**Faith and The Master Gardener**

[May 4, 2023](https://faithencounters.impart.org/2023/05/04/faith-and-the-master-gardener/)[Martha Rodman](https://faithencounters.impart.org/author/martharodman/)

*This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit. John 15:8*NIV.

There is something about reading through John chapter 15. I find it both challenging and comforting. In the natural, I admit I am not a gardener. It is by God’s grace that the plants my husband cared for, for so many years, are still mostly alive. I say mostly, because I know they probably need to be re-potted or fertilized (or at least I think so) but they get watered and are still green! I value those plants because he loved them. When we have a relationship with our Master Gardener, then we change our perspectives about His touch, including pruning.

But, I am so grateful we have a Master Gardener that looks after His planting. Every time I read through this chapter, I am in awe of how He works so patiently with me, as His planting. The pruning isn’t fun, but learning to trust our Gardener makes the process go smoother. Years ago, I watched Darryl prune some apple trees. He kept cutting and cutting, I thought there isn’t going to be anything left of that tree. But the next year, the apples grew bigger and tastier than ever before.

It can be humbling to realize we have branches which are bearing little or no fruit. Trusting the Gardener’s wisdom that we will bear even more fruit after the pruning comes with experience. *He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. John 15:3.* That is the promise. If we want to bear more fruit, we must go through the pruning process.

It’s also humbling to understand that, apart from Him, we can do nothing. *Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me, you can do nothing. John 15:5.*Oh, how I find myself, thinking surely I can do something. That nothing part brings me up short. We cannot bear any fruit at all unless we stay connected to the vine and let His Spirit move in and through us. This is really a good thing!

Some branches He has cut off from me aren’t pretty. Judgement which has led to a critical spirit, envy, unforgiveness, self-pity, pride, selfishness. These all fall under the works of the flesh, don’t they? Unfortunately, some of these have had to be cut off more than once! I admit, sometimes the pruning of what I think are branches that are bearing good fruit is often harder to understand. Some of it is still a mystery.

His pruning happens in different ways. When we cooperate with what we read in His Word, pruning happens. As the Holy Spirit points out places that need changing and we submit, pruning happens. Listening to the preaching and teaching of the Word and applying it, pruning happens. He may use circumstances, as well. I know He used my time as a caregiver to work some deep changes in my life. We don’t need to fear His pruning shears.

But all of it has brought me closer to trusting Him and His wisdom. *John 15:8-9 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love*. We must look at the bigger picture, like Jesus did. It is not about us; it is about Him. When we make it about Him, remembering His love and suffering sacrifice He did for us, it is easier to allow Him to make these changes. The goal of pruning is for us to become more Christ-like. Everything He removed and is removing from my life benefits me first!

*Father, I am so grateful for Your work in our lives. Help us yield to Your pruning shears in trust and faith. Help us to embrace the pruning process, no matter how it comes.* *In Jesus’ Name, amen.*