



Village Church of Laguna Woods: Vision 2010 and Beyond **Our Mission and Our Work: Be Fruitful**

Be Fruitful and Multiply

Fruit or fruitfulness is a metaphor used by God throughout the Word to illustrate how God's family grows.

A. Fruitfulness And The Farming Metaphor

Throughout scripture God uses nature, agriculture and farming as a metaphor for the process of salvation, growth and discipleship.

1. **Fruitfulness and patience:** *Jas 5:7* "Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain."
2. **Fruitfulness and persistence:** *Luk 8:5-8* "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; some fell on rock; some fell among thorns, But others fell on good ground..."
3. **Fruitfulness and prosperity:** *Isaiah 55:10-11* [See side bar] The nature of God's Word like rain, is to 'prosper' that which it falls upon or speaks to.

B. Fruitfulness and God's Promise *Gen 35:11*

"I am God Almighty!" *El Shaddai*

1. **El Shaddai:** El Shaddai or 'God Almighty' here means both blessing and power. It is God's favorite name when blessing the Patriarchs.
2. **The promise:** The promise is that God is Almighty and His 'Almightiness' is the source of power to fulfill the command that follows.
3. **What will you trust?** God is saying to Jacob and to us, "If you will trust Me as God Almighty, you can and will be fruitful and multiply." Jesus put it this way in *John 15:4*, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me."

C. Fruitfulness and God's Command *Gen 35:11*

"Be fruitful and multiply."

1. **Be fruitful:** Jesus also issues a command about being fruitful in *John 15:16* [See sidebar]
2. **Fruit for eternal life:** *John 4:35-36* We are often like the disciples and Jesus to point out the obvious: There is a harvest all around us. Laguna Woods is our Jerusalem-field. I think that God wants us to become effective in sharing and living the gospel in our 'Jerusalem' as it will result in greater effectiveness beyond Laguna Woods.
3. **Fruitfulness in the Great Commission:** *Matt 28:19-20* The Great Commission starts with a promise similar to *Gen 35:11* "All authority has been given to me in heaven and earth." It is after this promise that the power/authority of the Son of God will go with us—that He commands us to 'go.'

Genesis 35:11-12 (NKJV)

35:11 Also God said to him: "**I am God Almighty.**
Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body.

35:12 The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land."

John 15:16 (NKJV)

15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you **should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain...**

Isaiah 55:10-11 (NKJV)

:10 "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

:11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

John 4:35-36 (NKJV)

:35 Do you not say, "There are still four months and then comes the harvest"? Behold, I say to you, **lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!**

:36 And he who reaps receives wages, **and gathers fruit for eternal life,** that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.