

## **Are You a Low Yield Christian?**

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*My well beloved hath a vineyard  
In a very fruitful hill:  
And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof,  
And planted it with the choicest vine,*

*And built a tower in the midst of it  
And also made a winepress therein:  
And he looked that it should bring forth grapes  
And it brought forth wild grapes*

*And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem,  
And men of Judah, judge, I pray you  
Betwixt me and my vineyard.  
What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?*

*Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes,  
Brought it forth wild grapes? (Isaiah 5:1-4)*

Isaiah explains in chapter 5 verse 7 that the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel. The house of Israel is not only those who descend directly from the twelve tribes of Israel, but also all those who accept the gospel of Jesus Christ. The vineyard represents believers.

Isaiah compares those who accept the gospel of Jesus Christ to a vineyard that has had everything done for it. It's been planted on a fruitful hill. It's a choice vine. He's removed all the stones that would sabotage its growth. He's put a winepress in the middle of it. The presence of the winepress shows that He expects an abundant harvest from all the time and effort He's put into this vineyard (or these people). But, instead they've gone wild. Additionally, in Isaiah 5:10 He laments that they aren't fruitful. An acre is yielding only about eight gallons of grape juice. And a container of seed is only yielding half its measure.

Knowing that this vineyard represents you and me, we might ask ourselves, "Am I like this vineyard? Am I a high maintenance, low yield Christian? Has God given me so much and even sent Jesus to tread the winepress alone (Gethsemane means winepress incidentally), only for me to produce little fruit?"

Ephesians 2:8-10 is very clear about what God expects of those who follow Him:

*"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*

Christ gave His life and offers us His grace (enabling power) so that we will acknowledge that our power to do good things comes from Him. It's not us! It's Him! But we do need to make ourselves available to Him. We must take action and allow ourselves to be instruments. As we go forward, walking in good works we're living up to our creation. In keeping with the vineyard parable, we're bearing fruit.

I know I don't want to become as the vineyard in Isaiah 5 -- laid waste, not pruned or dug, overrun by briars and thorns and unfruitful. God wants high yield, low maintenance Christians! As Jesus said, *"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more"* (Luke 12:4).

Let us be anxiously engaged in a good cause, doing many things of our own free will, and through His grace making the world a better place. Let us be believers at work -- letting our lights shine!

I challenge you to put forth the effort to discover and live your purpose and in so doing lead others toward the Light -- to the Savior of the world. It's why you're here and why you've been given so much. I promise as you do this, you will find joy and happiness in this life and in the eternities to come.