

## Chapter 5- Fruitful: Filled with the Holy Spirit

*To enjoy God is the center of our rest and the fountain of our blessedness and the chief end for which we were made. It is our business to seek him, and our happiness to enjoy him.* — Thomas Manton

### Identity Theft

- Culture says be going, doing, being and becoming.
- Two ends of the spectrum (hamster wheel analogy): On the wheel going, going to chase down the unattainable goal of perfection or lying down on the hamster wheel being trampled by the more motivated hamsters.
- We can mistakenly put our identity in our ability to achieve our goals, or in our lack thereof.

### *The Proverbs 31 Woman*

- Often viewed as standard by which to attain.
  - o Our value of ourselves is then determined by our ability to measure up— ability to achieve and to do.
  - o Fail at one point, we feel worthless leading to shame.
- However, she isn't meant to be a daily standard we must seek to fulfill
  - o Proverbs is wisdom literature and we must read it as such
  - o Wisdom dictates how we view what we read
- Proverbs 31:10-31
  - o Not a day in the life of a Godly woman
  - o It is a picture of obedience expressed in all different aspects and seasons of life.
  - o Not a picture of a specific woman
    - It's meant to draw us to deeper reliance on Christ as we strive to be faithful in all of our duties at home and beyond.
  - o We are to learn to apply wisdom in way that are actually wise through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
    - God will tell us when to rest, or when to strive
    - Wisdom to discern what is best is where the abiding comes in.

### Identity Truth

- 1) Our TRUE identity is found as we ABIDE in Jesus. We see this in John 15:1-5:  
"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, so that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

- 2) True FRUITFULness is found in Jesus
  - a. By the power of Christ's atoning death on the cross, we ABIDE with the God of the universe, and through that relationship we bear fruit.
  - b. Instead of trying to succeed in our own power, or for our own glory, we must ABIDE in Christ.
  - c. The true message of the Bible bids us to come and die
- 3) All this is possible by the INDWELLING of the Holy Spirit
  - a. He is HELPER- "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know Him, for he dwells with you and will be in you" John 5:16-17
  - b. Through the Spirit we are connected to the mind of God— 1 Corinthians 2:6-16
  - c. By HIS power we are enabled to understand the things "freely given to us by God" (1 Cor 2:12)

### **Identity Transformed**

Doing is not separate from dying, but dying comes first.

As Paul says: "therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come" (2 Cor 5:17). And again: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me" (Gal 2:20).

Faith without works is dead, but before we can do the work of faith, we must die the death it requires of us. The doing is anchored in us becoming more like Christ as we ABIDE in Him!!

### **Abiding in Christ**

- Not passive, Jesus commanded it of us, we cannot bear fruit apart from Him!!
- 4 Truths (Sinclair Ferguson)
  - Union with our Lord depends on HIS grace
    - We are actively and personally united to Christ by faith, but faith itself is ROOTED in the activity of God.
  - Union with Christ means being OBEDIENT to Him.
    - Abiding involves our response to the teaching of Jesus: "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you . . . (John 15:7a)
  - The believer rests his or her life on the love of Christ.
    - "Abide in my love" (John 15:9)
  - We are called to submit to the pruning knife of God
    - He cuts away all disloyalty and all that is unimportant
    - In this way we can remain in Christ with our WHOLE hearts!!

By depending on Christ's grace, we're able to OBEY his commands, REST in his love whether we fail or succeed, and SUBMIT to his will as he makes us more like Him!!

All the activity in the world is fruitless if we're not abiding in the vine!

The goal of our union with Christ: abiding in Him and following Him as he guides our steps, giving us wisdom in how best to pursue Him in our daily lives.

Are you abiding in Christ, or are you abiding in the security of the work of YOUR hands? Are you abiding in Christ or are you walking in shame at the lack of the work of your hands? Neither will do.

Our identity is found in ABIDING in Christ. If we are fruitful it's because HE has given us increase, and we praise him for that. If we're floundering, we rest in the fact that our true worth come from HIS work on our behalf, and we praise Him!! In either one, we press toward the mark, resting and working for HIS glory alone!!