu vines can grow sixty feet each year.



Figure 2: House in downtown Tate, GA.

The USDA declared kudzu to be a weed in 1972!

Common names for kudzu include:

mile-a-minute vine,

foot-a-night vine,


and the vine that ate the South.

T.S. Jesus Talked about a vine also. He talked about a true vine and what's impact should be upon the world. Turn with me to John 15:1

15:1 "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. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

NIV

 **IF WE ARE TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN OUR LIVES, WE MUST LEARN A TRUTH ABOUT VINES--YIELD IS EVERYTHING.**

It is time for us to discover new wine. Last years fruit is not enough. The occasional grape is not enough. If we are attached to the vine, we should be producing fruit.

I. Admit that Bearing Fruit is elemental to becoming fruitful in our lives vs 2

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.

- You cannot be successful in your Journey with Jesus if you are fruitful.
- You cannot call yourself fruitful unless you are bearing fruit.
- You won't remain attached to the vine unless you bear fruit.

Listen to the definitions of fruitful

- Yielding or producing fruit
- Conducive to an abundant yield
- Abundantly productive

We have equated fruitfulness with showing evidence of the fruit of the spirit.. but to be truly fruitful we must yield a crop. When it comes to vines, it's all about the yield.



Kudzu has long vines strong green vines, lush leaves, boy can it grow, but it is not fruitful, it is a weed.

It is not just about green leaves and strong vines

(fruit if the Spirit).

Being fruitful is about the yield. It is about actually bearing fruit, reproducing what we have discovered in others.



Too many believers have settled for just growing the vine and not bearing fruit. Do you justify the fact that you have not led others to the forgiver, by raitionallizing that you bear the the furit of the

spirit.

Isn't it time for us to admit, you can't be furiltful until you bear some fruit.

 **ABOUT VINES--YIELD IS EVERYTHING.**

II. Admit that Bearing Fruit is evidential of a thriving relationship vv 2-5.

2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, . . .
. . . 4 . . . No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, **he will bear much fruit;** . . .

A. Means we are attached to the vine

B. Means that we are responding to God's pruning

Grapes grow the best in conditions of hardship. But **given a choice, growing wild, grapevine in a favorable**

take the vegetative route: that is, it will put its energies into making leaves and shoots.

More modern methods of growing grapes, in close-spaced rows on wire trellising with extensive pruning, (up to 90%), take advantage of the fact that making the vines struggle generally results in better quality grapes.

It's a bit like people. Place someone in a near-perfect environment, giving them every comfort and all that they could ever want to satisfy their physical needs, and it could have rather disastrous consequences for their personality and physique.

We need to understand that it is through hardships and struggles that we will bear the most fruit.

We need to understand that become fruitful will require allowing god to prune the dead wood from our lives.

 **ABOUT VINES--YIELD IS EVERYTHING.**

III.Admit that Bearing Fruit is exultant to the Father's glory vs 8

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

Like a grandparent taking joy n the birth of a grand child so God takes joy when we bear fruit.

It is testimony that what we believe is worthy enough to be shared with others.

On ER the other night one of the female doctors was uncomfortable when a fellow doctor introduced her as his girlfriend. She was uncomfortable with

others knowing about their relationship. She like the guy. She wanted the relationship. She just didn't want it to be too public.

Some of us live our lives the with the forgger that way. We want it, but were uncomfortable sharing about it with others

It is time for us to discover new wine. Last years fruit is not enough. The occasional grape is not enough. If we are attached to the vine, we should be producing fruit. It is time to glorify God by bearing fruit.

ABOUT VINES--YIELD IS EVERYTHING.

INVITATION

Do you need to confess that you have settled for just being a green leafy vine that bears little or no fruit? Do you need to admit that you have settled for less than a fruitful life?

Do you need to admit that you would rather have just a cushy easy walk with God than to face the hardships challenges that becoming fruitful will entail.

Do You need to admit that while you are good are working out the inward spiritual focus of your life, you outward impact is very little.

Are you ready to give up being Kudzu and that you are ready to discover some new vine – new fruit in your life.

If you want to make those admissions, confessions, I challenge you to come forward and pray with me.

APPLICATION

1. Take a step toward someone in a new relationship this week.
2. Ask God daily to prune you for fruitfulness and to make you sensitive to his leading
3. Share a story, a testimony a praise, an invitation this week.