

Kingdom People Produce Kingdom Fruit

Matthew 21:33-46

Introduction

The main point of this parable is that God had made a covenant with His chosen people, Israel. This covenant was based on obedience to His Word. They failed to keep His covenant, so He took the covenant away from them and made a **NEW COVENANT**, based on grace, and sealed with the blood of Jesus Christ. As believers, we are the recipients of that New Covenant. Just because the New Covenant is based on grace, doesn't exempt us from responsibility. We are to produce fruit for the Kingdom of God, just like the original tenants were.

Fruit in Jesus' Teaching

In the **Gospels**, there are 31 verses where Jesus is talking about bearing fruit or commanding His followers to "bear fruit." It makes sense. His was an agricultural society. Everybody knew about farming and how things grew. They knew that fruit trees produce fruit. That's their purpose. If they stop producing fruit, for one reason or another, they're useless and are cut down for firewood. Bearing fruit meant being productive. But what does it mean for a Christian to bear fruit? What does it mean for us to be productive?

Kingdom Fruit

In the **Augsburg Confession**, we read in ARTICLE VI, NEW OBEDIENCE, *Our churches teach that this faith is bound to bring forth good fruit [Galatians 5:22-23]. It is necessary to do good works commanded by God [Ephesians 2:10], because of God's will. We should not rely on those works to merit justification before God. The forgiveness of sins and justification is received through faith.* Good fruit is the evidence of our salvation. The way we live our life is our faith demonstrated. That's what James is talking about when he says, *Show me your faith apart from your works, and I'll show you my faith by my works (James 2:18).* You can't show your faith apart from works. Works are faith in action. They are the fruit of your faith.

Showing Our Faith

So, how do we show our faith? How do we show that we have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control? I think **Micah 6:8** sums it up best. *He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?* To **do justice** is to be *upright* and *honest*, to be *fair* in all our dealings with other people. It is "doing unto others as you would have others do unto you." When we treat others fairly in all circumstances, that shows in this world. To **love kindness** is about acts of *mercy*. One form of witnessing I like is called *intentional acts of kindness*. It's where you intentionally do these little things for people and let them know it's done in the name of Jesus. **Walking humbly with God** is just like it sounds; recognizing your *place* in the world and *allowing God to have control* in your life. When we live this way, it shows our faith, it is our witness to the world.

LWML

In my opinion, the LWML is the embodiment of this verse, to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly. *For over 77 years, the LWML has focused on affirming each woman's relationship with Christ, encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries and to support global missions.* They are involved in singles ministries, prison ministries, addiction ministries, responder support ministries, and caring for missionaries, just to name a few of their activities.

Mites

The LWML also serves as an outlet for all of us to participate in missions. One way is through this **MITE OFFERING**. In the story of the WIDOW'S MITE, she gave all she had. We, of course, are not doing that, but think about this: What does **God** do with the offering once it's collected? Paul says in **1 Corinthians 3**, *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6)*. When it comes to Kingdom Fruit, Kingdom people bear it because together we plant and water, but God gives the increase. He causes the fruit to grow. We bless and praise Him today for allowing us to be a small part of His ministry as we turn these mites over to Him.

*May the peace of God,
Which passes all understanding,
Keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
