

Short Talk

(SHT089)

How to Become Fruitful

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “How to Become Fruitful”

- Aim of Short talk:** To encourage people to “die” to their own desires and ambitions so that they can follow Jesus and become fruitful.
- Use of Short talk:** This is a short All Age talk picking out one issue from the Lectionary Gospel reading of the Sunday main service. The talk stands alone and assumes that the Gospel Bible reading may not yet have been read to the congregation. It could be used for example, for the whole congregation before the children go out to their age specific groups, leaving the adults with a full sermon later.
- Main themes:** Jesus, Cross, Dying to self, Fruitfulness
- Biblical references:** John 12:20-33
- Lectionary:** Year B – The fifth Sunday of Lent
- Props:** You will need a picture, (which you can project or show) of:
- i) A grain of wheat
 - ii) A wheat plant
- Alternatively you might be able to lay your hands on a wheat seed and a wheat plant.

Who can tell me what this is? (*Project or show the picture of a grain of wheat*)

- It is a grain of wheat

Can anyone tell me the first thing that must happen, before this single grain of wheat can become this wheat plant? (*Project or show the picture of the wheat plant*)

- It must be buried in the cold dark ground.

Only when this grain is buried in the ground can a wheat plant begin to grow,

- and with the right conditions of warmth, sunlight and good soil,
- one small grain of wheat can produce a whole plant with many more grains in it.

If the wheat grain wasn't buried in the ground, it would simply stay as one grain of wheat wouldn't it?

- It might be nice and comfortable, sitting on top of a warm fireplace,
- or relaxing in a bag with other grains,
- but it wouldn't be fruitful unless it is buried and dead to the world.

Jesus knew that He was going to die.

- He also knew that many people would see His death as a total disaster, because they were not expecting the Messiah to die,
- but to be a successful and powerful King.

But Jesus knew that unless He died and was buried in a tomb,

- sins couldn't be forgiven,
- and no-one could receive the gift of eternal life that God the Father wanted to give.

Before Jesus died, He said this:

“Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over.” (John 12:24 Message Version)

3 days after Jesus was crucified on a cross and died, He was raised to life again,

- and He now has billions¹ of followers.....
- billions of people who have received His gift of forgiveness and eternal life.....
- billions of grains from one single grain.
- What an incredibly fruitful life Jesus had.

Imagine if Jesus hadn't been willing to die in obedience to His Father.....

- You and I wouldn't be sitting here today because we would have no way of knowing God the Father, without Jesus dealing with our sin.

But Jesus was willing to die....

- and He has shown us, His followers, that if we want to be fruitful in our lives,
- then we too need to die in a different way.....
- not dying like He did on a cross,
- but dying to doing and having what we want,
- so that we can follow Him.

So for example, you may have given up extra sleep this morning, so that you could come and worship Jesus.....

- and that is a small dying to your self....
- dying to doing what you want, because many of you may have preferred the comfort of lying in bed all morning than making the effort to come and worship.

Who can think of other examples of how we can die to ourselves so that we can do what Jesus wants us to do? *(Interact with the congregation bringing out dying to our own ambitions and desires so that we can serve Jesus)*

The wonderful encouragement that we have from Jesus is that if we die to doing and having what we want, so that we can follow Him,

- our lives will be fruitful, and we will bring Him glory,
- just like the grain of wheat that is buried in the ground is fruitful.

¹ According to the website: www.pewresearch.org there were 2.3 billion Christians in the world in 2015
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