

**J.R. Miller:**

"He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit; while every branch that does bear fruit" he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful." John 15:2

Christ taught many lessons on the sin and doom of uselessness. One of His parables told of a tree which bore no fruit. The soil was good, and the tree was carefully planted and well tended; still, when the master came at the proper season, expecting to find fruit " he found none. Fruitlessness is cursed. The tree with nothing but leaves " is made to wither. There is no place in the Lord's kingdom for uselessness.

We must notice here that it is the fruitful branch which is pruned. The gardener does not prune the unfruitful branch; it would do it no good. It is the true Christian, whom the Father chastens and causes sometimes to suffer under sore discipline. The wicked are let alone; but in their luxuriance there is no spiritual fruit.

Another thing to be noticed here is, that the object of the Father's pruning " is that the branch may be made to bear more fruit. It seems sometimes as if the pruning were destructive; but He who holds the knife, knows that what He is doing will make the vine far more luxuriant in the end, and its fruit sweeter and more luscious. The aim of God in all His pruning " is greater fruitfulness.

Now the pruning, sharp, unsparing,  
Scattered blossom, bleeding shoot;  
Afterward the plenteous bearing  
Of the Master's pleasant fruit.

If we would but remember this when we find ourselves suffering under God's chastening hand " it would help us to bear the pain with patience, and also to engage with God in His design of blessing for us. Earthly prosperity often is to the Christian " like the luxuriance which the gardener must cut away to save the vine's life.