

**You Gotta Serve Somebody**

**John 13:1-17**

**11 of 14**

On a recent visit to two California vineyards, author Margaret Feinberg discovered that vintners must adopt a long-term approach to their work.

According to Feinberg: The first year a vintner plants shoots of vines rather than seeds because these yield the strongest vines. At the end of the first growing season, he cuts them back. A second year passes. He cuts them back again. Only after the third year does he see his first viable clusters of grapes. Serious vintners leave those clusters on the vines. For most vintners, it's not until year four that they bring in their first harvest.

For those growing grapes for winemaking, they'll bottle their harvest, but won't taste the fruit of their labors until year seven or eight. Most vineyards in Napa Valley won't reach a breakeven point for their investment until year fifteen, eighteen or beyond.

Applying these insights to her spiritual life, Feinberg writes:

Sometimes I look at my own life and wonder, Why am I not more fruitful? And why does pruning have to hurt so much? Why does cultivating a healthy crop take so long? Yet those questions circle around the here and now. God's perspective is much different. Like a good vineyard owner, he knows how to bring about fruitfulness better than I ever will. And he is patient with me, more patient than I am with myself ... [Also], as we fulfill our callings ... we must recognize that like the vintner's, our fruitfulness will not come overnight. The first harvest of our labors may not come for three or five years. (Margaret Feinberg, *"Napa Valley on Leadership," Q Shorts*, [www.Qideas.org](http://www.Qideas.org))

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This week's Daily Bible Reading will give us a better understanding of God's spiritual pruning process in our lives.

- DAY ONE – John 15:1-8
- DAY TWO – Romans 5:1-5
- DAY THREE – Galatians 5:22-24
- DAY FOUR – Hebrews 12
- DAY FIVE – James 1:2-4

**Memory Verse:**

"I am the true vine, and my father is the gardener. 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 15:1-2)

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