

## Trees & Fruit Luke 6:43-45

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. Preaching

1. In a survey about people's fears, respondents ranked *public speaking* as #1; higher than death. <sup>[1]</sup>
2. If you've ever taken a speech class you know *some people* would *rather* die than give a speech.
3. Jerry Seinfeld once said that at a funeral, most people would rather be *in the casket* than giving the eulogy.
4. Some years ago at a Bible college, one young student had an intense fear of giving the chapel message, which rotated to *each* of the students throughout the year.
  - a. He went to the dean & pleaded to be left off the list of students who'd be called on to speak.
  - b. He promised to do any chore in place of giving the message.
  - c. He'd gladly scrub floors, empty trash, clean the dumpster, wash dishes;
  - d. Even clean toilets – *anything*, if he could be excused from giving the chapel message.
  - e. The dean recognized that young man *needed* to conquer his fear, so he told him he would give the message *the next day*.
  - f. When the time came for him to speak, he stood up & said, "My fellow students, do you know what I'm going to say?"
    - 1) They all shook their heads.
    - 2) He continued, "Neither do I. Let's stand for the benediction."
  - g. The dean was furious & told him he had to give tomorrow's message as well.
  - h. The next day the scene was the same.
    - 1) The young man said, "Do you know what I am going to say?"
    - 2) When they all nodded their heads, he said, "Good. Since you already know, there's no point in my saying it. Let's stand for the benediction."
  - i. Now the dean was beside himself & once again told the student he would have to give the next day's message & if he didn't deliver, he'd be expelled from school.

- k. When the time came for the message at the next chapel service, the student began as he had before.
  - 1) He asked, “Do you know what I am going to say?”
  - 2) Some nodded while others shook their heads.
  - 3) He then said, “Let those who *know* tell those who *don't*.  
Let's stand for the benediction.”

## **B. Your Sermon**

1. If I announced that from now on at CC, sermons were to be given by the members & that everyone had to sing up,
2. While a few would be eager, *most* would find another church.
3. For the majority, the thought of giving a sermon is *terrifying*.
4. What they don't realize is that they preach a sermon *every day of their lives*.
  - a. But the chapel they deliver it in isn't a church building,
  - b. It's the chapel of their job, school, home, the marketplace.
  - c. And while it may not have an Introduction, 3-points, & Conclusion
  - d. The people who hear & watch them *are getting the point* of their message.
5. *Your life is a sermon!*
  - a. Your words & deeds convey a message to everyone around you.
  - b. They speak of the *truth* you live *by*, the *values* you live *for*, & what you *love*.
6. You don't have to be a pastor or preacher to give a *powerful sermon*; just a Christian who's surrendered to the Spirit of God.
7. The most *effective sermons* don't come from behind an ornate wooden pulpit. They come from the pulpit of . . .
  - a. a work-desk, an assembly line, an ironing board, a sink,
  - b. a delivery van, a hand-truck, a phone, & a work-station.
8. The most *eloquent sermons* are not given by golden-tongued orators. They're delivered by those who **DO** what the golden-tongued orator preaches.
9. Miguel de Cervantes wrote, “He *preaches* well who *lives* well.”
10. In speaking to a group of pastors, the famous preacher Charles Spurgeon said, “The sermon begins when the *application* begins.”
  - a. What he *meant* was that a sermon isn't really *helpful* until the preacher turns from *explaining* the text to showing how to *live* it.

- b. I'd like to take that *even farther*. "The sermon begins when the application begins;" not in terms of the preacher's application of the text in his message,
  - d. But when the people begin to *live* what the text says, when they apply the truth they've learned. That's when the *real* sermon begins.
11. I've heard some great & powerful sermons. I'm thinking of one in particular by Damien Kyle.
- a. A sermon he gave on Brokenness at a Pastor's conference several years ago is one of the most moving & powerful messages I've ever encountered.
  - b. But here's the thing – God doesn't want that message to just reside in my memory or on a CD.
  - c. He wants it to be preached *again & again & again* because I'm *living* it.
12. Really, what we do in here is *Bible study* – the *Sermon* begins *when we leave*.
13. Our *motto* is "Learning & Living God's Word."
- a. This is the *Learning*. After this, when we leave here, is the *Living*.
  - b. You didn't *come* to Calvary Chapel this morning – You *are* Calvary Chapel.
  - c. Calvary Chapel may *meet* at 1925 Eastman Ave. – But it **LIVES** all over this County.
  - d. What we're looking at this morning is going to be repeated in a far more powerful way this afternoon in our homes; this week at our jobs.

## II. TEXT

### A. V. 43-44

**43 "For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush.**

1. Unless they're specially trained, *most* people cannot tell what kind of plant a tree is just by looking at its trunk & leaves.
2. The mark that *easily* identifies a tree is its *fruit*.
3. Put lemon, lime, orange & grapefruit trees near each other & until

they produce fruit, the average person isn't going to be able to tell them apart.

4. But once the fruit ripens – identifying them is easy.
5. **The fruit reveals the root.** That's what Jesus is saying here.
6. Just as fruit identifies the kind of tree, so in the realm of the spirit, our *actions* identify what *kind* of person we are.
7. Just as a good tree produces good fruit, so the person who's been born again & is indwelt by the Spirit of God will give *evidence* of that new life by choices that are right & good.
8. Jesus is *not* saying that *perfection* comes the *moment* a person is born again.
  - a. That's not the intent of His words here.
  - b. Just as it takes time for fruit to grow & ripen, so spiritual fruit comes through the *process of spiritual maturity*.
  - c. What *is* certain is that a good tree *will* produce good fruit; a bad tree bitter fruit.
  - d. You don't get figs from thorn bushes; you gather them from fig trees.
  - e. Grapes grow on grape vines, not brambles.
9. Anyone who's gone hiking knows what you get from a thorn bush is -- *thorns*.
  - a. You come out of a tangle with a bramble bush with those little stickers in your clothes –
  - b. Not a pocketful of juicy red strawberries.
10. If you want fruit, you go to *an orchard*, not a briar-patch.
11. Jesus' point here is one that may seem obvious, but it's one we ought to stop & consider *personally*.
  - a. What fruit are you bearing? Good or bad?
  - b. The fruit reveals the root.
12. If your life is headed toward God, then there's going to be evidence of that in terms of your *choices*.
  - a. Your *priorities & values* will be godly.
  - b. Your *habits* will change from destructive to constructive.
  - c. Your *behavior* will take on a similarity to the actions of Jesus.
13. Look at v. 40 - Luke 6:40

**A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.**

- a. Don't forget what the whole goal of discipleship is – TO BE

JUST LIKE THE RABBI.

- b. That means as we grow in Christ, we will take on more & more of His image.
14. As the bumper sticker says, being a Christian doesn't mean being perfect, but it **does** mean moving **toward** it.

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15. If you plant a baby fruit tree in your yard, don't expect it to yield any fruit that first year.
  - a. In fact, don't expect any for the first few years.
  - b. Most new trees will not produce fruit until the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year after being planted.
  - c. And the first years of fruit-bearing are often meager & not all that sweet.
  - d. But once the tree has taken root & established itself securely in the ground, it will begin to produce a rich harvest.
16. How long have you known the Lord? How long since your conversion?
  - a. While it may take 3 or 4 years for a fruit tree to start producing **it should not take that long for a Christian.**
  - b. Spiritual infancy ought to be a stage **quickly grown out of** as we sink our roots deeply in Christ.
  - c. Sure, we all grow at different rates & it's wrong when we **judge** each other because some aren't as mature as others.
  - d. But the fact is, **some stay** spiritual babes **long past** the point they ought to have gone on to fruitful maturity.
  - e. The Apostle Paul **rebuked** the Corinthians for this very thing.
  - f. When they ought to have been a fruit-filled orchard for Christ, they were still wallowing in a carnal play-pen like spiritual infants.
17. As we come honestly before the Lord this morning, let's deal with this question forthrightly – Given the time we've known the Lord, is He getting from us the fruit He deserves?
  - a. Given all the good spiritual seed He's planted in us,
  - b. And all the work He's spent on us, cultivating, pruning, watering–
  - c. Are we yielding the fruit that matches that faithfulness?
18. Consider this - If the roots of a **good tree** are in rich, life-sustaining soil & that tree is being well-watered with an abundance of sunlight – Then it's going to produce a **bumper crop**

of luscious fruit.

19. But if its roots are in poor soil, aren't watered well, & the sunlight is blocked, the fruit will come, but it's going to be meager & the quality poor.
20. If you've been born again, then your nature *is good* because you're a new creature in Christ.
  - a. What are *your roots* in – the *world* or the *Word*?
  - b. Is your *soul* being watered by *prayer*?
  - c. Is the light of daily intimacy with The Son shining on you?

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21. Jesus repeats the lesson by changing the image a bit . . .

### **B. V. 45**

**45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; & an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."**

1. Jesus was fond of calling the core of our hearts – *treasure*.
2. It's a fitting picture because our hearts refer to that which we *value most*.
3. The good man is someone who's been given a *new heart*, one indwelt by the Spirit of God.
  - a. Every good man *began* an evil man with a wicked heart.
  - b. But in His mercy, God changed the evil to good.
  - c. The transformation was affected by giving the evil man a new, good heart.
4. Since all the *evil man* has is a wicked & corrupt heart, what else can be expected of him but evil & corruption?
5. But the good man has a *new heart*, one *made good* by God. What we ought to expect from him is goodness.
6. Jesus makes clear *where* we can look for the evidence of a good or evil heart when He says –  
**"For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."**
7. The *first fruit* of our lives, the evidence of what our hearts treasure, is what our mouth says.
8. Our speech reveals our thoughts & thoughts reveal the soul.
10. This image of our *speech being like food* is a ready one in Scripture.

**Proverbs 25:11 • A well-spoken & timely word is like a golden apple nestled in a beautiful silver-basket.**

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**Proverbs 16:23-24 • <sup>23</sup> The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, & adds learning to his lips. <sup>24</sup> Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul & health to the bones.**

11. What Jesus says in v. 45 is a good test –for *all* of us.
12. Our speech reveals what’s in our hearts.
13. But let’s make sure we understand what Jesus means when He says,  
**“Out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”**
  - a. The *verb tense* Jesus uses here refers to one’s *habit of speech*,
  - b. Not an occasional slip of the tongue that comes from not thinking.
  - c. Jesus means the general tenor & tone of our conversation.
14. The way William Barclay explains this is helpful. He says . . .  
“If you ask directions to a certain place, one person may tell you it’s near such & such a *church*; another, that it’s near this or that *theater*; another, that it’s near such & such a *sports park*; another, that it is near this or that *bar*. The very words of the answer show where a man’s thoughts most naturally turn & where the interests of his heart lie. Always our speech betrays us.”
15. What reference point does your speech revolve around?
  - a. What thought is woven through all your words?
  - b. What value & priority governs your choices?
16. In Judges 12 we read how the men of Gilead defeated the Ephraimites in battle.
  - a. The retreating Ephraimites were captured but tried to pawn themselves off as men of Gilead going home from the battle.
  - b. The men of Gilead then gave them a little test – all they had to do to prove they were Gileadites was to say the word “Shibboleth.”
  - c. Since the Ephraimites had no “sh” sound, they changed it to “sibboleth” & were caught in their deception.
17. Those who are born again will give evidence of it by consistently speaking the language of the Kingdom of God.

### **III. CONCLSUION**

## **A. The Most Powerful Sermon**

1. Many Christian leaders today fear the *menace* of *secularism* in all its many forms.
2. Some speak about the danger of the *radical Islam*.
3. These threats will not be defeated by writing books & pamphlets or staging rallies & holding conventions.
4. The only way to prove the superiority of Christianity is to show *by our lives* that it produces *better people*.<sup>[2]</sup>
5. The most powerful sermon is not the one given from a pulpit in a church.
6. It's the one we **LIVE** before the eyes of a watching world.

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<sup>[1]</sup> [http://www.pbs.org/standarddeviantstv/episode\\_res\\_public.html](http://www.pbs.org/standarddeviantstv/episode_res_public.html)

<sup>[2]</sup> Adapted from Barclay, William *Daily Study Bible: Luke* Electronic version, Libronix