

## RCMI L-Path Teaching

July 31, 2022

TITLE: WHERE'S YOUR FRUIT? [Nasaan Ang Iyong Bunga?]

[The Parable of the Fig Tree]

TEXT: Luke 13: 6-9

B.I.: Jesus wants us to live our lives for God and stay deeply rooted in His Word and His Presence in all we do.

INTRO:

- Jesus in Luke 13:3 said, *“Unless you repent, you too will all perish.”* To reiterate this call to repentance, Jesus tells the story of the fig tree.
- In this parable, the vineyard owner represents God, and the gardener who cares for the trees represents Jesus. The tree has two symbolic meanings: the nation of Israel and the individual.
- As the story unfolds, we see the vineyard owner expressing his disappointment at the fruitless tree. He has looked for fruit for three years from this tree but has found none.
- The presence or absence of fruit in the lives of those who claim to be God's people is an essential issue in God's word. Fruit is a necessary concern for anyone who loves God and desires to go to heaven.

### I. THE PRIVILEGED POSITION [v.6] [Ang Posisyong May Pribilehiyo]

- This fig tree enjoyed certain advantages not possessed by all fig trees. Many fig trees grew along the roadsides. They were, in essence, wild. No one fertilized them. No one cared for them. They had to survive in rocky, shallow soil with sparse nutrients.
- But this fig tree was different. It was purposely planted in a vineyard. It enjoyed better soil. The gardener watched over it and took special care of it.
- God had put His chosen people in a favored position.
- Doesn't it seem obvious that God would expect a return on His investment?
- Hasn't God lavished even more favor upon His church today - we have the Word of God in abundance –it's all around us.
- Not only that, the tree is planted in a vineyard where other trees are bearing fruit.
- One thing we need to understand about being planted in the Kingdom is that this tree would not have been expected if it were not on good ground.
- The tree was planted on good ground; I'm here to tell you that RCMI is good ground. The Bible-based messages, the discipleship, and pastoral care we've been investing in making it a perfect environment.
- We have indeed been planted in a privileged place! Yet have we produced appropriate fruit? Doesn't it follow that there should be much fruit when the vineyard's owner invests so much in us?

### II. THE PLANNED PRODUCTION [v.7] [Ang Ipinlanong Produksyon]

#### A. It Was Designed For Fruitfulness

- What was the expectation of the owner of the vineyard? [v.6] The owner went out looking for fruit.

- The fig tree in this parable had only leaves. A fig tree cannot survive without leaves. But it had no fruit after three years. Israel was very religious. It had lots of leaves but no fruit.
- **Do you and I know the difference between leaves and fruit today?**
- “Do not confuse work and fruit. There may be a good deal of work for Christians that is not the fruit of the Heavenly Vine.” -Andrew Murray.
- God, Himself is looking for fruit in our lives. Leaves of merely sitting in a church building will not do. He wants fruit, and if He doesn't find it in our lives, according to the passages, He will cut us down and remove us from His vineyard. We must bear fruit!

### **B. It Was Displaying Failure**

- The purpose of planting in the owner's vineyard is to bear fruit. The fruit is not for us; the fruit is for God Himself, the vineyard's owner.
- I want my life as a disciple of Jesus Christ to bear fruit for the kingdom of God and not just as a bench warmer. Somebody ought to attest that the Gospel lives inside of you.
- Every leader, worker, and the member should have an L-Path group. Every home ought to have a family altar. Everyone should be worshipping corporately every Sunday, and if you are physically able, you want God to see you making an effort to worship here in person.
- When the vineyard owner comes, he finds no fruit. The tree had failed in its purpose; it's been three years with no fruit.
- **Q: Can the Lord see any fruit in your life?**
  - Fruit of Repentance
  - Fruit of the Spirit [ Gal. 5: 22-23]
  - Fruit of Evangelism
- Jesus says that the tree is wasting space because there's no fruit on the tree. It's taking up ground that could be used for a tree that will produce. If the Lord can't get what He wants out of you, He puts somebody else where you were that He'd get something out.
- **Chop it down!** The right of ownership carries the right of determination. Likewise, since God owns the world and everything in it and owns each one of us, God is sovereign and can do whatever He wills.

### **III. THE PASSIONATE PLEA [v.8] [Ang Madamdaming Pakiusap]**

- The gardener steps in, “I know there's no fruit right now but leave it for another year.” Just give me one more year. The Lord will work on you if you allow Him to.
- You know you're not where you ought to be, and you've shown up where you don't want to be. Something happened during this pandemic: instead of being closer to Him, you feel like you've drifted away. Lord, dig around me!
- Lord, dig around me so that the water of Your word can stay. Dig around me so that I can hold some of what you've been putting over to me.
- After digging up the hard ground, the gardener said let me put manure on it to make it grow. For growth, let me fertilize it.
- The Lord can take the stinky mess and make it a blessing in your life.
- Jesus, our High Priest, continues to intercede for us and offers to help us bear fruit for another season. Praise the Lord of Second Chances!

#### **IV. THE PROVISIONAL PARDON [v.9] [Ang Pangsamantalang Kapatawaran]**

- We need to take stock of our lives. We are all in that probationary "fourth-year" period. Christ, the Vineyard keeper, has made intercession for us.
- He did not do that to grant us more time to do nothing for God. He expects us to use the remaining time to produce fruit in our lives!
- Notice the element of warning to us that hangs at the end of verse 9. It says: "...if it doesn't, cut it down."

#### **CHALLENGE: Jesus wants us to live our lives for God and stay deeply rooted in His Word and His Presence in all we do.**

- The lesson for the individual is that borrowed time is not permanent. God's patience has a limit.
- God, in His mercy, gives us another day, hour, and breath. Christ stands at the door of each man's heart knocking and seeking to gain entrance and requiring repentance from sin. We all live on borrowed time; judgment is near. [Isaiah 55: 6-7]

#### **DISCUSSION:**

- What have you learned from the Parable of the Fig Tree?
- How will you apply it in your life?
- Discuss the urgency of bearing fruit. Are you manifesting:
  - The Fruit of Repentance
  - The Fruit of The Spirit
  - The Fruit of Evangelism