

Leafy Christians - 10/20/19

TEXT – Matthew 21:18-22 *Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. 19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, . . .*

INTRO – Since the beginning of time He's commanded man to be fruitful. It started with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when He commanded them to "be fruitful and multiply". He commanded them to be fruitful by increasing in number. He wanted them to populate the Earth with other people just like them. He was saying my desire is for you to bear fruit.

I. The Two-fold Fruit of the Church...

A. The fruit of the Spirit

Gal 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

B. The fruit of souls saved

We will grow in number because we will sow the seeds of our spiritual fruit into the hearts of men. We are to populate this earth with other fruitful Christians.

the early church knew how to be fruitful and multiply.

Acts 2:47 *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord **added** to the church daily such as should be saved.*

Acts 6:7 *And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples **multiplied** in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.*

Acts 16:5 *And so were the churches established in the faith, and **increased in number daily.***

II. Professing or Possessing...

The problem today is that there are too many professing Christians and not enough possessing Christians. Nothing but leaves.

They're claiming to be fruitful but there's no fruit on their branches.

Instead of the fruit of the Spirit being evident in their lives there's nothing but leaves.

- The Bible says that Jesus was hungry:

Mar 11:13 *And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.*

Scripture says that it wasn't fig season yet But Jesus cursed the tree for not bearing fruit.

Why did Jesus come expecting figs even though they were out of season? And why when He found only leaves did He curse the tree knowing that it wasn't time for fruit?

To know the answer to that question you have to know a little bit about the fig tree. See the fig tree always bears fruit first and then leaves.

In some cases the leaves accompany the fruit but they never precede it.

So when the scripture says that Jesus saw the leaves from afar off, What it's saying is that He heard the profession of that tree. It was saying I am fruitful because I have leaves, And Jesus knew that leaves came after the fruit. It was making a loud profession with its leaves but there was no possession.

III. Israel Didn't Produce Fruit

Mat 3:8 *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:*

Luke 3:8-9 *Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

This is the only destructive miracle in the gospels, the destruction of the fig tree. It is a parable, an analogy, a metaphor, an illustration of the coming destruction of the temple. It is a preview of judgment and a prediction of judgment.

IV. What happens to us if we don't bring forth good fruit?

A. Good standards are not enough

B. Good doctrine is not enough

C. Good demeanor is not enough

Nothing but leaves misses the mark. We are to bring forth fruit.

2 Peter 1:4-8 *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.*

CONCL – Inspect your fruit. Tend to your garden. Dig out the weeds and only sow good seed that you might be fruitful and multiply.