

A Fruitful Foundation (Luke 6:43-49)

1. The Reflection of the Disciple of Christ (v.43-45)

A. *The good tree (good fruit, good person, good treasure, good):*

Good: in Greek, it means “profitable or beneficial,” which is a goodness transferable to others. It describes that which is helpful in addition to being good. It is good in character, not just work. The benefit of the good exceeds well beyond the act itself.

- Jesus does not define what the “good” is specifically. However, He has already preached on the ethics of His kingdom (v.20-38).
- Contextually, the “good” is produced:
 - as a result of persecution: poverty (v.20), hunger (v.21), sorrow (v.21), hated, maligned, excluded, and spurned because of the Son of Man (v.22-23).
 - as a result of God’s work in the heart of the disciple of Christ: love toward enemies, doing good and blessing (v.27), graciousness and generosity (v.29-35), mercy (v.36), a redemptive mindset (v.37-38), and continual circumspection (v.39-42).

B. *The bad tree (bad fruit, evil person, evil treasure, evil):*

Bad: in Greek, it means “decayed or foul.” It is the putrefaction of what was once good. It can also mean to rot away, corrupt, disgusting, perishing, rank, or worthless. In secular language it was used to describe spoiled fish, rotten grapes, or crumbling stones.

- Contextually, the “bad” is produced:
 - as a result of a worldly perspective on wealth (v.24), happiness (v.25), indifference (v.25), and respect (v.26).
 - as a result of a wicked heart that curses others, uses the court system for gross immorality, takes advantage of those who have more than them, and is engaged in thievery and covetousness (v. 28-34).
- The good and evil man (heart, tree) have a treasure (thesaurus). From this treasure (storehouse), fruit is produced.
 - The “heart” and the “tree” are synonyms that produce fruit. The kind of fruit produced is evidence of the tree’s health.
 - Being determines doing, as the DNA of the tree creates and feeds the fruit. The fruit is the only way to assess the kind and health of a tree.
 - The tongue (speaks, v.45) is the “tattletale” of the heart and the captain of the ship that delivers the treasure from the heart (Jas. 1:13, 19, 22; 2: 2-3; 3:1-12).

When a man’s conversation is ungodly, his heart is graceless and unconverted. While Jesus talks about direction (not perfection), the immediate context is self-evaluation. The one making conclusions may not see right (Lk. 6:37-42; 2 Cor. 13:5). While an absence of fruit does raise the question of regeneration and saving faith (Rom. 8:1-16; Jas. 2:14-26; 1 Jn. 3:1-9), some turn away from God for a time (1 Cor. 3:1-3). The amount, kind, and season of fruit will vary depending on the grace of God, maturity, and unrepentant sin.

While fruit cannot always be a sure indicator, it can be a suggestive one:

- How we view “fruit”: not enough fruit (legalism or ceiling due to the grace of God), counterfeit fruit (as goats, tares), no fruit (briar/thorn), or an absence of fruit for a season (fig or grape tree).
- Jesus calls His disciples to self-examination, for if there is any hindrance or “load-bearing beam” in the way, their evaluations and judgments will be incorrect (not only regarding themselves but others).
- Simultaneously, no excuse can separate the connection between a tree’s fruit and the nature of the tree.

2. The Requirement of the Disciple of Christ (v.46)

- While a tree will always bear fruit consistent with its nature, there can be pretension (for a short time).
- The tree determines the fruit. Fruit is not a work, which is something that is disassociated from its source, but a product that corresponds to the nature of the tree.
- For their hypocrisy and disobedience, Jesus rebukes those who have only come to hear Him, because the fruit that Jesus calls His disciples to produce (along with those who will choose to follow Him) is the fruit of obedience.

Why do you call me Lord, Lord? (v.46): The repetition signifies intimacy and affection: Abraham, Abraham (Gen. 22:11), Moses, Moses (Ex. 3:4), Martha, Martha (Lk. 10:41) and Saul, Saul (Acts 9:4). Those who came to hear Him have identified with Him in some form of false piety, yet did not obey Him. Many of them are hypocritical professors of Christ, but not possessors of Christ.

The verbs (v.46-47) ascend from easiest to hardest and summarize the spheres of a relationship between a teacher and His disciple. All of them are required:

- “Lord, Lord” (relational intimacy), “comes to Me and hears Me” (verbal), “and does them” (obedience).

The disciple of Jesus Christ will not only call Him his Savior and Lord, but will listen to and obey Him. If Jesus was not God-incarnate, His claims and demands on the lives of those who have come to hear Him would be blasphemy (v. 27, 46, 47).

3. The Result of the Disciple of Christ (v.47-49)

- Jesus illustrates two men who both build houses in supposed “obedience.” While at first glance both houses representing each man appear to be the same, one is built without a foundation at all, while the other has been laid upon a strong base.
- While contextually this simile is primarily eschatological, it is also temporal because Jesus speaks about the abiding perseverance and stability of His true disciples through obedience.
- Flash floods were typical of Palestine, as mountains surround Jerusalem. During heavy rainstorms, frequent flooding occurs when water cascades and overflows the riverbanks without warning.
- His Sermon on the Plain, as recorded by Luke, ends with a “great crash/ruin” for the house not built on “the” rock (v. 48).
 - The word “ruin” in Greek is only used here (v.49). It depicts the deck, hull, and keel of a ship split in half, that is sinking with no hope of recovery.
- The good man, good tree, or house built into the rock, with a good treasure, is the same man who grows in and lives out this kingdom ethic (v.20-23, 27-36, 37-42).
- The bad tree, evil man, or shallow house who did not construct his dwelling in the bedrock is the same man who is careless about God, wealthy with no eternal perspective, and always living to please man (v.24-30).
 - Everything, including he himself, will be lost when the “flood” comes (either this life or in glory).
- Those who follow Jesus will bear good fruit (v.27-36) and blessings both in this life and in heaven (v.21-23), but for those who reject Him and His teachings, there will be woes (v.24-26) and destruction (6:49).
- The final test will be evaluation and remuneration, or condemnation and damnation.
- Hearing without doing has its own recompense. Regardless, the flood will come suddenly, and only the one who has built his foundation on the “Rock” will stand.