



## Fruit—Ye shall know them by their fruit

Text: Matthew 7:16, 20 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

In this context the Lord was revealing how we would know the false prophets who were ravening wolves in sheep clothing. One of the main things He mentioned was how we would know them—their fruits.

### What are the fruits?

We were also told how to know them. This is talking about how we shall know the false prophets—by their fruits—evil fruits/bad fruits.

The word "*evil*" doesn't always mean demonic as many have always thought and believed. It can also mean "bad or corrupt" (as used in this passage). We all know that fruits can't be demon possessed in a way the word evil has come to mean in our present day and age.

Because they bring forth corrupt or evil fruit, they will be hewn down and cast into the lake of fire. We all know the lake of fire is for **unbelievers** not believers. We can also conclude that these false prophets were not believers.

Good fruit that one needs to bring forth or else they are cast into the lake of fire is believing on the Lord Jesus. Those who have not believed on the Lord do not bring forth good fruit.

Some people take fruit to mean:

- a) Miracles performed
- b) Number of following congregants or churches
- c) Size of their ministry
- d) Money
- e) Major movements.

Jehovah Witnesses, the Mormons, the Jesuits, and many more have turned out to become major movements, yet they are false and occultic. That's right I said!

**All these can be faked and staged.** There is got to be a better definition of fruit that is not based simply on big numbers and money.

Let me submit to you what **the fruit** is based on the principle of Scripture interpreting scripture,

a) General Fruit

- i) Believing on Jesus that He died for your sins and God raised Him up from the dead. This is the general fruit.
- ii) Once we bring forth the general fruit, then we can certainly bring forth the specific fruit which others eat.

b) Specific Fruit

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

- i) It's not talking about what many call fruit, but **character**. Huge difference.
  - o If you are walking in these then you are one heck of a fruity person. No tree eats its fruit.
  - o This is how we measure fruitfulness.
- ii) If the fruit is just size, money, and numbers—**then a lot of believers and ministries are not fruitful**. But we know it's not true. Believers are fruitful and have the ability to bring forth this specific fruit just like the preacher.
  - o Was Stephen's ministry fruitful?

- iii) If the fruit is not defined as the external things, then there is no boasting.

2 Peter 1:5-8 *But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these*

*things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- i) Notice after all these things are listed, it then talks about barrenness and unfruitfulness.
  - o This brings out that these things are fruits which is why the word "unfruitfulness" is used.
- ii) If we lack these fruits, we are then barren and unfruitful (fruitless).
  - o Just like in Galatians 5:22-23, these things listed here (2 Peter 1:5-8) are the true definition of fruit which we are all supposed to bring forth and they are the true measure of fruitfulness.
- iii) If we have them and abound in them, we are then considered fruitful, nor barren in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.