

Are You In? Leaves and Fruit

When we are born again our lives produce the fruit God requires.

Fruit or Leaves

Mark 11:12-25 New Living Translation

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

12 The next morning as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. 13 He noticed a fig tree in full leaf a little way off, so he went over to see if he could find any figs. But there were only leaves because it was too early in the season for fruit. 14 Then Jesus said to the tree, "May no one ever eat your fruit again!" And the disciples heard him say it.

- Jesus created the fig tree, so he knew that when it was full of leaves fruit should be present.
- If it was too early in the season for fruit, then it was also too early to be full of leaves.
- The tree was out of order! His intended order that He input into the tree.
- It would be like spotting an open McDonald's with no food. All the appearances of being useful, but useless.
- God desires that His creation function in its intended use!

15 When they arrived back in Jerusalem, Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the people buying and selling animals for sacrifices. He knocked over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves, 16 and he stopped everyone from using the Temple as a marketplace.[a] 17 He said to them, "The Scriptures declare, 'My Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations,' but you have turned it into a den of thieves.

- The temple had a use that He intended, but it was not being used correctly.
- When we have been born again we become His temple, for His use!
- He has a zeal and passion for His temple.
- Since He's coming back for a church without a spot or wrinkle, is He flipping any tables in your life?
- God desires that His creation function in its intended use!

”[b] 8 When the leading priests and teachers of religious law heard what Jesus had done, they began planning how to kill him. But they were afraid of him because the people were so amazed at his teaching. 19 That evening Jesus and the disciples left[c] the city. 20 The next morning as they passed by the fig tree he had cursed, the disciples noticed it had withered from the roots up.

- Anything that Jesus curses/destroys/delivers dies from the roots up.

21 Peter remembered what Jesus had said to the tree on the previous day and exclaimed, “Look, Rabbi! The fig tree you cursed has withered and died!” 22 Then Jesus said to the disciples, “Have faith in God. 23 I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, ‘May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart. 24 I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you’ve received it, it will be yours. 25 But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too.[d]”

- When we have faith in God, we can say to the mountain.
- We must really believe and not doubt, displaying the fruit of faith and not just the leaves.
- Our mountains will die/be removed from the roots up!

What’s Wrong With Leaves?

Genesis 3:4-10 New Living Translation

4 “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. 5 “God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.” 6 The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. 7 At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. 8 When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man[a] and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees. 9 Then the Lord God called to the man, “Where

are you?” 10 He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.”

- Leaves are a lot like religion.
- Religious leaves hide the absence of fruit.
- Religious talk, religious activity, religious duties, without the character of Christ.
- My testimony of knowing about God, but not knowing (producing fruit after His kind).
- Yes the fig tree may have been out of season, but it was displaying the evidence of having something it lacked.
- Adam covered up his nakedness, didn't have the character of God
- Leaves hide the absence of fruit, religion can hide the absence of God.
- What kind of tree did Adam get the leaves from?
- What kind of tree did Jesus curse for having leaves but no fruit?

What is Required?

Matthew 7:13-23 New Living Translation

The Narrow Gate

13 “You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell[a] is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. 14 But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it. 15 “Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. 16 You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. 18 A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. 19 So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. 20 Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions. 21 “Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. 22 On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ 23 But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’

- The evidence that we're a good tree, producing good fruit is that we do the will of the Father in Heaven.
- The evidence that we're a bad tree, with bad fruit, is that we don't do His will!
- 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name. Leaves!
- 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God's laws.' No fruit!

Matthew 3:10

New Living Translation

10 Even now the ax of God's judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.

The Lord's Grace

Luke 13:6-9 New Living Translation

Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

6 Then Jesus told this story: "A man planted a fig tree in his garden and came again and again to see if there was any fruit on it, but he was always disappointed. 7 Finally, he said to his gardener, 'I've waited three years, and there hasn't been a single fig! Cut it down. It's just taking up space in the garden.' 8 "The gardener answered, 'Sir, give it one more chance. Leave it another year, and I'll give it special attention and plenty of fertilizer. 9 If we get figs next year, fine. If not, then you can cut it down.'"

- The man that owned the field sounded like the accuser, pointing out fault, rushing towards final judgment.
- But the voice of the gardener was tender and merciful, a very familiar voice.

John 15:1-8 New Living Translation

15 "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do

bear fruit so they will produce even more. 3 You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. 5 “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. 6 Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. 7 But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! 8 When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

Renewing Our Fruit

How do we turn ourselves over to the Father’s care, to renew our fruitfulness?

Romans 12:1-2 New Living Translation

12 And so, dear brothers and sisters,[a] I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.[b]
2 Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

- The evidence that we’re a good tree, producing good fruit is that we do the will of the Father in Heaven.
- When He renews your mind, He renews your fruit, because you’ll know how to please Him!

Are You In? Fruit is the Evidence!

Galatians 5:16-26 New Living Translation

Living by the Spirit’s Power

16 So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves. 17 The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. 18 But

when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses. 19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. 22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. 25 Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. 26 Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.