

Called to Bear Fruit



Jim Cymbala November 16, 2019

Bearing fruit is the underlying purpose behind the gift of God's Son. Christ suffered, died, and rose again so that we would die to the law and "belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, *in order that we might bear fruit to God*" (Romans 7:4).

A new believer in Christ will *always* exhibit a change in behavior as proof that the fruit-bearing process has begun. Paul told the Colossians, "All over the world *this gospel is bearing fruit and growing* just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth" (Colossians 1:6).

A growing number of churches, afraid of "scaring" people away, have become more intent on being seeker-sensitive than on trusting God to transform lives, as he has been doing for over two thousand years. We need not worry about the power of the gospel, for *it still is* the power of God for salvation. We just need to be bold enough to communicate it in simplicity and love.

Jesus said, "By their fruit you will recognize them ... every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit" (Matthew 7:16-17). Although Jesus offered this teaching in the context of a warning about false prophets, its application is universal. The only indisputable proof that God's grace is at work in us is the spiritual fruit we produce. This is neither legalism nor mysticism, but a fact of life in the kingdom of God.

Remember, Israel was rejected by its own Messiah because it did not bear fruit: "Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to *a people who will produce its fruit*" (Matthew 21:43).

The Holy Spirit was sent to tenderly draw people to Christ. As you respond to his voice and humble yourself in the presence of God, ask him for a personal revival that will bear fruit to the praise of the glory of his grace.

Jim Cymbala began the Brooklyn Tabernacle with less than twenty members in a small, rundown building in a difficult part of the city. A native of Brooklyn, he is a longtime friend of both David and Gary Wilkerson.

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