

April 14, 2024AM – Pastor Kevin Olivier

Luke 13:6-9 – “Where Is Your Fruit?”

- A. Consider growing some plants. They can teach us some things about the Christian faith.
- B. This morning’s text follows after a very challenging teaching of Jesus concerning catastrophes of this life as they point us to the ultimate tragedy— hell.

Each of us are to endeavor to bear fruit as Christians.	I. <u>GOD IS LOOKING FOR YOUR FRUIT</u> II. <u>GOD GIVES YOU ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY</u>
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I. GOD IS LOOKING FOR YOUR FRUIT → vv6-7

A. When a plant doesn’t produce fruit, it encumbers the ground. It takes up valuable land that can be used for a fruitful plant.

- 1. If you have a farm, you will select plants for producing something of use: grain, fruit, vegetables, or lumber.
- 2. Another parallel is that we have tools and machines designed for needed purposes as well.

B. Jesus gave this parable to teach us about our condition before God who is looking for fruit in our lives.

- 1. The landowner in this parable represents God.
- 2. To give more light as to what sort of fruit we ought to have in our lives, John the Baptist used this same illustration in his preaching when he said, **“bear fruit in keeping with repentance . . . every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire (Mat 3:8, v10)**.
 - a. Repentance involves turning away from sin and turning to God in faith.
 - b. A person can have remorse, regret, and even avoid committing a particular sin yet still be separated from God in this life and in the life to come.
 - c. You need repentance unto eternal life! WSC 87 says “Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.”
- 2. We should examine if God’s Word and Holy Spirit is bearing fruit in our lives. **Gal 5** says, **“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (vv22-23)**
 - a. Most of these fruit of the Holy Spirit are self-explanatory.
 - b. **“Faithfulness”** involves our duties to God and towards our fellow mankind.

C. This parable of Jesus leads us to examine ourselves. → **2 Pet 1:1-11**

- 1. Contrary to common opinion in many Evangelical churches, one doesn’t just make a profession of faith in Jesus as their personal Savior so that they can then go live any way they want!
- 2. J.C. Ryle wrote, concerning this parable of Jesus in **Lu 13**, “We live in a land of Bible, and liberty, and Gospel preaching... Never let us forget that God expects from us ‘fruit’... Few things are so much forgotten by men as the close connection between privilege and responsibility... we are accountable to God for all we enjoy; and that to whomsoever much is given, of them much will be required.”¹

¹ Ryle, J. C. Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: Luke (Vol 2), pp. 113-114

II. GOD GIVES YOU ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY → vv8-9

- A. In this parable, the “**vineyard-keeper**” could represent a gospel minister (teaching elder) or ruling elder who actively serves God in the church, praying to Him on behalf of the brothers and sisters in the church.
1. Parents, family members, and even Christian friends can also plead with God before His throne of grace on behalf of others.
 2. This is something we should do for one another.
- B. The advice the vineyard-keeper gave was for the master to give more time so that he could nourish the tree with fertilizer. That could give opportunity for the tree to bear fruit.
1. During this time in history, granulated fertilizer as we know it didn’t exist.
 2. The KJV has a rather literal translation of v8: “**let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it.**”
 3. If that endeavor failed, the tree would be cut down and thrown onto a burn pile.
- C. If you examine your life and see that you are lacking in gospel fruit, you desperately need spiritual nourishment. Your eternal condition depends upon it!
1. The fertilizer God has for your growth and necessary fruit-bearing are His outward and ordinary means of grace— especially His Holy Word, the sacraments, and prayer.²
 2. When you come to church, you should feel nourished and challenged.
 3. Church is a primary place of nourishment. It is where we can feast upon the Word of God as it is preached; however, that isn’t the only place we should get sustenance.
 - a. Quoting Deut 8, Jesus rebuked Satan by saying, “**Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.**”³
 - b. We pray together at church, yet each of us should have times when we pray to God outside these church walls. Peter wrote that we should be “**casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you**” (1 Pet 5:7).
 - 1) If you are not sure if He cares for you, think about what God did in the gospel.
 - 2) → Jn 3:16-21

Review, further application, and conclusion:

² See Westminster Shorter Catechism (WSC) #88-98.

³ Mat 4:4