

LEARNING FROM THE PARABLES OF CHRIST

Matthew 11:28-30
Mark 4:1-12 & Matthew 13

Wednesday, December 21, 2011
7 PM - 8:30 PM

THE BARREN FIG TREE

Luke 13:6-9

THESIS: The ultimate purpose of all of us is to honor and glorify God through Love, Obedience, Virtue and Edification.

INTRODUCTION

Keep in mind, the parable is an extended figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another. “A parable is a saying or story that seeks to drive home a point the speaker wishes to emphasize by illustrating it from a familiar situation of common life” (Zondervan Encyclopedia of the Bible). The parable will illustrate truth; impart instruction; and increase information.

The parable of The Barren Fig Tree refers to the nation of Israel. The parable is intended to strengthen and enforce the word of warning just given, “Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish.” Except you reform, you will be ruined, as the barren fig tree; except the tree brings forth fruit, it will be cut down. Israel had received the advantages of the favors of God, but had failed to satisfy God’s Expectations of them. They had consistently disappointed God’s Intentions for them and had been derelict in keeping His Commandments. They must “repent”:² GK. “metanoia” - afterthought, change of mind, repentance; and this has reference to repentance from sin, and the change of mind involves both a turning from sin and a turning to God.” In includes, but is not limited to deep sorrow, shame, lowliness of mind, humiliation, regret, embarrassment and dejection. However, the idea in repentance is always to do better; and it leads to the better and the best.

BODY

Moreover, this parable has a further reference. Its aim is to awaken all who enjoy the means of grace and the privileges of the visible church. As the people of God, we have a purpose like the fig tree. Note these things about the fig tree:

1. The fig tree was greatly privileged. It was “in the vineyard.”
2. The tree’s purpose was to bear fruit.
3. The day for reaping came.
4. The vineyard owner found no fruit. The tree was bare.
5. The vineyard owner had waited a long time. He came time after time looking for fruit.

6. **The tree was wasting and misusing space.**
7. **The tree was to be cut down.**
8. **The mercy of God. The vineyard dressed interceded for the unfruitful tree.**
9. **The judgment of the future of the tree was based upon fruit bearing.**

“Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be my disciples” (John 15:8). “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance” (Matthew 3:8).

Several things essential to fruit bearing are for your consideration.

A. Fertile

- 1) **Productive**
- 2) **Profitable**
- 3) **Prosperous**

B. Insight

- 1) **Learning**
- 2) **Understanding**
- 3) **Wisdom**

C. Godly

- 1) **Depart From Iniquity**
- 2) **Consecration**
- 3) **Built Spiritually**

CHALLENGE YOUR THINKING

“Barren” refers to that which does not bring useful results; or is unproductive; or is unprofitable. Use each letter of the word barren for a word which can make the child of God **“barren”**?

- B** **backslide:** stray; regress; deteriorate
- A** **arrogance:** uppity; disrespect; vain-glory
- R** **rash:** impatient; ill-advised; heady
- R** **run-down:** unnurtured; unmaintained; unkept
- E** **empty:**purposeless; powerless; lacking
- N** **neglectful:** careless; unwatchful; derelict

Also, use each letter of the word **“fruit”** for a word which will produce **“fruit”**?

- F** **faith; faithfulness; fellowship**
- R** **righteousness; readiness; replenish**
- U** **understanding; uplifting; usable**
- I** **increase; information; instruction**
- T** **truth; testimony; turn**

