

## LESSONS OF THE FIG TREE

As Jesus and His disciples were traveling from Bethany to Jerusalem the day after His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus saw a fig tree having leaves, but upon closer inspection He saw it had no fruit *“for it was not the season for figs”* (Mark 11:13). As a result, Jesus cursed the fig tree saying, *“Let no one eat fruit from you ever again”* (Mark 11:14). What lessons can we learn from this obvious object lesson Jesus provided for His disciples?

As followers of Jesus, we are to bear fruit. *“By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples”* (John 15:8). This passage indicates that in fact fruit bearing is essential to being a disciple of Jesus. The one who truly abides in Jesus will bear much fruit (John 15:5). Likewise, Paul tells us those who walk in the Spirit, will bear the fruit of the Spirit: *“love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control”* (Gal. 5:22-23). Additionally, the fact that Jesus cursed the tree for not bearing fruit when it was not even the season for figs, indicates we are to bear fruit always: in season and out of season, when it is convenient and not convenient, when we are having a good day and when we are having a bad day.

Secondly, it is not enough to simply look like we could bear fruit. The fig tree, having leaves, had the appearance of containing fruit, yet there was no actual fruit to be found. Jesus consistently condemned the religious leaders of His time for the hypocrisy of looking religious when their lives were full of corruption. *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence... Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness”* (Matt. 23:25, 27). Jesus’ solution to this issue is always to get the heart right, for *“every good tree bears good fruit”* (Matt. 7:17).

Lastly, Jesus was teaching His disciples about faith. When they passed by the fig tree the next day and the disciples pointed out to Jesus that the fig tree had withered away because of His curse, Jesus answered them, *“Have faith in God”* (Mark 11:22). They were impressed Jesus could speak to a tree and cause it to wither away, yet they would very soon be filled with the power of the Spirit that would allow them to do far greater things for God’s kingdom. Do we live by faith in the One *“who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think”* (Eph. 2:20)?

Let us all learn from the lessons of the fig tree and bear fruit from a transformed heart that has responded in faith to God Who has saved us!

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