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ELECTION FRUIT ?

The Iowa Caucus seems like ages ago - yet there's nine months until the election. Wouldn't it be great to elect candidates who would actually accomplish what we elect them for? That's the thing about the word "elected" - it's ontological. This means, it has a specific purpose or end result in mind.

Scripture uses "elect" like this. We often focus on the front-end of election, choosing the candidate who seems most in line with our values. But in Scripture, "elect" doesn't point to the past worthiness of the person at all. That's because all are un-worthy of God's grace. The focus is future - for His purpose.

John 15 makes this clear. Jesus says in verse 16 "**you did not choose Me, but I chose you.**" Not because of anything good or bad done by the disciples, but because God is sovereign. He does the choosing. Election is simply by God's grace - for His purpose. The rest of the verse says, "**I appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain.**" John 15 shows us three things that result from Christ's electing - to bear fruit, to bear witness, and to bear persecution.

1- BEAR FRUIT - through Christ - With the picture of the "**vine and branches**" Jesus says He is the True Vine. He fulfills the Old Testament language, and God's promised blessings come through Christ Himself. Believers in Jesus are like branches of God's vine, receiving their life force from the vine, and resulting in all the vine is meant to produce. That's why Jesus says "**remain in Me.**"

The most prevalent description of a Christian in Scripture is "**in Christ.**" If you are a believer, then you are in Christ and Christ is in you - by the Holy Spirit. In John 15, Jesus says, *remain united with Me*, and you will produce My fruit. You will obey My words, and have My love for one another, My peace, and My joy. Another evidence is answered prayer. Jesus says, "**If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done.**" Not what you want, but according to what God wants. You will pray according to His Word, because the Bible is the spiritual nourishment feeding your soul.

It's a process. And the branches will be pruned. It can be painful. If not pruned, they will produce no fruit, or only leaves. God cuts off non-productive things. He cuts back productive things, so that His spiritual life force will produce more fruit. Not like worldly fruit, which spoils and results in rottenness. Galatians 5:16-26 says the fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. All evidences of remaining in spiritual union with Christ.

2- BEAR WITNESS - of Jesus - If you are a disciple of Jesus, drawing your spiritual life from Him, then you will show and tell the world that you belong to Him. In verse 27 Jesus tells His disciples they WILL bear witness about Him because of the Holy Spirit within them. The root word of bear witness is "*martyr*" which means giving testimony, but came to mean giving your life. It's really His life lived through you.

The great puritan preacher Spurgeon said, "*you have not truly found Jesus if you never tell others about Him.*" But Jesus promised that just as He obeyed the Father in all His words and works, so His disciples will testify of Him, in all you do and say. The label on a wine bottle declares its vintage, but the proof is in the tasting. Often, worldly fruit doesn't taste as good as it looks. But the Christian who "*remains in union with Christ*" will become more and more like Jesus - bearing witness to Him and being His fruit.

3- BEAR PERSECUTION - for Christ - Jesus told His disciples, "**I chose you out of this world.**" The world hated Him, and the world will hate His disciples. If you are a believer, in union with Christ, drawing your spiritual life from Him and producing His fruit, don't expect the world to like you. Jesus said, "**they will persecute you**" on account of His name. Like pruning, this is further proof you bear His fruit.

You're not to become politically correct with the world just to make things easier for you. It's all about HIS mission, not yours! Expect discomfort, because they reject Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. But you have His promise in John 16:33, "**I have said these things to you that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart, I have overcome the world.**"

He said this a few hours before Good Friday. The lesson is clear: Easter is already reality! He conquers sin and grave. Believers are elected to bear His fruit. And you WILL. The world won't like it, but you will persevere. In union with Jesus, the Overcomer, you will survive and thrive. By the Holy Spirit's power!