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THE EMPTINESS OF FRUITLESSNESS

MK. 11: 12-14, 19-21

God expects you to produce fruit.

Open to John 10: God wants/expects you to have an abundant, fruitful spiritual life.

Why did Jesus Christ come? To die.

Why did Jesus Christ die? To give us an abundant life that overflows with more fullness than we know what to do with!

Fruitful job	=	money
Fruitful farm	=	crops
Fruitful family	=	children

So, what kind of life are we to have as Christians? Abundant. Let me ask you: Is your life abundant?

Children- Is it abundant or are you always wanting more? More toys, more fun, more activities?

Young people - Is your life abundant? Or are you empty and always looking for a thrill, a pick up ... ?

Adults How about it?

Far more important than saving you from the lake of fire some day - Jesus Christ wants you to have an abundant, overflowing, full life of joy and peace.

Today.

Now, turn to John 15 to see the connection.

1. Jesus Christ died.
2. Jesus died to give abundant life.
3. Jesus wants us to have abundant life.

How? John 15: 1-11. How do we have abundant life? Abiding in Christ produces fruit of a full abundant life. Mark 5

Jesus Christ used vivid pictures to get His message across.

Mk. 5 Screaming, half-straight out = dad on way to shower = swine dive, deviled ham.

In Mk. 11: 12-14 He does an object lesson on the condition of fruitlessness. Remember God expects us to produce fruit.

JB: fruit repent Lk. 13: Israel

He uses a fig tree. V. 12-14, no fruit - cursed.

1. Vivid lesson disciples - most have talked about.
2. Somber warning nation Israel
3. Eternal truth believer

Note the result v. 19-21 cursed -- withers Now this is a story about fruit and the lack of fruit.

Why? Because God expects us to produce fruit.

For just a moment let me get very practical. Do you want to grow in your Christian life? Gal. 5. That's what bearing fruit means - growth in Christ.

Fruit¹ is extremely important as seen by the fact that it is mentioned many times in Scripture. Twenty-four of the twenty-seven New Testament books talk about fruit. The word appears 70 times in the New Testament and 106 times in the Old Testament. God has a lot to say about fruit in the Christian's life. Matthew 7:17 and 20 show that if there is no fruit in a person's life, something is wrong because fruit is an indicator of salvation!

God is the source of the fruit in a Christian's life. So if you see fruit in a man's life, you know that God is at work. Hosea 14:8 says, "*From Me is their fruit found*" In other words, whatever you produce of godliness is from God.

¹ MacArthur

His Spirit is God's Spirit. He produces it!

1. ACTION FRUIT

Many different things in Scripture are referred to as fruit:

- a. Praise (Heb. 13:5)
- b. A contribution of money to the needy (Phil. 4:17)
- c. Blessed conversation (I Cor. 14:14)
- d. Godly deeds (Col. 1:10)
- e. Winning people to Christ (Jn. 4:31-36; 1 Cor. 16:15)

Notice that all of these deeds and works are actions. But behind them are attitudes.

2. ATTITUDE FRUIT

Before you will ever see the production of "action fruit" in your life, "attitude fruit" must first be present--because attitude produces action. For example, the "attitude fruit" of Galatians 5:22, 23, *"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control,"* must produce action. You can't love in a corner all by yourself-, you have to find somebody to show love to. You don't rejoice all along; you need someone to share your joy with. Goodness isn't self-centered. "Attitude fruit" is the heart of everything because it produces action; and the key to "attitude fruit" is to walk by the Spirit! So the Spirit produces the attitude fruit and the actions just come in sequence.

How do you grow?

Let me use the analogy of spring planting: buy seeds get soil
plant in little pots/ground
put in window and wait

Scrawny, wilted, died. Why? Because of three things:

Moisture -- Warmth -- Nutrients or Food

Same for growing Christian fruit.

I. Need moisture to bring to life dry, dead or dormant life -- what's that?

Acts 26 Open eyes

Acts 19 Received Holy Spirit when believed

Have you yielded to the life giving Holy Spirit of God?

Secondly,

2. Food needed. What's that? Word of God.

Thy word found Jer.

Bread of life John 10

Let Word of Christ richly dwell Col. 3

Be filled with Holy Spirit Eph. 5

3. Finally need warmth. What's that? Christian fellowship, assembling together. Heb. 10:24-25 forsake not.

Let me ask you as we close this portion of the service:

1. Do you have an abundant overflowing fruitful life?

2. Are you producing the fruit God is expecting?

- Attitude love, joy, peace

- Action giving, worshipping, evangelizing, praising

3. Are you ready to meet the fruit inspector himself? (Rev. 2-3 He inspects and judges.)