

Episode 1-13 - Fruit Out of Season

I. The Bible speaks of “bearing fruit” as the expected outcome of our lives in Christ. We need to bear the fruit that God desires in all that we do as believers in Christ.

II. Fruit in season.

- A. In Psalm 1:3, a blessed man bears fruit in its season.
- B. The word “blessed” here means “how happy.”

III. A strange passage: Mark 11:12-14

- A. Christ curses the fig tree for not bearing fruit when it was not the season for figs.
- B. Was the Lord crazy? Or at least impatient. James 5:7 tells us a good farmer waits patiently for the fruit of the earth.
- C. The Lord’s actions were symbolical for what He expected people to do.
- D. Many in Israel refused to bear fruit out of season. John 12:42-43 tells us of those who loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.
- E. Some chose to throw their lot in with Him before the season, while He was on a lowly donkey rather than on a great white horse.

IV. An example of bearing fruit out of season is when David was on the run from Saul.

- A. David at the cave of Adullam. I Samuel 22:1-2. These four hundred men were with him when he was rejected. They threw in their lot with him in the hopes of a better kingdom, even when the king was in exile and the kingdom seemed a distant possibility.
- B. David at his coronation. II Samuel 5:1-4. Surely the whispered words of loyalty of those few hundred men in the cave must have been more meaningful to David than the shouts of tens of thousands did after his coronation.

V. Like the four hundred who were loyal to David when no one else was, we have the opportunity to bear fruit out of season!

- A. Someday, everyone knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Philippians 2:9-11.
- B. Not, most knees do not bow. Now, most tongues reject Him. We have the opportunity to confess Him now, ahead of season! This is something that we cannot do in the life to come. Then, all will be praising Him. This is something we can only do in this life!

VI. What are some ways we can bear fruit out of season?

- A. Isaiah 11:9. Says that someday, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.
 - 1. What does it mean, “as the waters cover the sea?” In the Hebrew mindset, the “sea” was not the water, but the “bowl” that the water was in.
 - 2. How can we cover ourselves with the knowledge of God today? By learning about the Lord by reading His Word now, we can cover ourselves with that knowledge ahead of season!
- B. Luke 4:4 says that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.
 - 1. Living on the Bible! I believe that this is a rule that will be in effect in God’s Kingdom.
 - 2. “Starving” from no Word of God? Acts 9:36-42.
 - a. The fact that Tabitha died does not seem strange to us. Yet we need to remember the time period they were living in. Why did Tabitha die, when there were plenty of people around with the power to heal?

- i. These stories from the book of Acts give us a picture of what God's future kingdom will be like.
 - ii. What we read about Tabitha is that she did good and helped the poor. Those she helped could not imagine what sin she might have done to deserve the punishment of death. Yet I cannot help but wonder, did Tabitha pay attention to God's Word, or did she only do good works? Could she have "starved"? I believe that Tabitha died because she was so busy doing good works that she starved to death from not "eating" God's Word.
- b. Whether or not my speculation about Tabitha is correct, what we do know is that this will be the rule in God's coming kingdom. Yet you can bear fruit out of season, and live like men will have to live then, NOW. If you had to read God's Word to keep from dying, would you be well-fed, or would you be starving? Do you read the Bible like you couldn't live without it? How might reading it like that change your life?

C. The truth on the scaffold, the truth on the throne.

1. In our day, many, like Pilate, give up finding the truth. John 18:38. Yet for those of us who believe, the Lord Jesus' words give us the answer we need, "Your Word is truth." (John 17:17) Others are willing to trade in the truth for many other things. Still others claim they cannot know the truth.
2. In God's future, all will love the truth. According to Zechariah 8:18-23, in God's future kingdom, conditions on earth will cause people to love the truth. Yet we can do this ahead of season! We have the chance to bear fruit ahead of time, and to love the truth now.

VII. In the life to come, everyone will be bearing the fruit that God desires. Yet we have the unique opportunity to bear fruit like that now today. Only in this life can we do this. We have the unique opportunity of pleasing the Lord by bearing fruit out of season. Let us take advantage of this, and bear fruit every day out of season!