



I. Out On A Limb

II. Good Trees & Bad Trees

Luke 3:7-9

Assumption & Validation

Luke 6:43-45

Character & Action

III. Rooted In Truth

Personal Reflection

Take time this week to pray & respond to the following:

Many people believe that actions dictate nature and identity. They argue that who we are is established by what we do. In contrast, the Bible teaches that conduct is determined by the condition of one's heart—good begets good, evil begets evil.

Jesus calls men and women to allow the Spirit of God to reveal the condition of their hearts so that the transforming power of God can replace evil motives and actions for those that are good. Each person must choose to either be a good tree bearing good fruit or an evil tree bearing evil fruit. The choice begins in the heart.

What is the condition of your heart? Have you been quick to assume, without actually investigating the evidence, that you are living a good life? Does the fruit you are bearing confirm or deny the goodness of heart that you hope lies therein? Is your life characterized by an intention of doing good but an absence of actual goodness being lived out? Is there perhaps room for a deepening of your commitment to be a bearer of good fruit for God's glory?

Prayerfully reflect upon the goodness of heart and deed that is modeled in the life of Christ. Take time to consider how difficult it must have been for Jesus to face such tremendous challenges—to deal with so many needy people and be tempted and tested in so many ways without succumbing Himself to the evil all around. Be encouraged that the same Father who worked through the Son wants to work in the lives of His adopted sons and daughters. Embrace the truth that God is able and willing to work goodness in your heart if you will let Him lead. Ask Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit and give you a hunger to be a good tree, bearing good fruit in these days of opportunity to show and share His love.