

The Spirit of a Disciple-maker

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I. Introduction.

A. There are basic steps to the divine life cycle of fruitfulness.

B. Texts: Matthew 13:36-38, John 12.

II. There are steps in the divine life cycle.

A. The seed. We are many things in Christ, but God sees us as a seed.

B. The farmer.

1. Jesus is the farmer who plants the seed.

2. The sower knows best where to plant the seed.

3. The seed does not know where best to be planted.

a. Seeds do not have rights.

b. We must be available to God.

C. The field is the world.

III. The seed must die in order to bear fruit. (John 12:24)

A. The seed does have an option to die here or abide alone.

B. The seed that dies denies itself.

C. To die means to relinquish control of life.

D. Life is the sum total of all one's relationships, activities, and possessions.

F. We must be open-handed with all that we have.

G. Every time we surrender some area to the Holy Spirit, God exposes another area.

IV. The seed that dies forms deep roots. (Isaiah 37:31)

A. Fruit is a result of relationship with Christ. (Romans 7:4)

B. We must develop our secret life with Christ.

V. The seed bears life. (Mark 4:28)

A. The process is as important as the product.

B. There are no shortcuts to fruitfulness.

VI. One bears fruit in season. (Psalm 1:1-3, Jeremiah 17:7-8)

- A. Every believer has his or her own season.
- B. It is a mistake to compare fruit with other Christians because everyone is in different seasons.

VII. Seed. (Genesis 1:29)

- A. Your fruit becomes someone else's seed.
- B. We cannot play junior Holy Spirit when someone we love is called to "die."

Application questions:

1. How does the seed illustration help us to see that we are not in control of our ministry?

2. What does it mean to die to oneself?

3. What areas might God be calling you to be more open handed with? Explain.
