

Luke 6:43-45 (NLT2)

A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. A tree is identified by its fruit. Figs never grow on thornbushes, nor grapes on bramble bushes. A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.

An apple tree will not produce oranges. But if the apple tree keeps looking for oranges as it's fruit, it will never see any fruit, even though it may be full of apples, which is good fruit. We may be producing fruit for the kingdom of God, but we may not see it, because we are looking for oranges, when God has called us to be an apple tree, or a peach tree, or an avocado tree.... Simply, we are looking for the wrong fruit that God is producing through us.

But when we do that, that is when we get discouraged, because we feel like we are not doing any good for the Kingdom of God. Sometimes we get so depressed about it, that it can even cause some to doubt their salvation. But let me encourage you, if you have given your life to Jesus, you are saved according to scripture. Also, think about this. Remember when Jesus was baptized, and God spoke from heaven? What did God say about Jesus, His Son?

† **Matthew 3:17** *And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

Yet we seem to forget that God said this about Jesus before He even started His ministry. As far as we know, no one was healed, no demons were cast out, no abundance of food was distributed, yet God still said, *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* I just wanted to add this for those who are struggling right now with not seeing fruit in their lives.

But I remember back, around 25 years ago, when I felt God had called me to teach His word. So I started out with teaching a home bible study on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and when I came to the gift of evangelism, I really struggled doing that one, because I wanted that gift for myself, because I saw that as those who are gifted with it as doing great things for the Kingdom of God. Men like Billy Graham, Greg Laurie, or Chuck Smith. Because I was looking for that fruit in my life and I felt I was not bearing any fruit because hundreds or even a couple of people were not coming to Jesus when I taught His word. For me, that was the fruit I was looking for.

But God (Love those two word) showed me that He called me to teach His word, and that those I taught would go out and share Jesus with others, and their lives would be changed, and that was the fruit I should be seeing in what God called me to be.

So don't get discouraged in doing good for the Kingdom of God.

† **Hebrews 12:3** *For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.*

† **Romans 1:12 (NLT2)** *When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.*

So let me encourage us all to be fruit inspectors of our own lives, and as we do, may we NOT look for numbers to be the evidence of fruit in our lives, but may we look for the true fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

† **Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT2)** *But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!*

† **Ephesians 5:8-10** *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.*