

Bearing fruit

▶▶▶ Dear Friend

For the past year or so, I have been spending a lot of time reading and meditating on the book of John. If you ever have an opportunity to do so, I encourage you to read it in one go from cover to cover. While it is good to take a small portion of scripture and meditate on it, you see a different dimension from reading books of the Bible in their entirety.

Some Bible scholars believe that this Gospel was written later in John's life. I sort of see his writing style as taking time to reflect on the life of Jesus. It is almost like a collection of "Kodak moments" — episodes in which Jesus obviously made a distinct impression on John and the other disciples. It makes for very entertaining reading when you see it from that perspective.

The story line of the book is summed up for me in chapter 15, in the very well-known verses about the vine and the branches. Jesus emphasises to us that it is the Father's intention that we bear much fruit: "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

Did Jesus really mean that we should bear much fruit? Think about that question and then ponder John 20:21, when He goes on to say, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you!" In essence He is saying, I have done these things, now you go and do the same. Sometimes I suspect that we have read over these passages of scriptures so many times that we forget to think about it in the literal sense. We forget He showed us the way and then sent us to bear fruit.

This is one of the reasons we in YWAM England believe that God has led us to set aside 40 weeks of this year to pray around the clock and fast on a weekly basis. With 40 Weeks, we are very much on a journey — asking Him to show us in a new dimension His intention for us with regards to bearing fruit. We are not ungrateful for the things that God has done so far — and He has done many wonderful things for us and through us as YWAM. But we are hungry to see more of God at work in us and through us.

As we embarked on the 40 Weeks prayer initiative back in March, our faith was stretched in that we had never done anything quite like this before on a nationwide level. We have recently completed the first 1,000 hours of prayer, and already there is an anticipation of God meeting with us. It's not the quantity of hours or any expectation that we can get God to do something for us, but

"Jesus emphasises to us that it is the Father's intention that we bear much fruit"



YOUTH WITH A MISSION

Highfield Oval, Harpenden,
Herts, AL5 4BX
Tel: 01582 463216
Fax: 01582 463213

Registered Charity No 264078

rather that as we spend quality time on a regular basis communicating with Him, our hearts become more aligned with His.

Take a minute and look at the needs of our communities, nation and world; the opportunities for the Church to be effective are greater than ever. Why not jump into the book of John with us for a bit and see what God might say to you about bearing fruit in the places, in the situations, and among the people He has called you to?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donovan Palmer', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Donovan Palmer
Chairman, YWAM England Executive Leadership Team

“the
opportunities
for the Church
to be effective
are greater
than ever”

If you would like to receive the devotional letter by e-mail, and have not told us yet, please contact us on ywamnews@oval.com, giving your full name and address.