

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (April 3, 2022)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

As we continue on our journey to Easter we encounter two teachings of Jesus that reinforce important truths about the interior life of a Christian. In both Jesus uses earthy, common, easy to understand language. In the first Jesus uses the illustration of a tree producing fruit. In the second He uses the image of a house being built.

Someone unfamiliar with the structure of a tree, someone unschooled in the development of a house, might make the mistake of thinking that what can be seen on the outside is the measure of the health and soundness of both. If the fruit on the branch looks good ... if the paint on the walls looks good ... but to those who know something about trees and houses it is clear that appearances can be deceiving. The old joke, "What's worse than finding a worm in your apple? Finding half a worm."

Good looking apples can be rotten on the inside. A beautiful looking house may have hidden fatal flaws.

It's difficult, possible but difficult, to miss Jesus' point. The most significant aspect of a house is a good solid foundation. The critical aspect of a fruit tree is its roots and inner structure. In a human life too. The question is, as we build our lives what do we spend most of our time on? Do we focus painting around the windows or do we invest in a good foundation? Do we polish the exterior of the apple or do we make sure our roots are grounded in the right kind of soil? Great teachings from God Himself, with eternal consequences.

Healthy Trees and Good Foundations (Luke 6:43-49)

⁴³For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, ⁴⁴for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. ⁴⁵The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. ⁴⁶Why do you call me "Lord, Lord," and not do what I tell you? ⁴⁷Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."

What Does it Say?

1. What experience have you had with fruit trees? What is your favorite fruit? Have you ever bitten in to a good-looking piece of fruit and tasted something rotten? How did that affect you?
2. When buying a house, what would be the most important things you checked on before buying?
3. Why do you think Jesus used these two images (tree and house) in this teaching?
4. What do these two teachings indicate is most important?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

5. What does "no good tree bears bad fruit" and "figs are not gathered from thornbushes" mean?
6. What type of fruit is "good fruit"? Read Galatians 5:22-23
7. What does it mean if a tree produces bad fruit? What does it mean if a house falls when a storm beats against it?
8. Does the house built on a solid rock foundation escape the storms and floods? Why or why not?
9. What did Jesus mean when He said, "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you"?
10. For Jesus, why is it important to connect "hearing" and "doing"?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

11. How would you describe the fruit growing in your life? How would others evaluate the fruit growing in your life?
12. What kind of foundation are you building your life on? What difference would it make if you chose to build your life on a foundation other than Jesus?
13. What would a life built on a foundation of popularity, fame, wealth, power, pleasure, look like? How lasting would it be?
14. What happens to you when storms come your way?
15. What are you doing right now to make sure your fruit is healthy, that the foundation of your life is solid/unshakable?

Notes: _____

As you spend time praying remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural, easy, and empowering part of your day. Prayer is talking to God, knowing that He hears you, and that He loves you. In your prayers ask God to help you grow good fruit in your life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Ask God to help you build your life on a solid foundation. God will help you because He loves you.