* I want everyone to picture this, imagine that there is a gardener who patiently nurtures and maintains his crops every day, and despite the storms, the droughts, the pests, he never gives up. He still waters the plants, maintains the plants, prunes the plant, and continue to nurture his garden with such great dedication
* Such a great farmer, right?
* But why does he endure these hardships? Knowing that these tough times will surely come again, the storm might pass but he knows there will be another in next couple of months, and after the storm pass drought might appear and ruin his crops, and the pests, oh the pests that does
* not care whether there’s storm or drought.
* For someone with a weak mindset, someone that has not been tested, someone who have not endured such hardships, he will surely just give up, he might even sell his land and just change his job
* But the farmer endures because he knows that, IN TIME, his garden WILL BEAR beautiful and abundant fruit
* Similarly, we often find ourselves facing the storms, droughts, and PESTS in life. We wait, we struggle of course, sometimes it leaves us wondering if this season will ever pass, and sometimes it leaves us wondering if the fruits of our efforts will ever come
* But I am here to tell you that enduring these hardships can ACTUALLY LEAD to a DEEPER, and more profound joy than we have ever imagined
* In this night, I’m going to share with you all the PROCESS of bearing fruit in our lives — despite all the trials and hardships — will bring us closer to a joy that is NOT JUST POSSIBLE but PROMISED by God.
* And for this Big Question that we have **\*next slide + reads question\***
* I hope that we find the answer to it WITHIN ourselves
* **\*next slide**
* So this verse, I’m hoping at this point everyone is already familiar with it
* It emphasizes the importance of staying connected to Jesus, as only through Him can we bear fruit in our lives
* In a spiritual context, ‘bearing fruit’ obviously it means producing outcomes, positive outcomes that REFLECTS our relationship with Christ when we ABIDE in him
* Now “What are these outcomes?” you might ask
* First of all, it is the relationship with God, when we abide in Him we feel his presence, we NOTICE his guidance to us, and most especially we experience his love for us.
* Second is that when we abide in him, we achieve spiritual GROWTH and MATURITY, and as we as Christians, grow our faith, we DEVELOP a “Christ-like” character, the joy, love, peace, patience, etc.
* As the verse also stated, that if you REMAIN in him and his WORDS remain in you, your prayers WILL be effective, we will have ANSWERED prayers
* Also bearing fruit glorifies God, because it reflects his work in the believer’s life, and as a Christian we should find joy as it brings glory to the kingdom of God
* Speaking of the qualities of that brings glory to God, this reminds me of TRAITS that Pastora Jez stated last week, that we should have Trust, Faith, Patience, Courage, Strength, and Endurance as we actively wait for the Lord
* This night, I want to focus on qualities we should have as Christians
* And one of the key aspects of a Christian is developing the fruits of the spirit that is stated in Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control
* But before I even proceed, I also want to emphasize that these qualities are not something that we are born with, rather they are DEVELOPED, and refined through our connection with others, our everyday circumstances, basically our journey in life
* Because there are some common misconceptions that bearing fruit is an easy task. But the reality is that it is way more difficult than it seems.
* Developing these spiritual traits takes GREAT EFFORT and PATIENCE, Let alone to ENJOY the process, because not everyone likes to do the hard thing, I mean they want to, they say that they want to, but their actions don’t align
* Because let’s admit it everyone, if we’re given the chance to do nothing and still get everything we ever wanted in life, I feel like most of us will accept it right away, I mean most, for those doesn’t, thumbs up ka saken
* Just like they said, laziness is a privilege, because you have nothing to be worried of
* Magtatrabaho ka pa ba kung, may makakain naman kayo bukas? Mag-aaral ka pa ba ng todong-todo kung secured naman na future mo? I don’t think so
* Kasi if we have the choice, we’d probably prefer to just be lazy all day and do nothing that requires way any effort, why? because it feels good, It’s comforting to do so
* What I’m trying to say is that to bear fruit and achieve success, we must be willing to work hard, show a substantial amount of effort, develop our character and skills. Although it might be tempting to seek an effortless path, real progress comes from effort and dedication
* **\*next slide\***
* I’m sure everyone here has their own circumstances, battles that we’re fighting every day. But let’s remember, in our Christian walk, in our Christian Life, we are not promised a life free of hardship.
* Instead, what we are promised with is God's presence and support through our struggles. As James 1:2-4 reminds us, **\*reads the verse\***
* Christian walk is a Journey of Faith, filled with both trials AND triumphs, because as we know it’s during the difficult times that we often grow the most
* The trials and the challenges that we face acts as a form of spiritual pruning. God uses these experiences to remove the unfruitful aspects of our lives
* Kasi it’s only through this process that we come into alignment with his will
* Kailangan din nating itatak sa utak natin na every trial is an opportunity to experience God's power and to witness His ability to turn our struggles into sources of strength and hope.
* Kaya as we undergo this pruning, we are refined and even purified, becoming more like Christ in our character and actions.
* **\*next slide that shows the fruits of the spirits\***
* These are the traits that I’m talking about when I said spiritual growth and maturity. The fruits of the Spirit, evidence of a life transformed by Christ.
* Why? Because these are not something we are born with. We have to experience certain scenarios, and go through various circumstances that will make us grow and mature.
* It is through life's challenges and God's pruning process that we develop these qualities. Because when we face trials with faith and perseverance, we allow God to cultivate these fruits within us, leading to true spiritual growth and maturity.
* when we ask God to spare us from pain, he will refuse, because suffering draws us apart from worldly care and bring us closer to him
* when we ask God to make our spirit grow, he will refuse, because we must grow on our own, becasue he will prune us and make us fruitful
* when we ask God for all the things that we might enjoy in life, he will refuse, because he will give us life so that we may ENJOY all things
* Yes, It's a painful process at times, it makes you question yourself, makes you feel stupid, it hurts you, but it’s necessary for us to grow, for our spiritual growth.
* So we should embrace the hardships, find joy in hardships, shift your perspective to something positive, because as we persevere through these hardships, our faith matures.
* Let’s take a look at the fruits of the spirit, as I’ve said earlier, it is not something that we are born with, it is developed as we progress in life
* Do you think we will find love if we never faced hatred?
* Because it is through the presence of hatred that love becomes evident
* Experiencing hatred, or not just hatred but also selfishness, helps us to appreciate the depth or significance of love
* And also let’s not forget that the promise of God's presence means we are never alone. God walks beside us, He is there to support us, offering His COMFORT and GUIDANCE.
* Paano? Have you guys ever asked God to help you in your life? Cause I do, I have prayed for God to guide me, to prune all of the negative aspects in my life
* I asked God to take all of my bad habits away, I feel like he refused, why? because I realized it is not for God to take away but for me to GIVE IT UP
* I asked God to grant me patience, what He answered is that he allowed me to experience situations that requires it, because I realized that when we go through difficult times, we learn to rely on God’s timing and trust in His plan, It is through these trials that we learn to wait, trust, and endure
* When I was so sad, I prayed to God for happiness, but what He gave to me was BLESSINGS, I realized that happiness and being grateful is up to us

**The Reality of Hardships**

**Contrasts:**

* **Explanation:** Discuss how spiritual qualities are developed through facing their opposites.
* **Lines:**
  + "You will never truly find love if you have never faced hatred. It's in the presence of hatred that the value of love becomes evident."
  + "Joy is not merely happiness but a deep-seated contentment in Christ that shines brightest in times of despair and discontent."

**Examples:**

* **Explanation:** Provide specific examples for each fruit of the Spirit.
* **Lines:**
  + "Peace, the calm assurance that God is in control, stands in stark contrast to the restlessness of anxiety and the chaos of conflict."
  + "Patience is cultivated in the waiting, in the moments when things don't go as planned."

**Endurance and Pruning**

**Endurance Through Trials:**

* **Explanation:** Explain how enduring hardships strengthens our faith.
  + "James 1:2-4 tells us, 'Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.'"
  + "Through trials, our faith is tested and strengthened, leading to maturity and completeness."

**The Pruning Process:**

* **Explanation:** Describe the pruning process and its importance.
  + "John 15:2 says, '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.'"
  + "God's pruning process involves removing what is unfruitful in our lives, refining us to become more productive and aligned with His will."

**Purpose of Pruning:**

* **Refinement and Growth:** Pruning is not about punishment but about refining us to grow stronger and bear more fruit.
  + **Line:** "Pruning is God's way of shaping us, removing the unnecessary, and making us more effective in our walk with Him."
* **Removing Unfruitfulness:** It involves cutting away the parts of our lives that are unproductive or hindering our spiritual growth.
  + **Line:** "God's pruning removes the dead and unfruitful branches in our lives, those habits or attitudes that hinder our growth."

**Personal Application:**

* + **Life Experiences:** Pruning can come in the form of challenges, trials, or even the removal of certain comforts or distractions.
    - **Line:** "Sometimes, God's pruning may feel painful as we face trials and challenges, but it's through these experiences that we grow stronger and more resilient in our faith."
  + **Spiritual Discipline:** Embracing spiritual disciplines like prayer, fasting, and Bible study as part of the pruning process.
    - **Line:** "By dedicating ourselves to prayer, fasting, and studying God's Word, we allow Him to prune our hearts and minds, removing distractions and deepening our relationship with Him."

**Outcome of Pruning:**

* + **Increased Fruitfulness:** Just as a pruned tree produces more and better fruit, we become more fruitful in our spiritual lives.
    - **Line:** "Through God's pruning, we become more fruitful, our lives reflecting His love, joy, peace, and all the fruits of the Spirit more abundantly."
  + **Alignment with God's Will:** Pruning aligns our desires and actions with God's will, making us more effective in His service.
    - **Line:** "As God prunes us, our lives become more aligned with His will, and we are better equipped to serve Him and others."

**Personal Reflection:**

* **Line:** "Reflect on your own life. What areas might God be pruning? What challenges or changes are you facing that could be His way of refining you to bear more fruit?"

**Encouragement:**

* **Line:** "Remember, pruning is a sign of God's love and care. He sees our potential and wants us to thrive. Embrace the pruning process, knowing that it leads to greater fruitfulness and a deeper relationship with Him."

**Additional Lines for Emphasis:**

* **About God's Intentions:**
  + **Line:** "God's intention in pruning us is always for our good. He wants us to flourish and become more like Christ."
* **About Embracing the Process:**
  + **Line:** "Let us not resist the pruning process but embrace it, trusting that God is at work in us, making us more fruitful for His glory."
* **About Trusting God's Plan:**
  + **Line:** "Even when the pruning process is uncomfortable, we can trust that God has a perfect plan. He knows exactly what needs to be removed and what needs to be nurtured."
* **About The Outcome:**
  + **Line:** "The result of God's pruning is a life that bears abundant fruit, reflecting His love, grace, and truth to the world."

**Personal Testimony**

**Share a Story:**

* **Explanation:** Tell a personal or relatable story about trials and waiting.
* **Lines:**
  + "I remember a time when I faced significant challenges in my life. Despite my efforts and prayers, it seemed like the situation would never improve."
  + "But through this experience, I learned to trust God's timing and saw how He was shaping me through the process."

**Lessons Learned:**

* **Explanation:** Highlight the lessons learned from this experience.
* **Lines:**
  + "This taught me the importance of perseverance and how enduring trials can lead to greater spiritual growth and a deeper relationship with God."

**The Waiting Period**

**Patience in the Process:**

* **Explanation:** Discuss the importance of patience and trusting God's timing.
* **Lines:**
  + "Ecclesiastes 3:1 reminds us, 'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.'"
  + "Patience involves trusting that God has a perfect plan and timing for everything in our lives."

**Active Waiting:**

* **Explanation:** Offer practical ways to stay active and faithful during waiting periods.
* **Lines:**
  + "Engage in spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation, and service to others."
  + "Stay connected to your faith community and continue seeking God's guidance through His word."

**Encouragement to Practice:**

* **Explanation:** Encourage the audience to practice these principles.
* **Lines:**
  + "As we face trials, let us remain connected to the vine, Jesus Christ, and trust that through Him, we will bear much fruit."
  + "May we embrace our journey with patience, perseverance, and a deep sense of joy in the Lord."

**Slide 13: Final Thoughts and Prayer**

**Encouragement:**

* **Explanation:** Provide final encouragement to the audience.
* **Lines:**
  + "Remember, every trial we face is an opportunity for growth. Let us trust in God's timing and embrace the journey with hope."
  + "May we always find joy in the process of becoming more like Christ."

**Closing Prayer:**

* **Explanation:** End with a prayer to reinforce the message.
* **Lines:**
  + "Dear Lord, help us to embrace our trials with patience and perseverance. Give us the strength to remain faithful and to trust in Your perfect plan."
  + "May we find joy in our journey, knowing that You are always with us, guiding us, and helping us to bear much fruit. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen."