

“The Barren Fig Tree”

Introduction

Luke 13:1-5

- 1. This particular passage deals with the question of the guilt of sin.**
 - A. There seems that some had the mind that the Galileans “deserved” the treatment that they received.**
 - B. But the main point the Lord tried to get them to understand was that sin is sin. Everyone who sins is guilty and that his hearers would perish as the Galileans did, if they remained impenitent.**
- 2. Therefore all that sin need to repent. Repentance demands bearing fruit worthy of that repentance.**

Matthew 3:7-8 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore **bear fruits worthy of repentance,**

- 3. In view of this, Jesus then proceeds to teach the parable, showing the need to bear fruit, and that will be the aim of this morning's lesson.**

Luke 13:6-9

The Parable

1. **A fig tree is planted in a vineyard. Often times trees would be planted in a vineyard, and when one was, it would tend to receive special care.**
 - A. **If one did not mature in three years, it would likely remain fruitless, putting a strain on the good ground.**

2. **Possible players in this parable:**
 - A. **"A certain man"** - this is the vineyard owner, let him represent God

 - B. **"Vinedresser"** (keeper of the vineyard)- **this is the worker for the owner, let him represent Jesus or other messengers of God**

 - C. **"Vineyard"** - this is the place where the work is accomplished, let this represent the earth.

 - D. **"The Fig Tree"** - Let this represent God's people; the Jews. It's worth in the vineyard is only as good as the fruit and progress it bears.

3. The Lesson of the Parable

A. The owner of the vineyard comes to check on the progress of the Fig Tree

- 1) He has already invested in the vineyard and in the tree.
- 2) He is very interested in the tree's progress and therefore by this time (3 years), He fully expects to find good things.
- 3) Then He is angered and ready to cut it down when He finds that the tree has produced no fruit!

B. The tree had not produced properly in the vineyard.

- 1) The tree was just "existing," it was "holding its own."
- 2) It was offering nothing to its owner other than its presence in the vineyard.
- 3) Listen to the owner's accusation:
 - a. It is using up the ground! ("Cumbered - KJV ---- "to hinder by obstruction; hamper")
 - b. It was not producing and as a result was hindering other production.

NOTE: The Fig Tree (the Jews), should have the desire and motivation to move the plan of God forward, yet they resisted God's scheme.

C. The Vinedresser intercedes:

- 1) **Let's leave it alone for a year, loosen the dirt and fertilize it. Let's give it another year. God is longsuffering. Willing to go the "second mile."**
 - b. **But even the Vinedresser saw the futility if it did not bear fruit.**

Application Principles Today**1. God has invested in our salvation.**

1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 7:23

A. He thought so much of us that He gave His only Son.

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

B. Therefore, He fully expects to find good things; fruit produced in our life!

Psalms 92:13-14 Those who are planted in the house of the LORD Shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing,

Hebrews 5:12-14

Matthew 28:18-20

C. There is a variety of fruit that we are expected by God to bear:

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. **Against such there is no law.**

Matthew 25:34-36 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

D. He is angered and ready to cut us down if we are not producing fruit worthy of repentance.

Matthew 3:10 And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

1) Sometimes we do not produce fruit because of worldliness.

Matthew 13:22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

2) We must be engaged in bearing fruit that's pleasing to God.

Colossians 1:10 that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, **being fruitful in every good work** and increasing in the knowledge of God;

2. Jesus intercedes for us

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

A. But even Jesus knows that given time, if we do not produce fruit, then we must be delivered to Satan.

3. God is longsuffering. He does not want us to perish. He is at this moment giving us more time to produce properly!

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

4. There will come a day of reckoning. Our owner, God, will appoint a final day of accounting! Our progress will be reviewed.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

Conclusion

1. **It is important for us to abide in the word of Christ today.**

John 15:1-8

John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

2. **We must not delay, we must take advantage of God's longsuffering now and ensure that we are producing fruit that is pleasing to God.**

- A. **Our eternal destiny depends on it.**

Invitation

Place

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Richie Thetford, March 2001 - Reworked May 2018 (Thompson's Bible, Sweet Commentary, Parts of Johnny Hooks' lesson).