

In every generation, God places certain people in His Church in ways that seem unusual or even out of place. Their background, language, position, or circumstances might set them apart. Yet, their placement is not by accident it is divinely intentional.

Often, such individuals may feel disconnected or assume they have little to offer in ministry. They may keep a low profile or stay spiritually inactive, assuming that God's work is for others more qualified. But the truth is this: God expects fruit from every life He plants.

Let's consider a parable Jesus told:

Luke 13:6-9 (NIV)

"Then he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any.

So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

"'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it.

If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’”

The vineyard in Scripture often symbolizes Israel or the Church (see Isaiah 5:1-7, Matthew 21:33-41). The fig tree, though distinct from the vines, is planted intentionally within the vineyard. This fig tree represents individuals whom God has placed among His people those who may stand out for their uniqueness but are still expected to be fruitful.

The vineyard owner (God) visits the fig tree repeatedly, looking for fruit. Despite its uniqueness, the expectation is the same as for the vines: growth and productivity. Jesus’ message here is a call to spiritual accountability. No one is exempt from the call to bear fruit.

John 15:2 (NIV)

“He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”

Matthew 3:10 (NIV)

“The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

Jesus isn't just speaking to church leaders or evangelists. The call to fruitfulness applies to every believer whether visible in ministry or seemingly hidden. Whether you're a new believer, a professional in a secular job, a stay at home parent, or someone with language or cultural barriers your life is still part of God's vineyard.

Why Only One Fig Tree?

The parable shows only one fig tree among many vines. This reflects how some believers are called in unique ways, for specific purposes. The owner doesn't expect the fig tree to produce grapes but he does expect it to produce figs. In the same way, God doesn't expect you to serve exactly like others but He *does* expect you to fulfill the purpose for which He planted you.

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 (NIV)

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.

There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.

There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.”

The fig tree wasn't neglected it was cultivated, fertilized, and given extra care. God is patient with us, giving us opportunities, teaching, encouragement, and time. But His patience is not indefinite.

The Warning and the Hope:

The parable ends with urgency. If the fig tree still remains fruitless, it will be cut down. This echoes the reality of final judgment:

Revelation 22:12 (NIV)

“Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.”

God will reward His people according to their faithfulness, not their visibility. Those who spent years simply listening to sermons without action will need to answer: *What did I do for the Lord?*

James 2:17 (NIV)

“In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

You are not in the vineyard by mistake. God planted you where you are, not just to be present, but to bear fruit whether that's through service, generosity, encouragement, prayer, teaching, or even quiet faithfulness that impacts others.

These are the final days. The time for fruitfulness is now. Don't assume your role is small or unimportant.

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

“For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Let each of us examine our hearts: Am I bearing fruit in the place God has planted me? If not, now is the time to respond to be cultivated, to grow, and to bring forth fruit that glorifies God.

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