

Rom. 14:19
So then let us
follow after
things which
make for
peace, and
things
whereby we
may edify one
another.

John 8:32 And
ye shall
know the
truth and the
truth shall
make you
free.

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ARE WE PRODUCTIVE FOR CHRIST?

by Jim Stauffer

We recently hired a Nursery to plant some new bushes for us. The old ones had seen their "better days". Out of 5 new shrubs planted in the same general area 3 of them have flourished but two of them died. Instinctively I feared I had failed in the care needed for their sustenance, but suddenly realized I treated all 5 the very same way. It became apparent to me the two that died were in some way unable to receive the water and nutrients from the soil sufficiently to stay alive. Now with these shrubs, we have concluded those that died were not healthy enough to survive and the Nursery will replace them with others.

There are some lessons in Scripture that remind us men can be unproductive and receive similar treatment to these shrubs.

First, John the Baptist warned the Pharisees and Sadducees to be productive, *"The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."* (Matthew 3:10)

Another comparison occurs with Jesus teaching us about the Vine and the branches in **John 15:1-6**. He the productive branches are pruned in order to be even more productive and their source of nutrition is the Vine, the Lord Himself. Those who are not productive are not in the Vine, therefore He says, *"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned."* (John 15:6)

Jesus teaches His disciples how to handle those who reject them when they are sent to preach to the lost sheep of Israel. They are to *...shake the dust off your feet. Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.* (Mat. 10:14,15).

Paul and Barnabas taught the Jews of Antioch of Pisidia they would be replaced as God's people by the Gentiles because they did not accept the Word of the Lord, the gospel of Jesus Christ (**Acts 13:46**).

The parallels of Scripture are supposed to go only far enough for us to learn how to please God. A bit of introspection will allow us to see which of these we are. First, are we productive? Are we in Christ, the Vine? Have we accepted the word of the gospel and allowed it to grow in our hearts? Have we accepted it and then allowed it to dry up in our lives as we pursue the things of this life in preference to those things God has required of us?

We can be replaced. We can be cut down and thrown into the fire. We can find ourselves in the position of Sodom and Gomorrah when we devote ourselves to pleasure and place this life above life with Him in eternity. We need to feed on His word. He is the bread of life, the living water.

I Have Fought a Good Fight

J.D. Tant (1861-1941)

Jefferson David Tant | Hendersonville,
Tennessee, USA

"Sixty years have come and gone. I hope and pray that long after I cross the great divide, hundreds will read my sermons, be taught the way of life, and take up their cross and follow Jesus. I am leaving this bit of history that others may know that life was no flowery bed for me but fraught with many hardships all along the way. If Paul could tell his experiences and troubles for the benefit of those who would live after him, I see no reason why my readers should not know something

of my past life that it may encourage the poor boy or girl who seeks a higher plane in life, to know that all difficulties can be overcome by the one who will not give up the fight.

I was born in Paulding county, Georgia, 1861. I was only eight days old when my father started to the war, and was four years old when he returned, and I was taught that he was my father, and that I must respect him. Our home was on the New Hope church battleground. After the battle nothing was left on the farm but some oak trees. My dear mother and oldest brother walked twenty-two miles to where they heard of a wheat field outside the army's march, and pulled up two bushels of wheat, beat it out on a rail the next day, brought it home and for three months we lived under an oak tree, with nothing to eat except boiled wheat and salted water put on it. The salt was obtained by mother's digging up the ground where the smokehouse had stood and boiling the dirt to get the salt from it.

At the age of fourteen, I joined the Methodist church. At fifteen years of age, with my parents, I moved from Georgia to Texas. About this time I became interested in an education, and fortunately we located near a high school, but unfortunately I had only one dollar to supply all my earthly needs. I invested that in three yards of cloth, from which my mother made me a pair of pants. I did not have a single school book. My teacher agreed that he would leave one window unfastened each night and for me to come and get all books containing my lessons for the next day, learn my lessons, and put the books back next morning before school.

About this time I thought I was up on vocal music and began to teach in different communities. I stood high with the Methodists and passed my examination for a preacher at nineteen. I then went to southwest Texas, and was teaching music, and breaking wild horses to ride, for a living, and preaching Methodist doctrine to help the people. About this time I heard old Brother W.H.D. Carrington preach the gospel, and I was shaken into a congregation of Christians on my Methodist baptism when twenty-one years of age. After trying to preach the gospel, and ease my conscience for three years on Methodist baptism, I made up my mind by studying the Bible that the Lord knew nothing of sect baptism. I then got on a Texas pony and rode one hundred and twenty-seven miles and had John Durst to baptize me into Christ.

On one occasion I started out afoot to my appointment to preach, fifty-five miles away. No brother would loan me a horse, yet a Baptist woman let me ride

her saddle horse. Six miles before reaching my appointment I had to swim a creek and got wet all over. I wrung out my clothes but my shoes were new and with all the work I could do, I could not get them on while wet. So I went on to the church house and found it crowded. I walked down the aisle with one shoe on and the other in my hand, set it on the pulpit and preached the gospel.

Many times I have ridden forty miles during the night, have laid down and slept on the ground two or three hours, and gotten up and gone on to my appointment. I have gone more times than one without dinner and supper to reach my appointment to preach.

The church of Christ at Holland told me to go out and preach and they would guarantee me \$50 per month, provided the people would give it to me. Some subscribed liberally. One old brother, worth \$80,000 promised \$10 to the work and never did pay it. Another brother worth \$40,000 promised \$10 and paid it. One sister worth \$600,000 was glad I was in the work, was anxious to help, but on account of a large herd of cattle she had bought, was unable to pay anything.

It was J.D. Tant who held the first meeting in Killeen, Bell County, Texas, bought candles to light the house, stayed at a third class hotel, and bought my horse feed at a wagon yard from Wednesday till Sunday before a single member out of the five families who lived there invited me to their homes. Yet I formed a congregation of eleven members and put them to work. Killeen now has a good house and two hundred members, yet I do not suppose they want me to preach the gospel there. I have labored five months under Holland at \$50 per month as they had promised. Then then called me in and heard my report. I had baptized fifty-three and done much good, but they feared they would have a drought. They were pleased with my work, but did not feel able to support me longer for the work. They paid me \$96 of the \$250 they owed me, and let me go. I guess they will pay me at the judgment day.

During September, 1886, I got up my first debate. I did not have sense enough to get up the proposition so I rode one hundred and forty miles horseback to get McGary and Hansbrough to help me word propositions for debate. Since then I have had experience in debating seventeen states with thirteen denominations. I have held over two hundred debates, and think I know more about debating than I did then.

It was during the year 1886 that I attended the Austin state meeting where the church of Christ divided, when a small faction pulled off and organized a human society, and introduced instrumental music in worship. I

did not go there to attend the meeting, but to hunt for a wife. I found the girl I wanted and told her my business. Four years later we were married. She became the mother of two children. Both of them are now dead. She was called home in 1894. A grander woman for a preacher's wife never lived. I count on seeing her with the redeemed in the city of our God.

In 1896, I married Miss Nannie Yater, who now stands by my side and helps me fight the battles of life. She is the mother of six children.

I write this bit of history only for the benefit of the young who may come after me so they will not think a preacher's life is all flowers and sunshine. If I had to live life again I know of but few changes I would make. I learned forty years ago that to become a Christian, a man must hear Christ (**Matthew 7:24**), have faith in him (**John 20:30,31**), repent of his sins (**Luke 24:47**), confess Christ (**Matthew 10:32**), and be baptized for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:38**). I have never had occasion to change but still preach it that way today.

As I come nearer the river's bank, I am fighting harder and trying to do more that God may welcome me than ever before. Only a few more miles and I shall rejoice to see the other side. If God accepts me, all will be well with me.

J.D. Tant died at 4:30 o'clock, Sunday afternoon, June 1, 1941. He was buried in the Cleburne Memorial Cemetery, Cleburne, TX. A simple stone marks the spot, bearing the legend: "Jefferson Davis Tant, 1861-1941, 'I have fought a good fight.'" (From the book of J.D. Tant's sermons, The Gospel X-Ray, published by Firm Foundation in 1933.) Guardian of Truth - November 20, 1986.

Taken from 8/27/21 Meditate on These Things

SHOULD YOU GET TO KNOW HIM?

There was a certain old recluse who lived deep in the mountains of Colorado. When he died, distant relatives came from the city to collect his valuables. Upon arriving, all they saw was an old shack with an outhouse beside it. Inside the shack next to the rock fireplace was an old cooking pot and his mining equipment. A cracked table with a three-legged chair stood guard by a tiny window, and a kerosene lamp served as the centerpiece for the table. In a dark corner of the little room was a dilapidated cot with a threadbare bedroll on it.

They picked up some of the old relics and started to leave. As they were driving away, an old friend of the

recluse, on his mule, flagged them down. "Do you mind if I help myself to what's left in my friend's cabin?" he asked. "Go right ahead," they replied. After all, they thought, what inside that shack could be worth anything?

The old friend entered the shack and walked directly over to the table. He reached under it and lifted one of the floor boards. He then proceeded to take out all the gold his friend had discovered over the past 53 years – enough to have built a palace. The recluse died with only his friend knowing his true worth.

As the friend looked out of the little window and watched the cloud of dust behind the relative's car disappear, he said, "They should have got to know him better.

The Lamb, Jesus Christ, suffered and died a criminal's death 2000 years ago. Most folks have missed out on the gold. Do you know our Friend's true worth? Do you treat Him as if he's some old relic of history that lived somewhere in the strife-torn Middle-East long, long ago in a galaxy far, far way? What's that got to do with me? Yeah, sure He died, and maybe he's some tragic hero. And we drive away or walk away empty. Have you missed the gold? Will someone one day say of you that he should have got to know Jesus better?

Ken Green

We offer either in home studies in person or by way of Correspondence Courses.

Call me, Jim Stauffer at 913-620-0563, Evangelist at the Lenexa church of Christ.

We believe in worshiping and serving the Lord as He has instructed in His word.

Things people believe that are not taught in the Bible!

Did you know that the Bible does not teach you are to confess your sins to a designated Priest? See James 5:16; 1 John 1:7-10

Please call us to study the Bible. It is refreshing.

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders: Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons: Bill Miller

Brandon Jimison

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Check out the following websites:

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News and Notes:

Sick in need of Prayers:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick,
Denese Goring, Brooklyn
Boyer, Tracy Richardson,
Jordan Moody, Don Craig, Tina
Brofft, Ken Green, Matt
Bassford, Tim Young, Judy
Root, Beth Armstrong and Don
Simmons

Bible Classes:

Sunday Morning - Hebrews -
Jim Stauffer

Wednesday Evening - 1&2
Peter and Jude - Ron Peck

Sunday Sermon: *Contending
for the Faith*



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10