

PRAYER

Father, thank You for Your presence and the covering of Your leadership in our lives. Give us receptive hearts to Your direction for us, in Jesus' Name, Amen!

INTRODUCTION

Pastor Britney read the story of Jesus coming upon the fig tree, expecting that because of the leaves, there would be figs. When Jesus saw no fruit, He cursed the tree (Mark 11:12). Like the tree, Jesus also sees us in the distance and He is coming to inspect our lives. He has expectations for us, whether we are aware of it or not, and He is coming to see if we are producing. Yes He loves us and has a purpose for us, but when He gets up close to us, He does have an expectation to see fruit. This tree looked like it was producing, it had plenty of healthy leaves, but upon further inspection, there was no fruit being produced. Many people profess faith in God with their mouth, so they have all the "leaves" and they sound fruitful; but in reality they aren't actually living the life of faith in God where action is being taken and good works are producing Godly fruit. It is impossible to deceive the Lord! We may have "leaves" that look good, but He wants us to have something from Him coming out of us in the form of Godly works and fruit. It doesn't have to be a large glorious "orchard" all at once; maybe we have fruit in the beginning or "budding" phase of growing and being produced, but following Jesus requires that we be fruitful! Charles Spurgeon stated "If we have nothing but leaves, we have nothing but lies". Jesus demands that we leave everything else, follow Him, and produce fruit! Here are three practical ways that we can produce fruit in the Kingdom of God:

DISCUSSION

- 1. Use your mouth.** To declare His truth, to worship Him, to encourage people, and to bring life, rather than destruction. What we say matters! There is life and death in our words (Prov 18:21). We should be using our mouth for the Lord. What comes out of our mouth is directly impacted by our mind. If we don't like what's coming out of our mouths, we should probably assess the content of our minds and make changes where necessary, so that our thoughts are Biblically aligned, and lead us to have a mouthpiece of heaven. **Questions:** *Do you consider your mouth a mouthpiece of heaven? Why or why not? Share a good or bad experience you had with the fruit of your own words? Did this experience change how you talked?*
- 2. Use your hands.** We need to make what He is calling us to make and touch what He is calling us to touch! We need to use our hands as an expression of glory and surrender to Him. We should be working hard with our hands, laboring and doing honest work so we can produce enough for not only ourselves, but to help and bless others in need (Eph 4:28). Whatever career we have been placed in by God, whatever we are called to by Him daily, it's meant for us to produce for Jesus! **Questions:** *Have you considered the work of your hands to be only for your benefit or also for Kingdom benefit? If only for your benefit, how will you focus more on the Kingdom benefit that the work of your hands can bring? Knowing God has placed you in the career, or daily work that you do, how does your perspective change of that work?*
- 3. Use your feet.** We must go where He has called us to go, and use our feet to follow Jesus! Feet symbolize the whole body and are the best physical representation of how we respond to God. What our feet walk away from, walk towards, or where they stand when troubles come, demonstrates whether we are using them for Godly fruit, or for our own benefit. We need to and are called to walk with feet that can be used by heaven. **Questions:** *How are your feet being used by heaven? If your feet aren't being used by heaven, why do you think that is? What response to God do your feet represent, as far as what you walk away from, toward, and where they stand when trouble comes? How do you feel about this, and does anything need to change?*

HOW WILL I BE DIFFERENT?

Jesus wants to bestow responsibility on each of us. How will you get off your heinie and use your mouth, hands, and feet to produce Godly fruit so that He can trust you with bigger Kingdom responsibility?