

42. VALUABLE THINGS A GOOD CHURCH PRODUCES

Bible Reading: Luke 13:6-9.

Aim: To show that the job of a church and its people is to produce spiritual fruit. What is that fruit?

Introduction: Many Christians don't appreciate the Church in general or a good church in particular. Many people don't see or understand the valuable things that a sound church produces. When we see what this church produces, we will support it more as we help produce the fruit God expects. Two examples of God removing an unfruitful steward of His Word are:

- 1) Jesus came to Israel for three years, looking for spiritual fruit but found none (Luke 13:6-9). Jesus said to cut down the tree of Israel if it didn't bear fruit. This reminds us of Jesus removing the candlestick of an unfruitful church, like that at Ephesus. (Revelation 2:5).
- 2) Because Israel failed to bear spiritual fruit, God took away the light of the Gospel testimony from Israel, and gave it to local churches. (Matthew 21:33-46, especially v.41,43).

Question: What Fruit Does a Good Church Produce?

- 1) Souls saved; peace and joy of going to heaven. (John 15:16 'that your fruit should remain.').
- 2) Soul winners produced. (Matthew 4:19 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.')
- 3) Preachers trained and sent out to pastor and plant churches. (Acts 8:4-8).
- 4) New churches started in Australia and overseas.
- 5) Thousands of lives rescued from sin, confusion, loneliness, fear & false doctrine (II Cor 5:17).
- 6) Bible Truths and convictions taught and established in many people's minds. (I Peter 2:9).
- 7) Godly marriage partners are trained and found in church. (Ephesians 5:21-25).
- 8) Tools developed to help win souls & train disciples, eg STOP tracts, *Answers* book, pamphlets.
- 9) It helps us avoid shipwrecking our faith on the rocks of false doctrines. It rightly divides God's Word so we clearly know what God wants of us in all issues of life. (II Timothy 2:15).
- 10) It links us with a worldwide network of strong Christians, churches, and useful resources.
- 11) It is a refuge from the evils of the world.
- 12) It provides Godly role models for young people. (I Timothy 4:12).
- 13) It sets high moral standards of love, self-sacrifice and Bible truths that we seek to achieve.
- 14) It provides a happy, peaceful, spiritual environment where Godly Christians comfort, strengthen, encourage and train each other. (James 3:17,18).
- 15) It encourages other Christians to keep on serving God. It gives answers to life's problems.