

MORE

READ John 15:1-11

INTRO This AM I want to talk about your 2016, about how we get the “MORE” out of life that we all want.

- I’ve never heard a person say: “I want “LESS” out of life.”
- But when I look at new year resolutions, the most unhelpful word is “more”.

TRANS What is “MORE”?

ILLUS a New Year’s resolution list for “more”.

1. Read the Bible more.
2. Pray more.
3. Forgive more quickly.
4. Put the phone down more.
5. Read more books.
6. Eat more vegetables.
7. Go on more hikes.
8. Write more letters to friends and family.
9. Work more strategically.
10. Print more pictures and put them in frames instead of leaving them on my phone forever.

We all want “MORE” out of life in some way or another.

- We craft our lists w/ the best of intentions, but the worst of plans.
- This list is good, but it will produce little good in us.
- More of the right things are good, but God wants to give “MORE” to us than just the right things. God’s “MORE” =
 - abundant life (John 10:10)
 - “bear more & much fruit” (John 15:2,5,8,)
 - “ask what you wish & it will be done for you” (John 15:7)
 - a life full of joy (John 15:11)

TRANS So, who’s MORE do you want? How do I get God’s “MORE” in my life?

MPS: God works to make us MORE like Jesus by producing MORE spiritual fruit that brings MORE overflowing joy.

TRANS 1st, understand **4 truths re: HOW God works.**

#1: God the Father prunes a Xn's life to increase spiritual fruit. .1-2

The Father prunes our lives to produce more fruit.

- counter-intuitive to our thinking, but it is the way God works.
- Today--each must ask of ourselves: "Am I bearing fruit as a Xn?"
 - Non-fruit producing branches get taken away b/c dead branches steal life-giving nutrients from good branches.
 - Fruit-bearing branches get pruned.
 - Don't get disillusioned when God makes a cut.
 - Every branch gets cut. God's working for "MORE" for your good.

God the Father is actively involved in the Christian's life, working in you to increase spiritual fruit from you to bring greater joy in you.

Pruning involves the Father and Son working together.

- The Father prunes to increase our fruit from a stronger relationship w/Jesus.
- Jesus sources growth in life that produces fruit.
 - No spiritual fruit will be produced in your life apart from Jesus as the source.
 - No pruning from the Father will in any way hinder your spiritual growth & maturity.

MORE comes as God the Father prunes & Jesus sources greater growth for increased spiritual fruit.

Truth #1: God the Father prunes a Christian's life to increase spiritual fruit.

#2: Jesus sources unlimited fruit-bearing as we abide in Him. .3-7

Jesus speaks to Xns, those who have received new life & live by faith in Him.

- Salvation comes by the living word that cleanses & brings new life in us.
- Pruning ≠ salvation, but the work in Xns that refines & sanctifies.

Salvation comes when by faith Jesus, the living Word, makes us alive & lives within us in an ongoing relationship.

Jesus is the vine that sources our life as we abide in relationship w/ Him.

- The key to Jesus' unlimited power in life = abiding in Him.
- There is no substitute source that provides what Jesus gives.
 - The only way to bear fruit is to remain in him.

Jesus = only source of all good & MORE in life.

We can do nothing on our own.

- The life we produce in our own strength may last for a time,
 - but leaves wanting, unsatisfied & unable to stand test of time & eternity.
 - The life we most desire, that satisfies longings & desires, is NOT w/in our capability to produce.

When we strive more & more to produce a life that satisfies, the only MORE we get is wearied & frustrated.

Jesus sources the Xn life with an unlimited supply.

- He cleanses us, makes us alive, sources & sustains life for increasing fruit.
- ⊕ **All** that Jesus does in us holds present & eternal value.
- ⊕ **No work** that Jesus sources in life ever fails to produce what He wills.
- When we abide in Jesus He becomes an increasing source for all of life.

If you want the "MORE" life, you must abide in the One who IS life & gives MORE.
Jesus = the one unlimited source for MORE life as we abide in him.

Truth #2: Jesus, God the Son, sources unlimited fruit-bearing as we abide in Him.

#3: Bearing fruit means faithful obedience to Jesus' commands. .8-10

Bearing fruit glorifies God and proves that we are followers of Jesus.

- Bearing fruit means we live in obedience to Jesus.
 - Obedience demonstrates = we have received God's love, we believe and trust Him, and are living in His love. (1 John 5:2)

- When we abide in Jesus, obedience ceases to be drudgery & becomes the activity thru which God's love flows through our life.
- When we stop obeying God, we stop feeling His love because the channel for it to flow has gone away.

Obedience to Jesus' commands demonstrates that the Xn lives by faith in God's love.

Love is the defining motivation for Xn obedience, not the result of it.

- The Gospel makes very clear.
 - We are not loved by God because we obey.
 - Xns obey because we are loved by God and live in His love.
- Jesus' commands become a rigid set of rules when separated from abiding.
 - Commandments disconnected from love weigh heavy on us, get received harshly by us & isolate us in cold loneliness.
 - Love that obeys = dispels the cold, destroys the harshness & lifts the heavy burden.

God's love in Jesus makes all the difference to lead us in faithful obedience.

Abiding in Jesus means abiding in God's love.

- NO love from God outside of Jesus Christ.
- We can trust God b/c Jesus showed us the faithfulness of the Father's love.

When we abide in Jesus, our lives are filled with God's love and we obey because we've been greatly loved.

Truth #3: Bearing fruit means faithful obedience to Jesus' commands.

#4: Jesus sources MORE spiritual fruit that increases joy to fill & overflow.

Spiritual fruit produces increasing joy that overflows.

- We are too often "joyed by" & "satisfied w/" that which gives God no joy,
 - indulging in "false joys" & "joy substitutes".
- We know what "joy in Christ" is, but we are not "full of" it.
- There are too many attached, dead limbs sucking life.

- Joy from spiritual fruit cannot overflow when we hang on to things that are not from God, do not honor Him, are not submitted to or obedient to God.
- We become “joy-deficient” when we try to make Jesus supply our plans (dead branches that need to be pruned).

MORE joy overflows from a life that trusts God's pruning & Jesus to source a life that honors Him first.

Jesus is the unlimited source of overflowing joy that supplies eternal life.

- True joy that only Jesus gives is the result of spiritual fruit.
- Spiritual fruit grows when we live in obedience to Jesus' commands.
- We walk in Jesus' commands when we live in God's love.
- We live & walk in God's love by abiding in Jesus.
- The life Jesus sources is eternal, beneficial and blessed both now and forevermore.

Therefore, joy overflows when we abide in Jesus.

Truth #4: Jesus sources MORE spiritual fruit that increases joy to fill & overflow.

MPS: God works to make us MORE like Jesus by producing MORE spiritual fruit that brings MORE overflowing joy.

TRANS MORE = God prunes 2 make us productive. Jesus sources 2 bear fruit.

- God the Father & Son work in us that we might be more fruitful in our work.
- NOT telling you to produce an action today, but to bow before Jesus Christ.

TRANS How can you know God's works, the Father pruning & Jesus sourcing?

OBJ: Focus = 4 core values to know where & how God wants to prune life so Jesus can source MORE in you.

1. Relationship for life. (over ritual of religion.)

- Salvation brings us into relationship w/ the Father thru Jesus the Son by HS.
- Do NOT settle for 'empty, religious ritual' that is absent of relationship.

- Abiding in Jesus means living in relationship with Him as “First” in all of life.
- If you want MORE in 2016, ask this question, “Is Jesus 1st in my life?”

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” Matt 6:33

The more complete dependence you place upon Jesus the MORE overflowing joy you will experience in your life.

Relationship as a value means we ask Q?s like:

Q? What aspects of my life ‘drain spiritual fruit from me’ because they compete with my relationship with God?

Q? What must happen to live & walk in a daily, growing relationship w/ Jesus that produces more ultimate dependence upon Him & faithfulness walking w/ Him?

Learn to abide with Jesus.

- Let your relationship w/ Jesus source your motivation & sustaining strength.

ILLUS Smart phone as “Instrument of righteousness”

- I take out my phone and click out of habit.
- **How many would agree that you do the same?**
- My first tendency is to hit a “social stupidity” app, (aka SM).
- I’ve had to discipline myself to go to other apps first.

4 Apps help bring intentionality in relationship w/ Jesus = Abiding in Jesus.

- a. Bible: YouVersion. / A-n-J begins w/ being in God’s Word.
- b. Prayer: PrayerNB. / A-n-J strengthens in prayer communication w/ God.
- c. Scripture Memory: Fighter Verses. / A-n-J deepens as Word takes hold.
- d. Devotion: Spurgeon. / A-n-J gets encouraged by gospel reminders.

2. Expression of life. (serve in Jesus name over invoke Jesus’ name for self.)

Xn, you are a servant of the living God.

- God redeemed your life in Jesus to display His glory in the world.
- Expression means you let Jesus live so fully in you that He lives out thru you.
- Serving others displays God’s love by ministering in Jesus’ name.

God prunes & Jesus sources so we can serve others & demonstrate God’s love.

Expression as a value means we ask Q?s like:

Q? What is God doing to prune & prepare me to serve others?

Q? What has Jesus done in me that I can do for others?

Q? How is the expression of my life faithfully demonstrating God's love to people?

3. Authenticity in life. (live as Jesus leads over create façade to impress others.)

Jesus makes us new and transforms life by renewing our mind.

- A involves learning => becomes following => transforms to Jesus' image.
- A means laying down this life to take up the life Jesus lives within us.
- We no longer have to live as we once lived = slaves to sin.
- As we learn God's Word, way & will, we follow Him by faith as He leads.
 - Obedience = spiritual act of worship. (Rom 12:2)
- A = live as Jesus leads & changes within, NOT as pressured from outside.

Xns are set free to live as Jesus transforms & leads.

Authenticity means we put away the natural life in order to live the spirit life.

- As long as we only live in natural world, we fill life w/ natural world "stuff".
- We need our spiritual life to take 1st priority over our natural life.

ILLUS Oswald Chambers quote (My Utmost for His Highest, Dec 10)

"God's order was that the natural should be transformed into the spiritual by obedience; it is sin that made it necessary for the natural to be sacrificed.

Some of us are trying to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God before we have sacrificed the natural. The only way in which we can offer a spiritual sacrifice to God is by presenting our bodies a living sacrifice. Sanctification means more than deliverance from sin, it means the deliberate commitment of myself whom God has saved, to God, and I do not care what it costs.

If we do not sacrifice the natural to the spiritual, the natural life will mock at the life of the Son of God in us and produce a continual wither."

Authenticity as a value means we ask Q?s like:

Q? What do I need to learn about the spiritual life from God?

Q? How is God leading me to trust and follow Him?

Q? What distracts or prevents me from obeying God?

4. Mission of life. (live to make Jesus known over self-centered consumerism.)

God's mission gives purpose to life.

- Mission means we view all of life from God's eternal perspective.
 - God's eternal purpose determines every aspect & activity of life.
- Instead of dividing life btwn what is "for God" & "for me",

Xns align all of life under the Lordship of Jesus Christ to serve His eternal purpose at all times, in all places, w/ all people for His glory.

Xns live to tell all people about Jesus at all times in all places.

Mission as a value means we ask Q?s like:

Q? How does my life bear a faithful witness to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Q? Does every aspect & activity of my life serve God's eternal purpose?

If not, why not?

Q? What's it going to take to align all of life under Jesus' Lordship?

CLOSE When you build on these 4 truths & prioritize these 4 values, Jesus supplies the "MORE" life of overflowing joy.

Let's begin together today, by turning to Jesus and surrendering our lives completely to him.

Invitation: All to Jesus