

Parables (Part 33) - The Unfruitful Fig Tree (C) August 16, 2025

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/zk3q4dj/part-33-the-unfruitful-fig-tree-c>

*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

The Unfruitful Fig Tree: Bearing Righteous Fruit

This sermon transcript from **Corner Fringe Ministries** features a message by **Daniel Joseph**, on the Parable of the Unfruitful Fig Tree (Luke 13:6–9). It emphasizes the urgent call for believers to bear spiritual fruit through **genuine repentance, obedience, and wholehearted devotion to Yeshua**. Daniel explains that while being part of God's vineyard (the body of Christ) places one within the community of faith, it does not guarantee salvation—each person will be examined by the Lord for fruitfulness. Drawing from Scripture, he highlights that repentance is not partial but requires the total surrender of the heart, leading to **a life shaped by God's Word, prayer, and service**. The message warns against **complacency, false security in heritage or religious identity, and living for worldly priorities**. Instead, believers are exhorted to **embrace pruning, endure trials faithfully, and display the fruits of the Spirit**, knowing that **fruitlessness ultimately leads to judgment**. The sermon closes with an urgent reminder that **time is short, repentance must be today**, and true discipleship is evidenced by abiding in Yeshua and **producing lasting fruit**.

[Video montage]

And He taught them many things by parables. He said unto them in His doctrine; Hearken, behold, there went out a sower to sow; it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up, and some fell on stony ground where it had not much earth. He said unto them, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

[Daniel Joseph]

We're going to be finishing up our *Parable of the Unfruitful Fig Tree* today.

We have a lot of ground to cover, and the way I want to start is to take you back to Psalm Chapter 78. This is something we looked at way back at the beginning of this series, but it is so relevant to what we are going to see unfold. So, I want to bring it back to Psalm 78:1-2— ¹ **Give ear, O my people, to my law; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth**, because that's what the Torah is; it's the words that proceed from His mouth. And then He says this: ² **I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old** (emphasis added).

I want you to take this in. Now remember, this passage is literally quoted in the Gospel of Matthew in chapter 13 when Yeshua is laying all these various parables out. What I want you to see and take away is this: when He opens His mouth in a parable, what is coming forth? This is coming forth: the message (Psalm 78:1): **Give ear, oh my people, to my law.** This is the point of the parables.

It's a bit of irony when parts of Christianity take the position the law has been done away with. Much of the ministry of Yeshua is made up of parables, and the whole point of it is to give ear to My law. And you're going to see that exactly; because it is the message of the *Parable of the Unfruitful Fig Tree*.

And so with that, let's break into our parable. — Luke 13:6— **He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard.** I want to take time again just to focus on this. You need to pay attention to the details here. We have a fig tree, and we know historically, biblically, according to the Old Testament, the fig tree is a representation of Israel in the collective, as a whole. Well, this parable presents something a little more intimate. What I mean by that is we see a fig tree planted in the vineyard. And in this parable, it's the vineyard that is Israel in the collective, which makes the fig tree a very personal situation where you have an individual being assessed who is in the vineyard, who is a part of what we would say today, the body of Christ, part of the larger communal Israel. And you're going to see why this is so important as we continue, because the next thing we read is this: **and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.** (Emphasis added).

He came seeking fruit on it and found none. What does this tell you? The Lord is getting up close and personal, specifically to individuals within the body of Christ, within Israel, and there's one thing He's looking for from you: He's coming and He's putting you under the microscope, and He wants to know what fruit you have. What fruit are you bearing?

2 Chronicles 16:9—**For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.** He is coming looking for those who have fruit. He wants to see what you have. That puts you in a situation where you must ask yourself, if you know the Lord is coming to you and He's going to put you under the microscope, what do you have to offer? I want you to think about it right now: how are you building His kingdom? How are you serving His community at large? How are you impacting other people who you interact with for the glory of Yeshua? Are they inspired to follow Him? Are they convicted because of your allegiance to Yeshua? Your faithfulness to His commandments—are they inspired to do the same? Are you serving one another? How are you serving your community? What fruit do you have?

If you die tonight, what do you have? What are you going to show the Lord as it pertains to your fruit? Are you going to have to reply, "I'm sorry, I was really busy with my employment"? I had things in the world; I had other things which were really pressing. All these other things took priority. My focus wasn't serving my neighbor. There's a difference between living a very selfish life and living a very selfless life. And we are under the microscope, and He is looking for our fruit from each and every one of us.

Then we read this in Luke 13:7—**"Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard."** Here you have the owner of the vineyard talking to the one caring for the vineyard. And obviously, for most people, when you look at this, the intercessor here is Yeshua. Just like Moses interceded on behalf of Israel when God was ready to destroy them, Moses stepped up and said, "LORD, no, no, no, don't destroy them, because then the nations will think You were not able to bring them into the land." In the same way, we see the keeper of the vineyard step in. And so, the owner says to the keeper of the vineyard, **'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none ...'**

Year after year after year, He's coming. And the time here is not to be taken hyperliterally, where every single one of us thinks, "Well, we have a three-year period; He keeps looking at it." The point that's being conveyed is that He keeps coming back; what grace, what mercy. He didn't find the tree with fruit; it should have borne fruit the first year, but it didn't, so He came back the next year. Is it bearing fruit yet?

How many times has the Lord come into your life without you even knowing it? The eyes of the Lord are peering down on you, looking for fruit and finding none. That is a terrifying thought because what is His response when He comes year after year, looking for fruit from us, and doesn't find any? This is the response in Luke 13:7—'... **Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?**' (Emphasis added). Destroy it. And isn't that amazing? In our last message, as Yeshua is making His way to the Temple, He sees a fig tree. It doesn't have fruit, and He takes it out; it's cursed and withered from the roots.

This is the response when the Lord comes to our camp, and you don't even see it. And His eyes are appearing, looking for the fruit, and He doesn't find any. His response is, "Cut it down." It's using up the ground; it's using up the resources. Keep in mind, this fig tree is in the vineyard; it's in the body of Christ. It's using up the resources of the ground; get rid of it. If it's not going to bear fruit, it doesn't belong in the community of the Lord; this is the reality.

To give you a further perspective and appreciation for what's being conveyed. I want to take you to the ministry of John the Baptist. We see this in the Gospel of Matthew 3:7— **But when he, John the Baptist, saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"** These were the shepherds, the guides of Israel in the first century. They've come to John the Baptist, and what does he call them? You are offspring of vipers. You know what you are? You're poison, you're killers; that's what you are. You're a scourge upon these people. All you do is destroy them. You inject them with the venom of your doctrine in filth. **Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?**

Matthew 3:8—**Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance.** Take that in. Spiritual fruits, good fruit that should come from a fig tree, John specifically attaches that to what good fruits are; it's through repentance. It's the act of repentance. In other words, we must get to a place of repentance if we want to bear good fruit. So now all our focus is on repentance.

If I know I need to bear good fruit because if I don't, I'm destroyed, now I need repentance; I need to embrace the whole concept of repentance, which brings us to this point: what does that mean? What does it biblically mean to repent? And we look to the Psalmist, and the Psalmist says in Psalm 119:9— **How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.** No longer do I walk according to the dictates of my own heart. Now I'm going to pick up this book, and I'm going to take the principles, and I'm going to live my life according to what it says. That's how you cleanse your way.

Then he goes on in Psalm 119:10—**With my whole heart,** not part of my heart. Hey, Lord, you know what? I'm going to give you 70% of my heart; 30% I'm uncomfortable with. There are still some things that I'm not willing to give up. There are certainly some things that I'm not willing to do, but I'll give you 70% of my heart. That's not repentance; that's delusion. Repentance is explicit, every percentage of your heart, not even 99%. You must give 100% devotion to the Lord. The heart must go to Yeshua. With my whole heart, **I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!**

It's amazing; I can tell you this. When you're seeking Yeshua with your whole heart, there's no time to seek the things of the world. You don't have it; you're busy. You're busy with seeking the Lord. You're busy seeking His Word. And the Psalmist says this in Psalm 119:11—**Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.**

Do you want to know what repentance really looks like in a practical, real experience? It looks like when a man is given over to the Lord, he has surrendered his heart to the Lord; he gives from the time his feet come off his bed; he is giving the first and the best of his day to the Lord; that's what it looks like. — Psalm 113:3 — **From the rising of the sun to its going down The LORD's name is to be praised.** You don't bring food to your mouth until you have praised the Lord. You don't begin the mundane things you do during the week without thanking the Lord." —1 Chronicles 16:34 — **Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.** When our feet hit the ground, we must praise the Lord; it cannot be any other way. We must pray before anything else.

I'm going to tell you what repentance looks like. It looks like this: it looks like when a man embraces prayer, it is not a chore, it is not an inconvenience, it's not an obligation; it's a privilege. It's when we recognize we don't deserve to be able to communicate, to talk with God. That is not something we are worthy of, and yet with a heart of repentance, one comes in humbly, and says, "Oh God, I'm not even worthy to come before You. And I don't come before You because of my righteousness, but because of Your great love."

That's what repentance looks like. Repentance looks like you picking up the Word of God and your heart being lit on fire. The two men who were on the road to Emmaus—when Yeshua spoke to them, their hearts burned with fire. It's not a chore; you are not checking a box, "Well, man, I didn't really do my devotion today." You don't have that conversation because you can't stay away from His Word. A heart of repentance cannot separate from the Lord; he's running to the Lord. And when he reads it, the words turn into fire, and they burn in his heart. That is what repentance looks like. Repentance looks like an entire day, all throughout your day, meditating on the word of the Lord.

Going back to John's statement here in Matthew 3:8—**Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance.** It's not a standalone statement; we interrupted him. He attaches the following: he then goes on to say in Matthew 3:9—**and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones** (emphasis added). In other words, don't rest on the laurels of your flesh because you're like, "Well, you know, I'm an actual physical descendant of Abraham; I'm good." If you're kin, you're in. John is destroying that delusion in a terrifying way.

And furthermore, I'm going to tell you, this is prophetic. This whole statement is prophesied because this is exactly what we would discover the Jews would say to Yeshua. And to help you appreciate the magnitude of this statement, we're going to jump over there; we'll come back. In John 8:31, it says, **"Then Jesus said—now listen—to those Jews who believed Him ...** (Emphasis added). You will not be able to unearth the magnitude of what is about to be dropped on you without taking this in. These are Jews who believe in Him. Let's take it into today's mantra. Well, these are Christians; they believe in Jesus, and they believe the things He said.

This is where it gets interesting. He goes on and says in John 8:31-32—³¹ **... "If—the condition—it's conditional. This is a conditional conjunction. If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.** This

is how He starts this off. ³² "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Emphasis added).

John 8:33—They answered Him, Look at this: "**We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?**" (Emphasis added). What did John the Baptist warn them not to do? This very thing; do not say to yourself that you are Abraham's descendants. Don't rest on the laurels of your flesh. So, this is their response to Yeshua's teaching, "**If you abide in My word, you are My disciples.**"

Then we continue to John 8:34-35—³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.** ³⁵ And a slave, listen to this, **does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.** (Emphasis added). This is the point of the *Parable of the Unfruitful Fig Tree* because if you're not bearing fruit and there's no true repentance and you're practicing sin, you will not abide in the vineyard forever. You will be taken out.

This is the delusion that comes upon all the Christians, thinking, "Well, I said a prayer, I'm good. You know, once saved, always saved, no problem." The whole point of the parable is that you can be in the vineyard, and you will be taken out if you practice lawlessness. That's the whole point of the words that He's saying here in John 8:34—whoever practices sin is a slave, not to Yeshua; they're a slave to the devil. They have a different master.

So, Yeshua says this in John 8:36-37—³⁶ **Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.** Yeshua is showing His power, His magnificence, and the beauty of who He is. ³⁷ "**I know that you are Abraham's descendants.** In other words, He recognizes who they are. I know you're Jews, and I know you're physical descendants of Abraham, **but you seek to kill Me.** Why? **Because My word has no place in you.** (Emphasis added). He knew what was in their heart; He could see it. They were under the microscope and did not even know it. He was looking for the fruit, and there was none because they were in sin.

John 8:38—"I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." The only way to appreciate this is if you take the following into consideration. Nowhere. You can comb the New Testament, and there is not one example where the Jewishness of Jesus is ever called into question. Do you understand that? There was a lot of debate about whether He was the Son of God; there was a lot of debate about whether He was the Messiah. I mean, we can see this from the New Testament text. There is no debate that He was a Jew; that He was of the seed of Abraham. So, you must take this in because this gets wild now. Yeshua, knowing that they're descendants of Abraham, knows He's a Jew. He comes out and says, "My father is not your father." He just drew a line in the sand and said, "We have different heritage, you and I; we have different fathers."

John 8:39—They answered and said to Him, "**Abraham is our father...**" (Emphasis added). Twice, they came and declared, "Abraham is our father." You know, it's interesting, and I showed this before, but back in 2002, *Time* magazine ran on the cover of their magazine a depiction of Abraham, and the headline reads, "Muslims, Christians, and Jews all claim him as their father." The three primary religions of the Earth all claim their heritage all the way back to Abraham; he is our father. I mean, even the Apostle Paul to the Galatians, these Gentiles, said only those who are of faith are children of Abraham. All of these different faiths, all claiming Abraham is their father. Well, clearly we have three different faiths, three different expressions of faith.

Who is the real descendant of Abraham? As we continue, we're going to find out in John 8:39—... **Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.** See, Abraham, when you go back to Genesis, we are told he kept the LORD's charge, kept His statutes, His commandments, and His laws. Abraham was faithful; he bore fruit worthy of repentance, the very thing that, basically, John the Baptist was attempting to convey. This is the call; we are to bear fruit worthy of repentance.

As we continue, let's look at what he says here in Matthew 3:10—**"And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.** (Emphasis added). The details matter. The axe, it doesn't say, is laid to the tree. It doesn't say the axe is laid to the branch. It says the axe is laid to the root. Oh, and this matters because when you go to the prophets, like the Prophet Malachi, and it's talking about eternal judgment, it says it will leave them neither root nor branch. In other words, we're talking about eternal destruction. When He talks about being cut down and thrown into the fire, we're talking about hell, the lake of fire.

Take this in because there's no coming back once that happens. Once the axe is laid to the root, and it's laid because there's no fruit, you don't have another opportunity to say, "Oh, okay, I really screwed up. My priorities were screwed up. I had the best value system in the world. Just give me another chance. I'll go back, and I'll do it all right. I'll be bolder for Your name. I'll walk at Your commands. I'll spend more time reading the Word. I'll spend more time praying. I'll spend more time serving my neighbor. I'll put the interests of others before my own. I'll stop building my own kingdom. There will be no time to do that; your time will be over. It's eternal judgment, and there's going to be weeping, and there's going to be gnashing of teeth because you did not make your choice now. You didn't make the choice today to serve Him. You made the choice to build your own kingdom, and it is going to come at the cost of your soul. That is the gospel.

I want to jump into the Torah and show you something very interesting. This is the instruction for war. —Deuteronomy 20:19-20—¹⁹ **"When you besiege a city for a long time, while making war against it to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them; if you can eat of them, do not cut them down to use in the siege, for the tree of the field is man's food.** ²⁰ **Only the trees which you know are not trees for food you may destroy and cut down.** (Emphasis added). You can't even make this up.

You can now see Yeshua and John the Baptist have an allegorical interpretation of something that was literally commanded to Israel, wherever they went, the trees that bore fruit were forbidden. You cannot lay the axe to the root. Only those trees which do not bear fruit are cut down. This is the beauty of the Torah. When you're confronted with the reality of the beauty of the Torah, there are layers of interpretation. There's a direct literal application to literally be carried out, but there's this deeper allegorical reality, a deeper spiritual reality which refers to eternity, and it's sharing the message. So amazing.

All these times in the Torah makes one think of Philo—he was known for his allegorical interpretation of the Torah. Philo read the Torah and said, "There's more. There's more being conveyed than simply what's at the literal surface." And of course, he was followed by Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and so on and so forth. These guys recognize these great allegories, the deeper realities of the Torah.

Let's build on this. Psalm chapter one opens by saying: —Psalm 1:1— **Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly ...** (Emphasis added). We are living in a generation where the counsel of

the ungodly is being vomited everywhere. Go to social media; everything we see is just Satan's vomit. And people are licking it up—the media, the nonsense, the ridiculousness is being spewed—people are licking it up like dogs licking vomit. Walking in the council of the ungodly, you know, the universities and the nonsense that is coming from them, this anti-God rhetoric—that's the council being talked about here. Only men who are blessed don't fall into that filth.

Continuing in Psalm 1:1, ... **Nor stands in the path of sinners** ... They don't get carried away with the wicked to do evil; they're not persuaded. They're not going to fall into the value system of the world, or the plight of the world, or all the world's desires—they don't do it. The ones who are blessed don't stand with them. ...**Nor sits in the seat of the scornful** (emphasis added), the blasphemer, or the scoffer. They don't tolerate that. They're not going to expose themselves to that. You know, Peter talks about scoffers coming in the last days; they would come. They're blasphemers saying, "Oh, where's the promise of Jesus coming?" You Christians keep saying, "Jesus is coming soon." He is still not here. Blasphemers; they do not consider for one moment that the mercy of God is the only reason He hasn't returned because He's not willing that any should perish.

But look at this; we're talking about the man who is blessed. —Psalm 1:2—**But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.** Consumed by the Word, and it's not a chore, it's not an obligation, instead it's "I can't get enough." How many of you can relate to the fact that there was once a time you had your first love, and the fire burned within you, and you couldn't get enough of Him, and now that's not there? I'm going to tell you; listen to the admonishment Yeshua gives the church at Ephesus (Revelation 2:4-5). You'd better get back to your first love, to where you were in a place where the fire of your heart is ignited every time you open your Bible up, because your lampstand is about to get removed. This is a reality.

And so, this statement, "his delight," the one who is truly blessed, "**his delight is in the law of the LORD.**" Again, what are the parables? What did Psalm 78 say? —Psalm 78:1-2—**Give ear, O my people, to my law; ...² I will open my mouth in a parable...** The parables are about this; it's about bringing us back to this place where our delight is in Him. Our delight is in His Word.



I look at this meditating day and night, and the power of it. We read in Isaiah 26:3—**You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.** (Emphasis added). What does it mean to have my mind "stayed on Him"? This, Psalm 1:2, my delight is in His Word. I'm consumed with it, and I'm going to meditate on it day and night and look at the blessing. Perfect; perfect shalom; perfect peace, and that means amid chaos. That means in the midst of when you are discouraged, when

you're in trials and tribulations, you have perfect peace because your mind is on Him. We live in a drug-induced coma in this generation with all the pharmaceutical nonsense, trying all these happy pills, and dealing with people's depression and discouragement. They're so drugged up, and the answer is Yeshua. The answer is His Word; to be consumed by His law, and then we'll have perfect peace.

You know, the Shulamite woman in 2 Kings; her only son dies. The prophet, the servant of the prophet, comes to her and asks (2 Kings 4:26), **"Is it well with you?"** He asks, "Is it well with you?" And her response is, **"It is well,"** but that's not what it says in Hebrew. She said, "Shalom," peace. This woman had perfect peace. How can you have peace when your only child has just died? This, Psalm 1:2, is how she had peace, because she meditated on the LORD day and night. The law of the LORD was her delight and power.

Psalm 1:3— **He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.** (Emphasis added). See, this is the fig tree. When we're fig trees planted in the LORD's vineyard, this is how we are going to produce fruit: when we can't get enough. Do you remember the time when you came into the faith and you couldn't get enough of Jesus? You wanted Him morning, noon, and night. We can't ever come away from that. That's what you talk about—oh man, I've gotten so far off the mark. I've gotten so far away because of all the clutter and all the distractions and all the voices; the stranger's voice is taking you out. And the only voice we're called to listen to is the voice of the shepherd. We're called to know whose voice we're following.

Building on this in Jeremiah 17:5—**Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength; Whose heart departs from the LORD.** (Emphasis added). Two things that make this terrifying. First, when your hope and trust are not in the LORD. Second, when you put your trust in man for your help, for your provision, for your security, or for your identity, you're in trouble. By definition, you are cursed. And when you're putting your trust in military might, physicians, or your employer, you're in trouble. Are you drawing security from how much you have in the bank account? Every one of these is telling you your heart has departed from the LORD. It tells you—you are cursed.

I'll never forget this guy I befriended many, many years ago; it was decades ago. He wasn't a believer, but he was intrigued by my faith and thought the Sabbath was peculiar and weird; I guess he had not been exposed to someone like me. He was an amazing man and had a really good job and a good position at his place of employment, and it was horrible to watch what happened to him. This guy was going to retire there. I mean, all his identity, everything, his life was wonderful, happily married, children—I mean, it was the American dream. It was the perfect little package. The only problem is he walked in one day and they said, "I'm sorry, we're going to let you go." This guy had planned to finish out his days in this company.

Because he had invested his heart, his identity, and his security in this place, his whole world came crashing down, and it cost him his marriage. This guy just spiraled out of control and went into such a state of depression. It was horrifying to see this. That's because the devil set him up. If you put your trust in this, draw your security and identity from your job, this amazing place of employment, which is very lucrative, well, I can tell you what's coming, because you're already cursed. You've given your heart to that which is not the Lord.

Jeremiah 17:6—**For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is not inhabited.** When it talks about you're not going to see when good comes, it's talking about the return of Yeshua and His deliverance for His faithful. You'll never see it. You'll never know the day when the Father wipes away every tear from the eyes, and you enter into the joy of the LORD. You'll never see it; you're cursed.

Jeremiah 17:7—**"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD.** (Emphasis added). Who hopes in the LORD for their finances, who hopes in the LORD for their health, for their healing, for their identity, for their security, for their strength, for their wisdom, and for their redemption. Blessed is that man; who puts his trust in the LORD. He knows where his sustenance comes from, the One who can rain manna from heaven and bring water out of a rock.

And look at what he says to the one who trusts in Yeshua. He says this in Jeremiah 17:8—**"For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes ... "** (Emphasis added). When the trials, when the tribulations, when the pain and suffering come, you're not moved.

David said in Psalm 16:8, **"I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved."** We're given an example of this in First Samuel: David's camp was plundered by the Amalekites while David and his men were away; there's nothing left. They abduct all their wives and their children. Could you imagine coming home, and your family is gone? Knowing they have been abducted, knowing criminals entered and took everything you had. And what does it say? It says the men wanted to stone David; they're so angry. And what does David do? It says in 1 Samuel 30:6, **...David strengthened himself in the LORD his God."** —Jeremiah 17:7— **"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD ... "** And because he did that, everything was recovered. That's the difference between faith and a lot of cheap talk.

Continuing in Jeremiah 17:8—**... but its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought ...** Philippians 4:6 says, **"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."** Strengthen yourself in the LORD in these tribulations. And look at this: Jeremiah 17:8 goes on to say, **"... Nor will cease from yielding fruit."** (Emphasis added). We can talk about how you can bear fruit while you're on the high hills of blessing. What happens when you're dragged into the valley of the shadow of death? Will you bear fruit? The righteous, those who are truly blessed and faithful, bear fruit in every single context of their life. They don't decide to be a good Christian only if things are good.

Yeshua says this in John 15:2—**"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away ...** The owner of the vineyard is going to remove every branch that does not bear fruit; it's going to be destroyed. But then we read this: **And every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit."**

There are two things a vine dresser does in the year. As you come into winter, the dry and dead branches are removed. But as you come back to spring and things are blooming and the little shoots are growing on the vine, the branches are all pruned. They're all trimmed off. Why? To focus all the nourishment on the main branches to bring about the greatest production of fruit. There's pruning. I'm going to tell you right now, if you believe in Yeshua the Messiah, you have come into the faith, don't think it's going to be rainbows and butterflies. You are going to be pruned. You will be pruned. And I'm going to tell you a lot of times you're not going to like it. It's not enjoyable.

The writer of Hebrews illuminates this. — Hebrews 12:8—**But if you are without chastening**, what does he mean? Without pruning. If you're without pruning, without chasing, without correction, literally the correction of the Lord, **of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.** (Emphasis added). When you come into the faith and learn about the reality that Yeshua is the Son of God; and He's the faithful one, and only in Him can I have forgiveness of sins.

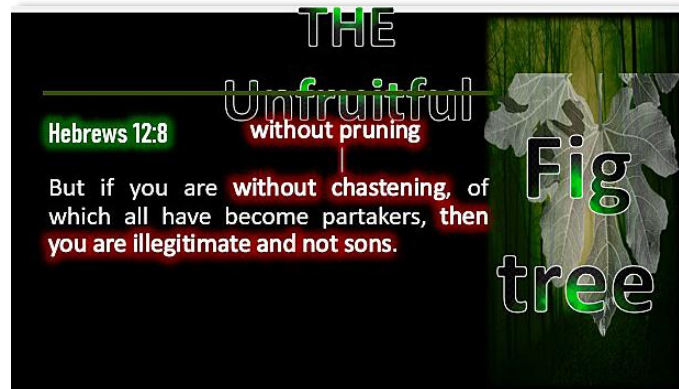
That's what we get at the front end. But what the Lord does is, when you immerse yourself in His Word and He purifies you, He then prunes you for the whole purpose of bearing more fruit. He gets the world out of you; it's a journey.

He's going to take the entirety of the world out of you, and how does He do it? It's right here in the Bible; this is how He does it. It's your time, because you can't have enough of Him. Your heart is lit on fire, and you start consuming His Word, and less and less and less of the world is being found in you. There are things you are going to have to cut off, and it is going to be painful. There are going to be things you must stop doing that you're accustomed to doing. There's going to be pruning. But if you don't accept that chastening and that correction of the Lord, you are illegitimate, and you are not sons or daughters.

It goes on in Hebrews 12:11—**Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.** (Emphasis added). Do you want to bear fruit? Because if you don't, you're going to be plucked out, axe to the root. This is how you do it. We receive the chastening of the Lord, and then we bear the peaceable fruit of righteousness and holiness.

So, Yeshua goes on in John 15:2—**...and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.** And then He says in John 15:4—**"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me** (emphasis added). Oh, now we're confronted with the scary reality. Here's the deal: If you are not bearing fruit, Yeshua is not in your heart. You don't have the very One who you profess.

How many Christians are going out confessing Jesus as Lord, but they have no fruit? We're told in scripture by Yeshua Himself (Matthew 7:20), You will know a tree by its fruit—its production, what it does, how it impacts, how it serves selflessly, and how it loves selflessly. If you're not doing that, I can tell you from scripture, according to Yeshua's own words, you don't have Him. And this is what I know: if you don't have Yeshua, you're dead; you are cursed. Everyone who does not have Yeshua as the Messiah Jesus, is cursed.





We look at the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. This is what will come forth. I think of love, and there are so many passages we could talk about. —1 John 5:3— **For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.** Yeshua says in John 14:15—**"If you love Me, keep My commandments."** We're told by the Apostle Paul in the chapter of love, 1 Corinthians

13:6, love **does not rejoice in iniquity but rejoices in the truth.** In Psalm 119:142—**... Your law is truth.** You're blessed because you delight in the law of the Lord. That's the fruit. You'll see it in someone. They'll be walking around with their Bibles, with their swords. They'll be talking about the Lord. They want to talk about the Lord; they want to pray; they want to praise.

I've had people look at my Bible, kind of in awe, and they're like, "Oh my goodness." Everything, every page, has all these highlights. Here's the deal: that doesn't prove anything. All that proves is that when you look at this very colorful Bible, it proves I read it. But if I bear the fruits of the Spirit, it proves I believe it. There's a difference.

You have joy in the presence of the Lord. —Psalm 16:11— **... In Your presence is fullness of joy ...** People don't want the joy of the Lord because they don't want to be in His presence. They want to be in the presence of the world. Peace, —Isaiah 26:3— **You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You ...** Long-suffering, they are slow to anger. —James 1:19-20— **... swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; ²⁰ for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.** You're slow to anger. You have *chesed* (חֶסֶד), kindness. —Proverbs 19:22— **What is desired in a man is kindness ...**—it is *chesed*, loving kindness; that's the totality of the law. Goodness, faithfulness—the faithfulness of Abraham in his obedience to the Lord. Gentleness and self-control. —Romans 13:14— **... make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.** Self-control is about using wisdom, and it's about not giving in to temptation on so many levels. These are the fruits that we are called to bear.

I think of Proverbs 11:30—**The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life;** here's the impact, **And he who wins souls is wise.** (Emphasis added). Because you have fruit coming out of you, others will taste it, and it will bring life because they will be convicted and say, "I'm not living like that person is living. I'm not living righteously." When you get around radical true believers who are fully surrendered, you're going to know it. You're going to be like, "Man, I want the joy that he has." "I want the peace that they have".

How many of you knew Susan Buchard? This was a woman whose body was destroyed by cancer; it was unbelievable. But in pain and agony, she's sharing the hope of Jesus. That is a whole different level. That's the kind of faithfulness God is looking for. That's the kind of peace that passes all understanding that you can only get in a relationship with Yeshua—phenomenal.

Yeshua says in John 15:5—"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, **bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.** (Emphasis added). Again, I tell you, if you're not bearing fruit, I know your problem; you don't have the Lord. You can confess Him until you're blue in the

face, and you can go to church every Shabbat, and you can go to the Bible studies, and again, you can raise your hands and sing all the songs, but if you're not bearing fruit, you know Him not.



George Whitefield

I love what Whitfield, the great revivalist, said: —George Whitefield— **We can preach the Gospel of Christ no further than we have experienced the power of it in our own hearts.** You can't give what you don't have. If Yeshua is not living in your heart, you can't give Him. If you don't have the truth of the Living God in your heart, you cannot give truth. If you don't have mercy and grace in your heart, you can't give it. We can go no farther than the fire of the Holy Spirit has indwelt us through faith in Yeshua. So, when we look at this *Parable of the Unfruitful Fig Tree*, we get some serious insight into what is being conveyed here.

Now we're going to move into the final statements. When the keeper of the vineyard is going to respond to the owner of the vineyard, we read this in Luke 13:8-9—⁸ **"But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹ 'And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'** (Emphasis added).

Oh, my goodness. Here you can see Yeshua interceding; give it a little bit more time, and it is precious little time. But, He says if it doesn't bear fruit after I've cut around the tree and fertilized the tree ... What is Yeshua talking about? What is the keeper of the vineyard referring to? He's referring to bringing the Word of God, which is living and powerful, into your life to see if you will submit and receive it so you may repent and change your ways. But it's very little time.

I think of Isaiah 55:6—**Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.** The problem is we don't know how long this is, and that's intentional. It simply says, "Seek the LORD while He may be found." Well, what does that mean? That means today, if you hear His voice, don't harden your heart. That means choose your master today. —Joshua 24:15— **... choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve ...** Period. Like Paul says in Romans 13:11—**... now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.** You'd better call on Him while He is near before it's too late.

We read in Revelation 2:18-20—¹⁸ **"And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: ¹⁹ "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. Man, what an amazing bio. ²⁰ "Nevertheless I have a few things against you. And what is it? **Because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols** (emphasis added).**

Now, take this in: There is apparently a woman at Thyatira. Yeshua applies the name Jezebel; this is clearly not her real name. It is applied because there's a reference point of perspective given, taken out of the Tanakh, taken out of the Old Testament, where we know Jezebel was the wife of Ahab, and what we're told about this woman is she caused him; she stirred him up to sin more than any other king of Israel before him. This woman is diabolical. This woman is pure evil.

So, He applies the statement to this supposed self-professing prophetess. We are living in a generation ... do you recognize every time you turn on the TV and you see another televangelist, it's prophet this

and prophet so-and-so and prophetess this and that? Prophets of God don't go around introducing themselves as prophet so-and-so. That's the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard. Do you know how prophets actually function? They go out and say, "Thus says the LORD," and it comes to pass. And the people say, "That's a prophet. That's a man of God." No prophet walks around going, "I'm a prophet." I'm sorry for that interjection.

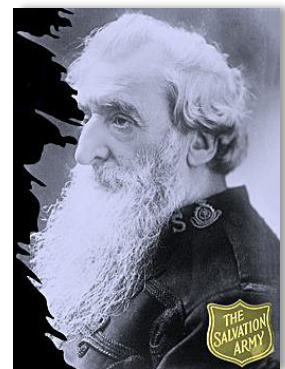
But what is Jezebel doing? She's teaching my servants to commit sexual immorality. I'm going to tell you the spirit of Jezebel is alive and well, and that spirit is teaching men to commit sexual immorality, to look at stuff on their phones they shouldn't be looking at. To open their computers, to look at stuff where they don't belong. They're in the realm of Jezebel; they're being led by the spirit of Jezebel to commit sexual immorality. Our culture is infected with this filth. It will, I promise you, lead to hell.

Then we read this in Revelation 2:21: ²¹ **"And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, even despite how vile this woman is—she's abhorrent; she's an abomination, yet, look at the grace and the love of God. I gave her time to repent. Here's the problem—and she did not repent. And so, here's the payment. ²² **"Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.**" (Emphasis added).**

This brings it right back to square one, where we started today. It's about repentance; that's how we bring forth fruit. The problem is you don't know how long you have. None of us knows if we have tomorrow. That's why we want to take heed of these words today.

He goes on and says this in Revelation 2:23—**"I will kill her children with death.** All those who follow her—it's not literal; it's the people who follow this filth and believe they can live like hell and inherit heaven. I will kill her children with death, **and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.**" (Emphasis added). He searches the minds and hearts. Do not forget, you are under the microscope. Yeshua is coming to you. The eyes of the Lord are coming to you personally and are looking for fruit. Do you have that fruit?

Back in the 1800s, there was a man who left a legacy that can be felt today, the founder of the Salvation Army, William Booth, and he made this very prolific and prophetic assessment. — William Booth, 1829–1912, founder of the Salvation Army —**The chief danger of the 20th century will be religion without the Holy Spirit, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and heaven without hell.** (Emphasis added). If he only knew what we know today, if he only knew what we see, not simply in our society, but what we see in the church today, it's every one of these things. You can go right down the list, and this is where we are at. He was worried. He was worried about this back in the 20th century.



William Booth

I'm going to close with Proverbs 27:18—**Whoever keeps the fig tree will eat its fruit.** What does he mean by that? That's the illustration. This is the lesson: **So he who waits on his master will be honored.** (Emphasis added). This goes right back to Matthew chapter 24. You'd better be watching for the coming of the Lord, or He's going to come as a thief. Keep your fig tree; that means keep yourself. —Jude 1:21—**keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.** (Emphasis added). And—1 John 5:21—**Little children, keep yourselves from idols.** (Emphasis added).