

Fruitfulness

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Date: 16 March 2016

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[0 : 00] Now the subject matter of this portion of Luke chapter 8 that we read from concerns the bringing forth of fruit. A visible and tangible return, in other words, on the Lord's outlay of his spirit and his word.

No one takes delight in a piece of ground, for example, which has been tilled and sown, or a plant which has been nursed and tended. If after all the labour be stolen and there is nothing to show for it, to all intents and purposes, then the effect is the same as though the ploughman had never ploughed, the sower had never sown, the gardener had never dressed the tender plant.

When Jesus was warning his disciples about the danger of false prophets and how to spot them, he said in Matthew 7 verse 20, And if there is one thing which is being taught consistently throughout these first 20 or so verses of this chapter, it is that the Lord expects there to be fruit in the lives as well as in the hearts of his children.

And yes, it's great that he enables us by his grace to believe, to assert the truths of the gospel, to yes, believe in our hearts, but he expects that also to translate out into our lives.

Verses 1-3 then of this chapter we read came to pass afterward, he went throughout every city and village preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, and the twelve were with him.

[1 : 41] And certain women which had been healed in evil spirits and infirmities, the area called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna, the wife of Cusa, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others which ministered out to him of their substance.

First of all then we find Jesus preaching and teaching the gospel throughout Galilee, giving as full and free an exposure as possible to the good news of the kingdom.

He went throughout every city and village preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom. This gospel in other words is too important to be confined in a corner. However, we see also that particular individuals accompanied them, these being the twelve apostles, as we know, whom he had specifically chosen as his companions and intimate disciples.

If we turn back a couple of pages, we'd see that in chapter 6, verses 13-16, when he calls them and sets them apart. And he would subsequently send out with his authority and commission, an apostle literally means one who has been sent, as you probably know, on various women into whose lives also he had intervened savingly, whether as regards afflictions of their bodies or minds and certainly in respect of their souls.

In both the apostles and the women who here follow Christ and minister to him of their substance, we see fruit coming forth in that they gave up their previous lives or their previous forms of life, and they left all and they followed them.

[3 : 17] Their sacrifice is the same, if anything, it's even greater by the women, as their response is complete and total. Their objective is simply to stick with Jesus wherever he goes and never to be parted from.

You know, it's quite simple in that. They don't say, oh, well, we're going to wait for the guest to the good of this doctrine or that doctrine. No, they are simply resolved to be wherever Jesus is, to go wherever Jesus goes.

They're going to stick with him no matter what happens. That is their resolution. It's quite a simple one. And if we make that a resolve, then it's not complicated. We just resolve to stick with Jesus, not to be parted from him, no matter what.

The function they fulfill, however, is quite different. Without the apostles, Jesus would, humanly speaking, have no one to send on his own behalf with his message.

We do not read that he committed the preaching of the gospel, for example, to these women. There's every implication, however, that the presence and ministrations of these women was what held body and soul together for Jesus and his disciples, humanly speaking.

[4 : 25] And the fledgling church could not survive without them. The Lord Jesus upheld the equality and mutual dignity of men and women, but he distinguished between men and women in the functions and opposites which he would accept of them and to which he called them, both of which are essential to the survival of the church.

So these women, then, together with the apostles, are demonstrating the fruit of their faith in their devotion to Christ, following him, whether so ever he went.

We then see in verses 4 onwards to verse 15, we've got basically the parable of the sword here. This has been preached on so many times by so many different people.

It's very difficult to get anything kind of fresh out of it. But the point here is the fruitfulness of the ground. Again, the subject in question is fruit. And having told the story, Jesus then explains it to his disciples in verse 10.

He explains to them why it is that they are especially blessed with full knowledge and explanations, whilst others must yet, as it were, hear without really hearing in fulfilment of that which was spoken to Isaiah the prophet.

[5 : 40] As we check back Isaiah 6, we would see verses 9 and 10. He said, go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not, and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

It seems like a strange thing to us that the Lord would, for any reason, keep back the truth from some people, whilst revealing it to others. But of course, that is what the grace of election is all about.

But also, I think, with regard to the apostles over against the population in general, it's just that the time was not yet. Jesus did later on appoint his apostles to go out and spread the news, and tell people, and later on still, he anointed them with his spirit and power to go out and bring the gospel in practice as well as in word.

He wanted people to hear then, but the time was not yet. Just as if you've got a wee tender plant, and you have a wee apple tree sapling, and you keep on looking in the branches every day for apples, somebody with a bit more experience will tell you, look, you're not going to find any yet. It's not time yet. Let it grow a bit taller, a bit stronger, get bigger branches, then there'll be little hard green apples, then in due course there'll be full big red ones. But it's just, it's not yet.

[7 : 00] And if you try and force fruit out of it just yet, it's not going to do any good. For whatever reason, the people were to be able to hear, so that later on, when either the preaching of the gospel or the spirit then brought to their remembrance what they had heard, they'd say, oh yeah, that actually makes sense.

And remember that. Just like when we are converted, we can point back to things in our lives and say, oh yeah, I can see the Lord was at work in that, although we didn't recognize it at the time. But the disciples have been entrusted with the whole truth at this stage. They are getting the parable unpacked to them. Theirs is a greater privilege, but it carries in turn a greater responsibility and requires more from those to whom much has been given.

The higher one is lifting up, then the greater is the height from which to fall, if indeed we do fall. For example, many hundreds of thousands have betrayed their Savior down the centuries, but only one of them was an apostle.

And so much greater is his shame, so much more agonizing must be his torment of conscience to this day. The position of the disciples, you know, it could be likened to a few years back, I think many years back, probably in the, I can't remember what was in the 70s or the 80s or whatever, there was a plane crash in the Andes in South America.

[8 : 28] And people were, you know, a big plane had crashed high up in the mountains and the fuselage had been cut in half. And those who survived, they were sort of huddling for shelter in the sort of broken off piece of the fuselage.

And they got together all the resources and all the supplies and everything they had and the warm clothing and the shoes and the boots and everything. And they decided eventually, you know, when nobody came for them, we thought somebody's going to have to strike out over the mountains.

Somebody's going to have to try and get down into civilization. We don't know how many miles away or how many valleys or mountains they have to go through, but somebody's going to have to go through. Two or three people are going to have to strike out and tell folk where we are.

Otherwise, we're all going to die here. So what they do is then they say, well, what have we got in terms of the best of food, the clothing, the rations, what have you? And they would give to the two or the three that they were sending out the best of the clothing, the best of the footwear, the best of the rations.

They say, right, off you go. Here's the rucksacks. Here's the food. Here's the clothing. Here's the shelter materials and the tents and the portable tents. Take everything you need and off you go and we'll wait here for you.

[9 : 37] Now, you could say, oh, they've got a good, yeah, they've got the best of the clothing. They've got the best of all the shelter, the footwear, and they've got the best of the rucksacks and everything, and the best of the rations. Oh, they've got it good.

But the reason they've got it is not just for their own benefits. They've got the best of everything that the survivors can give them because they have the responsibility of going to bring help.

And each mile they cover, each step they take, brings them nearer the goal of civilization and further from the wreckage that they've left behind. So should they turn back or chuck it in or decide that they must then die back in the fuselage, okay, if they choose to do that, say, we can't go on any longer, let's go back to the fuselage and shelter in there with everybody else.

Not only are they going to die, but everybody else who's depending on them is going to die as well. So the farther one goes in such a journey where all those whose lives depend on them getting through, the farther you go in such a journey, the less chance of being enticed back to the relative shelter but the ultimate death of the fuselage.

The farther one goes, the more real the prospect of freedom becomes, the greater the incentive to keep going. And at the end of the day, those who are privileged with the extra rations, the best footwear, the warmest clothing, were not being given it to benefit themselves, but so that in breaking through to civilization and help, they might in turn be able to serve the others.

[11 : 08] The disciples are not the objects of favoritism by Jesus. They are privileged, certainly, but with privilege goes responsibility, and they have a task for which he will soon be sending them.

In the meantime, the Lord is giving the soil of their hearts special attention to ensure its fruitfulness. He's giving them the best of his attention, the best of the teaching, the best of the explanations, so that in due course, they can venture out, and they can bring the good news in all its fullness to those who otherwise will die.

Because if they are not fully equipped, they won't be able to do the job. But they haven't been given it just to privilege themselves. Just to say, oh, isn't it great? Now we know the truth. No, they've been given that in order to pass it on.

Notice then the explanation of this parable when Jesus begins to unpack it for the disciples. All the types of soil, as it were, hear the word.

We've got verse 12 there, by the wayside. Verse 13, those upon the rock and the shallow soil. Verse 14, those among the thorns. And finally, verse 15, the good soil. So we should take careful note that hearing will not in itself say, yes, it is true, as we read in Romans 10, verse 17, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

[12 : 30] But a man may diligently listen to the word preached every Sabbath. He may be most regular in church. He may have received baptism. He may listen to tapes or CDs of sermons by godly men.

But hearing will not of itself save him. Jesus said in Matthew 7, verse 21, The Lord expects to see a change for good in our lives if we are claiming to have had a change in our hearts.

He expects us to do something about it. He expects to see fruit. You know, James makes reference to this as well. You know, in verse, chapter 1, verse 21 on, he says, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness.

That word we can't associate with naughty children and so on. It's a regrettable translation here in the authorised version. What it means, if something is naughty, a naught is a zero. So if something is naughty, it's not badly behaved.

It means it's worthless. It is worth zero. It is worth nothing. Naughtiness means worthlessness. So overflowing of worthlessness. Vanity. That's what it means there. Superfluity of naughtiness.

[13 : 49] Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. But if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man, beholding his natural face in a glass.

For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

This is what the Lord wants people to recognize. Remember, it's vitally important, of course, that we should hear the word of God. As we said, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. We must hear the message of the gospel. It's an integral part of the scheme of salvation. But if we think of that, Romans 10, 17 verse, what it goes on to say after that is, but I say, Paul says, have they not heard?

Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words were the end of the world. But I say, did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy, by them there are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.

[15 : 01] But his eyes, his very bold, and saith, I was found of them, and sought me not. I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, all day long, I stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient, and gained saying, people, hearing will not of itself save you.

All the types listed in the parable, all heard the word as it was distributed to them. What became of them? Well, first of all, we look at those on the wayside.

We read, the devil came and snatched it away. That's what we read. That which fell over the wayside, received the word with joy, the very part of the verse 12, the devil come, taking away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe in the sea.

Is it partly their fault, if he does this? Well, the wayside is that through which men pass. It was this sort of hard beaten track, at the edge of the field. They would pass that way, but generally didn't stop.

You know, who stops at the side of your field, and stops in the middle of the pathway? You know, it's like if you're driving along the road, either two or four, or a star, or a property, suddenly you stop in the middle of the road, and you start looking about.

[16 : 15] You know, sometimes you get people doing that, and some of it, of course, it's really irritating. But it's also quite dangerous, because the reason for the road, for the pathway, is to keep going on it, and the reason for the pathway at the side of the field, so that people could pass backwards and forwards on it.

It's designed as a temporary place, a public pathway, running close to, though not part of, the field. Into this transitory place, in which generally men do not linger, because they have somewhere else better to go, the seed of God's word falls.

Defining the people, lingering here after all, as though it were the only place in the world, and there was nowhere else. Seed that falls here, is conspicuously noticeable, because it's the hard, beaten path, so it just lies there, bouncing on the surface of the ground, as it were.

It doesn't penetrate the ground, it lies there for all to see. Now, seeing it there, might cause some to investigate it, to partake of it, or to plant it, and then discover the truth, of how valuable this seed was.

So, the devil swoops in, to take it away from that. Notice, that although, we ascribe all manner of evil, and instruction to the devil personally, in this parable, it is only here, by the wayside, that he is directly, saved by Jesus, to be involved, in disrupting the sword's work.

[17 : 44] The other sections of the parable, demonstrate a failure, to bear fruit, from what we might call, more natural causes. Notice, therefore, how little the devil, actively needs, to do, in order to achieve, the obstruction, of God's word, in a fallen world.

Notice, how little the devil, actively, needs, to do. Two out of the three times, his role is at most, one of supervision. Only once, is his intervention direct.

Nature itself, in its fallen condition, militates against, the planting, of the word of God, in our hearts. When it happens, it's a miracle. Miracle of God's grace.

Nature, in its fallen condition, militates against, the word of God, being planted, in our hearts. And when it looks like, it might be conspicuous, and we might focus about it, he snatches it away.

Now, we might say, if the devil's directly involved, where might we see the devil, directly involved, you know, nowadays? Well, you know, not too many of us, perhaps, dabble in the occult, or

whatever, but that's the most obvious thing.

[18 : 54] But, you know, you might say that, that militant atheism, I suppose, being directly anti-Christian, is the devil's work, which it is. Yes, you do get, all manner of, kind of, horoscopes, which are, every way in, newspapers, and even comparatively, reputable magazines, and so on.

You think, ah, it's nothing, it's just a bit of harmless fun. Yeah, but people read them, and people, sort of, look at them, and they think, oh, I wonder what my stars are saying today. You know, how can you possibly imagine, your lives down upon Earth, and affected by these, sort of, whirling gases, and planets, moving magnetically round, major planets.

How's that going to affect our life down here? But people say, oh, the stars see this, and the stars see that, and, sort of, interpret them with this, kind of, pagan ideas, all this astrology, and so on.

It's vanity, yes, it's empty, certainly. Is it harmless nonsense? Well, it's precisely because, it is nonsense, that this, well, this, basically, acopic activity, as well, has a curious fascination.

People do have a fascination, for that which is acopic, and a wee bit scary, a wee bit, sort of, mysterious, sort of thing. One can dabble without commitment. Enjoy without conscience, pangs, pick it up, or put it down.

[20 : 08] And like any addiction, of which one is not yet fully aware, you can quit anytime you like, supposedly, only it's too easy to get back into it. Yeah, too difficult, to consciously break with it.

Anyway, why should you? It's harmless fun, does it require anything from you? Not now, that's true, but all, will be required of us eventually. Who is filling the heads of these people, as their Bibles remain closed?

And horoscopes, and other things, are avidly read. Who's taking away the word of life, and replacing it with generalized drivel, passing off as clairvoyancy? This is just one little example, of the ways in which, all comic stuff gets it into our lives.

And the only antidote to that, is more of Christ. Why do such people, having heard the word, bring forth, no fruit? Jesus says, in John 8, to the Pharisees, why do you not understand my speech?

Even because you cannot hear my word. You are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father, you will do, and because I tell you the truth, you believe me not. I think, oh, come on, not many of us are devil worshippers, you know, that's a bit steep, you know, not many people really are these days.

[21 : 21] Okay, well, what are some of the titles we give to the devil? Well, in scripture, the prince of this world, prince of the power of the air, and the world fills up plenty of our thoughts, and all the ideas of the air, and of filling this world, and our ideas, and our thoughts, and how man is at the center of all these things, they fill our heads, this world fills our heads, the prince of this world fills our heads, and the devil loves it, he doesn't mind if it's overtly occultic, or if it's just man-centered, if it's just of the world.

In Isaiah, we read in verse, chapter 8, verse 19, when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, to wizards that peep, and that mutter, should not a people seek unto their God, for the living, to the dead, to the living God, for those who are spiritually dead, that's where we need to seek to, but if you think about it, every kind of, every kind of, whether it's film, or program, or dramatization, or television, it always has this idea of, a force of good, and a force of evil, but it's almost never, is the good presented, as Christ-centered, it's always as though, somehow we have the power of good, in our own hands, and this idea, that we can somehow, claim this power, to ourselves, and be the, the arbiters of good, and evil, well that temptation, it's as old as the garden, who is most vulnerable, to such delusions, ironically, it is not the, overtly, secular, atheist, but rather, perhaps, those who would like, to think of themselves, as, spiritual, but not religious, and this is the great, label nowadays, oh,

I consider myself, spiritual, but not religious, which means, I occasionally think, that there might be, something after death, and I don't want to get involved, in the church, or anything like that, I don't want to believe, in Christ, or anything like that, empty of any, spiritual content, that's suggestible, to spiritual influences, like the empty house, of which Jesus talked, in his parable, we turn a couple of pages, we see it in Luke chapter 11, verse 24 onwards, when the unclean spirit, has gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house, once I came out, and when he cometh, he findeth it swept, and garnished, in other words, empty, unoccupied, then goeth he, and taketh to him, seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwelleth in the last state, of that man, is worse than the first, what is the context, in which Jesus told that, we'll go back, to before verse 24, and look at verse 23, he that is

not with me, is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth, the only antidote, to having the seed of God's word, taken away, by the devil, the only antidote, to all whose influences, through life, and the world, and all the suggestions, of Satan, is to have Christ, dwelling, in the midst of our heart, and the home, of our life, he that is not with me, is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth, there isn't a neutrality, you take an empty house, that's neutral, that's not really, one thing or the other, is it, that's not, that's not taking sides, that's rather like, somebody nipping into, a newsagent, in a busy street, and getting out, without a Porsche, and leaving the door open, and the key in the ignition, and the engine running, and they say, well just be five minutes, isn't inviting the car, to be stolen, of course not inviting it, to be stolen, in fact, are we inviting a crime, the empty house, unoccupied, by anything positive, or spiritual, or Christ centre, is inviting the crime, of the devil, to come in, and occupy it, if we would have, defence against him, the only defence is Christ, so much then, for the, that which is by the wayside, which the devil comes in, and takes away, but what of the rocky soil, of which we read on Psalm, the rocky soil, is that, which is described, in other versions, of the parable, in the different gospel, accounts, is shallow earth, that which has no depth, of earth, so the seed beds, down into what it's got, and it uses up, what it's got, for the, to spread out its roots, but then it can't go, very deep in it, and it starts bringing up, because its roots, have gone down, as far as they can, so there's no way, to go out, but now upwards, so they quickly, receive the word, which is good, and they have a quick response, which is also good, but in this shallow soil, we see the short life, and quick death, of any spiritual growth, needing a quick fix, soon looking for something new, or perhaps thinking, well I, I should jolly well do this, because you know, I've got the right, and you do get people like that, you have people, that insist, it's their right, to say that, they belong to Christ, and they should be, acknowledged as this, but their lives, don't show it, and their commitment, doesn't show it, and their roots, don't show it, and their fruitfulness, doesn't show it, but oh no, they have to believe it, take the box, rocky soil, no depth, of earth, quick response, quick death, at the end of the day, needing a quick fix, this is something I haven't, tried, don't try that, and it's soon, looking for something new, moving on, to the next thing, or when persecution arises, the other versions, of the parable say, they quickly wiggle away, because they've got no depth, of earth, it's too shallow, it's too weak, and it doesn't last, and the next problem, with the thorns, or weeds, as it sometimes, may be translated, it's not absence of soil, it's plenty of soil, plenty of earth, but there's too much else, in it, there's too much else, competing with the seed, the nutrients, are being sucked out, by the weeds, and the thorns, there's real potential, for a good crop, but they are crowded out, by concerns, and cares, and worries, and other aspirations, which, when they have heard, verse 14, go forth, and are choked, of cares, and riches, and pleasures, of this life, and bring no fruit, to perfection, because their focus, is way too, divided, divided, between the things, of the world, between all the anxieties, and cares, and focuses, and loves, and all these other things, of the world, divided, from Christ, and so it doesn't, bring forth any fruit, not because the soil, is not good, not because it's not deep, it's just, too crowded, in there, for Christ, to be able, to make headway, he will not, share us, with others, he requires, that he be first, and foremost, in our lives, remember in Exodus 20, when the Lord, gives the commandments, to the children of Israel, what's his first commandment, thou shalt have, no other gods, before me, now the word, that's translated before, it can be either, you know, ahead of, or above me, or it can mean, alongside me, like a whole list, of gods on a shelf, you have nobody, alongside me, you have nobody, instead of me, I won't compete, I won't have, any other gods, sharing my place, the thorns, and the weeds, are filling up the soil, that should reserve, holy, for Christ, and then you've got, the good soil, of depth, and richness, which it may be, naturally provided, some aspects, some places are blessed, with good soil, I understand that, the mains of Gowdy, and then, or Perthshire, whatever, is meant to be, the best agricultural soil, in the whole United Kingdom, as far as I know, that's what I heard, once many years ago, in a class in school, it doesn't mean, it's the most fruitful, part of the country, but it certainly, will be fruitful, because of the quality, of the soil, that may be, a natural phenomenon, but it will not, in itself, bring forth, any fruitfulness, good soil, speaks of generosity, by the Lord, and what he has given, yes, of clarity, because he's cleared, the weeds, and thorns before, a people, perhaps, in this context, in the parable, have evened, the Baptists, and have prepared, the way of the Lord, for the Messiah, good soil, does not become, fruitful, by itself, if you think about it, if it is good, and fruitful, it is because, it has been worked, because it has been, cleared, of the stones, and the thorns, and the weeds, it has probably, been fenced, and dug, round about, it has been, minured, and fertilized, and tended, and planted, and sown, and tended, and watched, over, before

finally, it brings forth, a harvest, even with, good soil, the work, never ends, if you, clear a field, of all the stones, and the rocks, and build your dike, round it, and you, plough it, and sow it, and tend, it becomes a beautiful, either grass, the first year, or potatoes, or wheat, or corn, or whatever it is, you go, that's fine,

[30 : 31] I can just leave it, next year, I don't have to do, anything with it, if you don't tend that field, if you don't work that field, it is just going to go, back into the hill, even with good soil, the work, never ends, this side of eternity, the work, never ends, but thankfully, it remains a rest, for the people of God, as we read in Hebrews, chapter four, there, there is the necessity, that we work, at it, God, gives us, sufficient, and how, we work, at it, what we make, of it, is the fruitfulness, he desires to see, remember in the parable, of the talents, he doesn't give everyone, the same, he gives one five, and one two, and one one, and the one with the ones, is the one, almost nothing, so I'll stick it in my pocket, or I'll bury it in the ground, and I'll give it back, at the end, and see, and the page, well that's a genius, I haven't done anything, with it, because I didn't have much, to go on with, but that's not, fruitfulness to the Lord, is it, whatever he gives, we're to work with it, whatever he gives us, feel wise, and don't say, oh well you haven't done much ground, you can't do anything with it, look around this island, or up and down, at the golden road, or whatever, and you'll see, in every little, postage stamp, of ground, you'll see, the remains of lazy beds there, you'll see, where people, took out of the rock, where there was almost nothing, and they dug, and they worked, and they produced, and the tiny little bits of soil, in amongst all, the mass amount of rocks, they took what they had, and worked at it, say oh yeah, because they were poor, and they had to, okay, we're poor, spiritually we're poor, we have the work, of what the Lord gives us, this study of eternity, the work never has, verses 17 to 21, we see, that there is a necessity, of visible fruit, nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest, neither any from heaven, that shall not be known, and come abroad, otherwise, the gift of light, is pointless, nobody lights a candle, puts it under a vessel, hides it away, it's meant to be seen, fruit is meant to be seen, before it can be tasted, before it can be used, to feed others, you're going to be able to see it,

I don't know, if you've ever sort of, picked down, you know, blackberries, or whatever, or you know, black currants, and you have to lift the leaves, and look under the branches, in order to pick off each one, and stick them in the bowl, it's worth, actually finding the fruit, before you pluck it, before you pick it, it's going to be seen, before it can be tasted, before it can be used, to feed others, now verse 17 there, nothing is secret, it's not so much to do, with finding out, our secret sins, it's more to do, with what kind of fruit, you bring forth, sooner or later, everyone's going to know anyway, so take heed, but hearing itself, is not enough, but as Jesus says, take heed therefore, how, you hear, because of the grace of Christ, is not manifested, by us, in our lives, eventually, it will be manifested, against us, it will testify, against us, as to what we were given, and what we didn't do with it, part of the evidence, of fruit, is that spiritual bonds, become stronger, than those of the flesh, that's what we see here, with Jesus, and his mother, and his brothers coming, and he says, well you know, my mother and my brothers, are those who, hear the word of God, and do it, fruitfulness, it means that to us, our brothers and sisters, are more, the believers, on the far side of the world, who speak a different language, and have different skin colors, and their culture, and everything about them, is far more different from ours, they are more, our brothers and sisters, than people, who share our own language, and culture, and skin color, or even our own blood, and our own family, but who reject, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is saying, will not have him, to rule over them, eventually, that brotherhood, that sisterhood, that family tie, will be broken asunder, by death, but the brotherhood, the sisterhood, we have with those, on the far side of the world, and all places in between, who love, and serve, and follow Christ, that bond, will never be broken, not even by death, finally, in these verses, 22 to 25, we see the absence, of fruit, in the disciples, or rather, it's comparative lack, failing to trust Jesus, for their safety, and he says to them, you know, where is your faith, the apostles too, must go on learning, go on receiving, the seed of the word, go on sowing, digging, watering, plowing, fertilizing, harvesting, just because you're an apostle, doesn't mean, hey that's you, you've made it,

Jesus says to the 12, he says, where's your faith, well we thought, we might get a die, yeah but I don't see it with you, why didn't you trust me, their faith, has to keep on growing, it has to keep on being worked at, he doesn't end, until he says it does, the working at it, doesn't end, this side of eternity, doesn't end, until he calls time, on your life, until he says it's over, you might think, oh well, it's just a go then, be thankful to the Lord, it's not over yet, thank God, for there is time still, time still

to plow, time still to sow seed, and receive it, time still to grow, and mature, in our Christian walk,
and work, and experience, time still, to ripen, before the harvest, let's pray, guys to love, see you
guys, here we go, can we come down, thanks, here we go,
I'm going down to the river, we'll see you, we're going down to the river, and we'll see you,