

Bearing Good Fruit

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Numbers 13:23
John 16:33
Luke 3:8-9
Luke 6:43-45
Galatians 5:22-23

We all know the history of the Exodus of the nation of Israel from Egypt under the leadership of Moses, and of the commission he gave the representatives of each tribe to go into Canaan and, in modern parlance, check it out. Out of the 12 who were sent, only 2 came back full of enthusiasm, the other 10 reported of giants who were set to destroy them all. Yet, they came out carrying a bunch of grapes that needed to be slung on a pole borne by 2 men, evidence of the fruit that this land of milk and honey could produce. If only they had repented of their unbelief in God's promise that resulted in fear of the giants, they could have immediately lived in a land that bore such good fruit. Later, Joshua was told that those very giants were in fear and trembling of the God of the Israelites and were ready to flee from them.

Jesus spent His ministry on earth demonstrating what it is to walk in the physical realm while living and bearing fruit in His Father's Kingdom. No matter the distraction, He kept His eyes firmly fixed on His Father, dealing with every ploy of the enemy by countering with the living, breathing Word of God. And He instructed us to live in the same way, and to cheer up as we do (John 16:33).

How though do we do this? Without becoming totally self-obsessed, we need to be alert to what we are giving credence to, as Jesus said to the leaders in His day:

"Therefore, bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham."

What does it mean to bear fruits in keeping with repentance? The answer is surrendering our life unreservedly to Christ, turning from our sinful lives, our lukewarm attitudes and slipshod ways. Thinking that we can put God in our Sunday box, dusting off our faith for another week, is not bearing fruit demonstrating the repentance that Jesus desires. And without this step, we cannot bear the good fruit that Jesus also spoke about.

Most who call ourselves followers of Christ know about the Fruit of Holy Spirit spoken of by Paul in his letter to the Galatians. This Fruit that can only manifest through us when our repentance is real and we are prepared to abandon our old lives completely.

Reading the history of the Exodus all that time ago should give us pause. Do we truly want to wander around in a wilderness, within sight of our Promised Land yet so far away, just because we fail to take God at His Word.

When we empty our bodily temple of ourselves and allow Holy Spirit to fill us, His Life can flow through us and we will then bear the good fruit that God so

desires. It is His joy and delight to see us bearing this precious Fruit, to see us being Salt and Light to the world that needs Him so desperately.

God knows that the world He loved enough to sacrifice His One and Only Son for, will be drawn to Him by what it sees of His own Life flowing through those who know Him and bear His Fruit. The Fruit of Holy Spirit will cause us to live lives that are "questionable", lives that make others look and wonder what makes us different. This is the reason Jesus placed so much emphasis on our need to bear good fruit, and the only truly good Fruit is the Fruit of Holy Spirit.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for drawing us to Yourself, for opening our hearts to answer Your call to be the Temple for Your Holy Spirit, and to bear this precious Fruit for Your Glory.