

Blessed be the name of our Lord and Savior, JESUS CHRIST.

The Lesson from the Fig Tree

One morning, as Jesus was returning to the city, He became hungry. Seeing a fig tree by the roadside, He approached it to look for fruit. But despite its healthy appearance—full of leaves—He found none. Then He said:

“May you never bear fruit again!”
Immediately, the tree withered.
— Matthew 21:18-19 (NIV)

At first glance, this might seem harsh. Why would Jesus curse a tree for not having fruit—especially when it wasn’t even the season for figs (Mark 11:13)?

But Jesus wasn’t acting out of frustration. This moment was symbolic. He was using the fig tree as a powerful visual lesson for His disciples—and for us.

Outward Appearance vs. Inner Reality

In biblical times, a fig tree in full leaf would normally signal the presence of early, edible fruit. If it had leaves, it should have had some figs, even if small or unripe. But this tree had all the signs of fruitfulness—yet it was empty. It looked alive but was barren.

This fig tree represents people who appear godly on the outside but are spiritually empty on the inside. They have the “leaves” of religion: church attendance, Christian language, even leadership roles. But when God looks deeper, He finds no fruit—no evidence of true repentance, love, faith, or obedience.

“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”

— Matthew 15:8 (NIV)

Just as Jesus expected fruit from the fig tree, God expects fruit in our lives. That fruit includes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). Without this fruit, our faith is a facade.

The Danger of Lukewarm Faith

Many Christians today live deceived lives—outwardly religious but inwardly unchanged. This is the same condition Jesus warns about in the book of Revelation:

“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!

So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”

— Revelation 3:15-16 (NIV)

Lukewarm faith is offensive to God. It's better to be cold (fully apart from God and aware of it) than to pretend to be close to Him while remaining spiritually dead. Lukewarm believers are content with surface-level religion, but their hearts remain unchanged. That's dangerous, because deception is worse than ignorance—it blinds you to your true condition.

God Desires Sincerity, Not Show

God doesn't want empty religion—He wants a real relationship.

Jesus cursed the fig tree not because it failed naturally, but because it pretended to be fruitful. That pretense—hypocrisy—is what drew judgment.

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead.”
— Matthew 23:27 (NIV)

It's not enough to look the part. God sees the heart.

So What Should We Do?

If we find ourselves living like that fig tree—impressive on the outside but empty within—then it's time to change. God gives us the opportunity to repent and bear fruit. He is patient, but not forever.

“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

— Matthew 3:8 (NIV)

If you choose to follow Christ, do it with all your heart. Don't settle for being "half-Christian." If you're going to be a believer, be fully committed. Jesus said:

"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."

— Luke 9:23 (NIV)

Final Encouragement

Let's not just carry the name of Christ—let's reflect His character. Let our lives be filled with true spiritual fruit, not just leafy appearances.

Ask God to search your heart and make your faith genuine. Pray for the strength to live boldly and fruitfully for Him. And if you're lukewarm, ask Him to set your heart on fire again.

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise... Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

— 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

May Jesus help us live lives of real faith, not fake appearances.
May we be fruitful trees, not leafy deceivers.

God bless you

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