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CUT IT BACK

Change is often painful, but necessary. I like to grow avocados. I have had great success in planting them in water and watching them grow. They always start with the root going down before a sprout goes up. When the sprout first bursts through the seed it is always a thrill to see that tiny sprout. They don't all sprout, and that is disappointing. Their water becomes cloudy and the seed becomes slimy and dead. They are unfruitful and have to be thrown away. For those that do sprout, it takes time for them to grow upwards. I allow them to get about 18 inches tall and then plant them into a pot or the ground so they can grow larger and larger.

One plant that I had sprouted grew to about three feet tall and had become kind of spindly. I watered it, but it just was not growing fuller. One day as I was looking at it, I heard Holy Spirit speak and tell me "to cut it back to nothing but a twig." My first reaction was, "it wouldn't like to be cut back". Yet, the tug of Holy Spirit convinced me that it was the right thing to do. I cut off the spindly branches and all that remained was a pencil sized barren twig growing out of the pot. It did not look like a bit like it had when it first had been planted. There weren't any leaves on it, and it appeared to be dead. Over time, I watched it to see what lesson I would learn. Slowly over a few weeks' time, little sprouts of leaves started to come back on the "twig". They started growing and before I realized it, my avocado plant was growing and becoming full again. It became quite a plant. I gave many away in this condition because I was the "seed planter", and not the "seed harvester".

One day, several years later, a friend brought me a beautiful large avocado. It was so big! She said it was the "first fruit" from a tree that I had started and given her. She, in turn, had given it to her brother who had planted it in his yard, and it became a large tree full of fruit. I was shocked to say the least! I would have to say that the avocado was delicious.

What would have happened to that spindly avocado plant if it had not been cut back? Chances are that it would never have produced any fruit. It would have eventually become useless and would have died. Our lives are like this my friends. We often find ourselves planted somewhere that worked once but now it appears that things have dried up. We often don't understand why things that once were fruitful aren't working now. It is then that we have a choice - we give everything in our lives totally to God and allow Him to "cut us back" or choose to remain where we are and become "unfruitful".

Things will only change through pruning. It is painful to go through the cutting back season, but it is absolutely necessary if our lives are to become fruitful again. Many are going through this process right now. You are feeling abandoned, hopeless, helpless, and discouraged. Don't give up! The Master is working in your life, and you will see change coming as you yield yourselves totally to the cutting back! I can attest to it! I have been there but, in the end, we will see that it was worth it all to be fruitful for the Kingdom of God. Be blessed to be a blessing!