

Title: The Parable of the Fig Tree

Scripture: Luke 13:6-9

Speaker: Vic Redding

Event: Sunday Morning Service

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**Luke 13:6-9** *“He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.”*

The reformist Martin Luther once said, “Even if I knew that tomorrow, the world would fall to pieces, I would still plant my little apple tree.” In other words, he would still want to be fruitful for the Lord. He didn’t want to be barren. Barren means unproductive results; unproductive gain. We produce fruits to be examples to those around us.

In this parable about the fig tree, Jesus is speaking to the Jews and he’s telling them that they are the chosen people. These people were indifferent and unconcerned. It is easy for God’s people to get indifferent about bearing fruit.

### **Three thoughts about this particular parable:**

1. The master expects fruit: in verse 6, this man goes to his fig tree and he is expecting to see it bearing fruit. Luke 8 contains the parable of the sower – the good ground brought forth fruit. It multiplied. Luke 8:8 *“And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”* There are two different fruits that need to be shown by the way we live:
  - a. Personal fruit in our life: Galatians 5:22-23 *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”* Paul said that this fruit should be evident in our lives. They are personal fruits that God wants to produce in every Christian’s life.
  - b. Fruit of the lives of others: Matthew 9:37-38 *“Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”* To have a harvest, seed has to be sown. We are the product of seed sown before us. In this scripture in Matthew, God has brought the harvest. God created this world, thus creating the harvest.
2. The master is patient with us: in verse 7, we see that the owner of the vineyard wanted to cut the tree down after three years of the tree not producing fruit. However, the worker of the vineyard persuaded the man to wait a year, fertilize it, and give it another chance. We see two things in this verse:
  - a. The comforting side of this parable: it is to have the knowledge that God is not looking for an opportunity to cast you down. He’s not looking to cast you into judgement or cut you down. II Peter 3:9 *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”* The greatest comfort is knowing that God is patient when dealing with souls. He waits for us to make our choice.
  - b. The frightening side of this parable: *“cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?”* The word cumbereth means to hinder. We often think that we can live like a sinner and get by with it. We think because we don’t see immediate judgement from God that he approves of the way we are living. When judgement doesn’t come instantaneously we should view it as God being patiently waiting for us to repent. This parable shows the need for repentance. The closer we get to God, the more sinful we feel. We will be able to see the errors of our human flesh and seek God’s word for guidance and direction. We never know

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when the judgment of the Lord will come for the world or for individuals. We should strive to be fruitful because we never know when God will decide to cut the tree down.

3. The master will help us bear fruit: verses 8 and 9 show an extension of time. This is a picture of the intercessory work of the Lord. Hebrews 7:25 *"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."* Christ makes sure that there is nothing hindering our fruit bearing possibilities. He is working with us and for us. John 15:4-5 *"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."* It's only when we realize that we can do nothing without Christ that all things become possible. If we obey the Lord we will produce much fruit. II Peter 1:2-8 gives us the promise that the Lord will do everything we need in order for us to have a fruitful life. *"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."* In God's work, he provides the necessary tools to be fruitful. We will lack nothing as we trust him and put our confidence in him.

Are you barren because you aren't saved?

As a Christian, are you bearing fruit or simply taking up space?