

- the tree had to do is to receive it.
- 2) In life, Jesus Christ did all the work for us. He died and rose again to save our souls. (2 Corinthians 5:21) "*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*" The only thing we can do is to receive what He did for us by faith. You will NEVER bear any fruit for God's glory until you receive Christ as your Saviour. You are incapable without God's help. Jesus said, (John 3:3) "... *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"
 - 3) Trees that have produced good fruit sometimes stop producing fruit. They need the gardener's help. Sadly, that can also be true of Christians. Sin will keep Christians from harmony and fellowship with God. The solution is the same. If we will admit our need and receive Christ's help, He will enable us to live righteously and in harmony with God. (John 15:5) "*I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*"

Conclusion: As God looks at your life, does He see the fruit He expects from you? Are you living in harmony and fellowship with God and glorifying Him? If you have never repented of your sins and trusted Christ, you cannot bear that fruit and God has every right to "cut you down" and send you to eternal hell (v.3). Praise God, like the vinedresser, Jesus Christ wants to do a transforming work in your life if you will let Him. He died and rose again on your behalf. He offers you a fruitful life and home in heaven, but you must humbly receive it.

Christian friend, as God looks at your life, does He see the fruit He expects from you? Are you living in harmony and fellowship with God and glorifying Him? Or has sin crept in and made you fruitless? If so, you too need Christ's help. If you will confess your sin, He will restore your righteousness. If you will obey and walk with Him, He will enable you to bear fruit. If you continue to be fruitless, He has every right to "cut you down". He may take you to heaven prematurely. He may send trials in your life to chasten you. You cannot be a happy Christian and unfruitful at the same time.

Song: Take Time to Be Holy 376

The Need to be Fruitful

2 May 2021 AM - Luke 13:1-9 - Parables21 - Scott Childs

Introduction: Read Luke 13:1-9. I recently planted our winter vegetable garden. I fortified the ground with nutrients. I chose what to plant. I chose where to plant each plant. I water the plants. I pulled a couple of struggling plants and replaced them with stronger plants. I am the master of my garden.

In our parable today, Jesus describes an unfruitful fig tree. The owner appears to represent God and the vinedresser the Lord Jesus.

While some believe the parable applies to the nation of Israel, it more likely has a personal application in it for every one of us.

Transition: Notice with me how the parable teaches us the importance of bearing spiritual fruit.

1. The Reasoning of the People (v.1-5)

a. We often view disasters as God's judgment on sinful people.

- 1) Jesus had just been speaking of judgment in Luke 12. Probably, to ease their own conscience, some reminded Jesus of a time when wicked Galilaeans rebelled against Pilate and he killed them. They concluded that bad things only happen to bad people.
- 2) Jesus brought up another example of 18 who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them. He then asked if those 18 were greater sinners than others in Jerusalem.
- 3) Has God ever used natural disasters as judgement on sin? Yes, He did in the Noachic flood, plagues on Egypt, Jonah's storm, and other such events.
- 4) Is every disaster an act of God's judgment? Only God knows that answer. Many natural disasters are the result of Adam's sin and the curse on the ground that followed. We have only limited knowledge.

b. Jesus reminds us that we all deserve judgment.

- 1) If we are not careful, we may conclude that every tragedy that happens to others is God's judgment for some sin that they have done. When we do, we are like Job's

friends, who judged with limited knowledge. God alone knows His reason for allowing such things.

- 2) As I prepared this message, the Lord reminded me that I have said that the Covid-19 pandemic may be God's judgment on our sinful world. That may be true, but I am not God and should not declare something I do not know. It would be better for me to say, "[The Covid-19 pandemic reminds me that I deserve God's chastening as much as anyone else if I do not stay right with God.](#)"
- 3) Note Jesus' warnings in verse 3 and verse 5. (Read)
- 4) In order to teach them and us to look within rather than accusing others, Jesus proceeded to tell a parable.

2. The Rights of the Owner (v.6-7)

The parable is about a certain man who had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. When he expected to find figs on his tree, it had produced none. That owner had three rights over that tree. (Sub-points by G. Campbell Morgan)

a. He had absolute right to his property.

- 1) He owned the vineyard where the fig tree was growing and the soil in which it grew.
- 2) He owned the fig tree. It belonged to him.

b. He had absolute right to expect fruit.

- 1) He made space for the fig tree to grow in his vineyard because he wanted figs.
- 2) The tree was mature enough to produce figs, thus, he had the right to expect figs.
- 3) His expectation of figs is very justifiable. I expect figs from my fig tree. I expect cabbage from my cabbage plants. I expect lemons from my lemon tree.

c. He had the right to destroy the unfruitful tree.

- 1) He owned the fig tree. Fig trees are supposed to produce figs. He could do with it as he pleased.
- 2) The fig tree was using space that a fruitful tree could occupy. Since it failed to produce, he had the right to cut it down and that is what he told the vinedresser to do.

3. The Request of the Vinedresser (v.8-9)

a. He did not request pity.

- 1) He was not asking the owner to feel sorry for the unproductive tree.
- 2) The tree did not need pity; it needed help.

b. He asked for permission to delay, dig and dung.

- 1) First, he requested a delay, "Let it alone this year also."
- 2) Next, he requested permission to dig about the tree. Cultivation may break up the soil and stimulate production.
- 3) Last, he asked permission to dung it, which is to work in manure around the base of the tree to give it nutrients.

4. The Reaction God wants from Us

a. We are like the fig tree in the parable.

- 1) We belong to God by creation. He gave us life. He sustains our life. We live in His world. We breathe God's air, drink His water, eat His food, and soak in His sunlight. We have no abilities except those received from God.
- 2) God created man in His image. He wants man to reflect His image, to live in harmony and fellowship with Him, and to glorify Him. This is the fruit He expects from us.
- 3) We have a problem. Each of us was born a sinner. Since birth, we have chosen to sin many times. Sin prevents harmony and fellowship with God. We are just as guilty as those we call "bad sinners." We cannot fix our problem any sooner than the fig tree could fix its fruitlessness.
- 4) When we fail to produce the fruit God expects, He has every right to "cut us down". We deserve His judgment. (Romans 6:23) "[For the wages of sin is death...](#)" (Revelation 21:8) "[But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.](#)"

b. The Jesus Christ wants to help us produce fruit.

- 1) In the parable, the vinedresser did all the work. He was patient. He cultivated. He fertilized. The only thing that