

pruned to yield fruit

"look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' but He answered and said to Him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. and if it bears fruit, well. but if not, after that you can cut it down.'" luke 13:7-9

do you sometimes weary of all the trials and temptations that afflict your walk with the Lord? perhaps we even esteem Him not faithful to finish the work He has begun in us. i tell you NO, but He is a masterful gardener and knows what is best.

let me tell you a little story.

a child of God was dazed by the variety of afflictions which seemed to make her their target. walking past a vineyard in the rich autumnal glow she noticed the untrimmed appearance and the luxuriant wealth of leaves on the vines, that the ground was given over to a tangle of weeds and grass, and that the whole place looked utterly uncared for. as she pondered, the Heavenly Gardener whispered so precious a message that she would fain pass it on:

"my dear child, are you wondering at the sequence of trials in your life? behold that vineyard and learn of it. the gardener ceases to prune, to trim, to harrow, or to pluck the ripe fruit only when he expects nothing more from the vine during that season. it is left to

itself, because the season of fruit is past and further effort for the present would yield no profit. comparative uselessness is the condition of freedom from suffering. do you then wish me to cease pruning your life? shall I leave you alone?" and the comforted heart cried, "NO!"

- homera homer-dixon

it is the branch that bears the fruit,
that feels the knife,
to prune it for a larger growth,
a fuller life.

though every budding twig be lopped,
and every grace
of swaying tendril, springing leaf,
be lost a space.

o thou whose life of joy seems reft,
of beauty shorn;
whose aspirations lie in dust,
all bruised and torn,

rejoice, tho' each desire, each dream,
each hope of thine
shall fall and fade; it is the hand
of love divine

that holds the knife, that cuts and breaks
with tenderest touch,
that thou, whose life has borne some fruit

may'st now bear much.

- annie johnson flint