

Withered Fig Tree

By Mary Kane

Please read Matthew 21:18-22



After Jesus cleansed the temple, He left Jerusalem and went to the village of Bethany to rest. In the morning, while Jesus was walking back to the city, He saw a fig tree. Our Lord stopped at the fig tree to pick some fruit to satisfy His hunger. When Jesus saw that the fig tree was fruitless, He spoke to the fig tree and immediately it withered.

The disciples did not seem to make the connection between the words Jesus spoke and the withering of the tree. After the disciples commented on how fast the tree withered, Jesus used the fig tree to teach His disciples about combining faith, prayer and speaking in accordance with the will of God to accomplish His purposes.

Fruit trees were created to produce fruit and feed God's creation. Like fruit trees, God calls Christians to be fruitful also. The fruit we are to produce however is the fruit of the Spirit and the fruit of our hands—good works.

Fruitless Christians do not glorify the Lord. Fruitlessness can occur when we've chosen to walk according to our own wisdom. Certain activities, relationships or projects may not produce godly fruit because by nature they do not line up with the Word of God. At other times an area of our lives can become fruitless because God wants us to move on to the next stage of our walk with Him. When an area of life is fruitless or becomes fruitless we need to be rid of it. It can take great faith and courage to *wither* the fruitless parts of our lives, especially if that part had previously produced great fruit. Please be assured if God is calling us to leave a fruitless habit, pattern or relationship (please keep in mind that I am not speaking about leaving your husband or children) it is because He has a plan to abundantly bless us in another way.

Bridge:

Please list some possible habits, activities or relationships that may hinder us from walking closely with Jesus:

What fruitless habit, activity or relationship (not your marriage) is God calling you to leave?

If you answered *yes* to this question, please follow the example that Jesus gave us and combine His words (scripture) with prayer to *wither* that destructive thought pattern, habit or activity. If appropriate ask Him to take away your desire for that activity and replace it with His will for your life.

Is there something good (fruitful) in your life that God may be calling you to leave so He can give you something better (more fruitful)?

If you answered yes to this question, please take time to pray and seek God's will for your life. Ask Him to confirm His will to you through His Word and show you the next step you need to take to follow Him.

Prayer:

Dearest Holy Father,

Thank You that You constantly call us to a closer deeper relationship with You. Thank You that by Your Holy Spirit we can produce fruit that is pleasing to You and beneficial to others. Please show us what we need to leave behind so we can become fruitful. Your words says that if we abide in You and if Your Word abides in us, that we can ask you for what we desire and it will be done for us. According to Your word we ask that You rid us of any

unfruitful habits and wither any desire for sin that resides in our hearts. It is to Your glory that we, your disciples, bear much fruit (John 15:7-8).

In Jesus Holy Name,

Amen.

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