

FOLLOW ME

The Gospel of Matthew Part 1

WEEK 7 - THE TREE AND ITS FRUIT OVERVIEW

When it comes to following the teachings of Jesus, it can be easy to become either legalistic on one hand or blasé on the other. We can tie ourselves in knots trying to do all the right things “to the letter,” or we can shrug our shoulders and consider the teachings of Jesus as little more than idealistic extremes. To Jesus, however, what matters is the *fruit* which is produced by our faithfulness to his teaching. Rather than evaluating whether we are doing the “right” things in the exact right way, he suggests, we must examine the fruit of our actions to see if we are becoming more or less Christlike in our approach to a broken world.

Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

Matthew 7:20

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever had a “*bad fruit*” experience, like Barry’s allergic reaction to hardy kiwi?
2. Read Matthew 7:15-20. Barry said that through the fruit image Jesus gives, “you have a choice to make”. What is that choice?
3. What people bear fruit in their lives?
4. How do you know if the fruit your life is bearing is bad or good fruit? (See Galatians 5:22-23)
 - a. Give some other examples of *good fruit*.
 - b. Give some examples of *bad fruit*.
5. Why do you think Jesus uses fruit and trees as images for life?
6. Have you ever tried to be more patient or kind or joyful? How did that go? What worked or did not work for you?
7. What can you do to “tend your tree” in order to produce good fruit? (See Matthew 10:39, John 15:5, Matthew 7:24, Matthew 28:19-20)
8. What lessons have you learned about growing your own food that could apply to life?
9. Who are “master gardeners” in your life that you can look to for advice on bearing good fruit?

RESOURCES

www.gracechurch.us/matthew

Practicing the Way, by John Mark Comer