

Fruit Trees



WARM UP: Which is easier; to identify a tree by its leaves and bark or by its fruit? Why?

When you walk into an orchard, it is easy to tell what kind of trees are growing there even if you know nothing about trees. All you have to do is look at the fruit the trees produce. If you see apples, it is an apple orchard and those are apple trees. If you see oranges, it is an orange grove and those are orange trees. The same principle applies when it comes to people as well.

You don't have to be around someone long before they reveal to you what kind of person they are whether they are good or bad, godly or evil. Their fruit gives them away even if it takes you a while to discover their fruit. When people saw the things Jesus did and heard the way he spoke and the things he taught, it was plainly visible that he had to have been from God. No one could do or say the things he did unless the source of his power was rooted in the nature of God himself. Yet, even with the visible fruit staring them in the face, some refused to believe.

READ ABOUT IT: Matt. 12:31-37

1. *If you were Jesus, which would have been hardest for you to handle; the people's constant commands or the religious leaders constant criticism and attacks?*
2. *What is meant by blasphemy against the Spirit? Why is this sin unforgivable when there are so many other sins that seem much worse in comparison?*
3. *What would you say to someone who is afraid that they have "blasphemed against the Holy Spirit"?*
4. *What did Jesus mean when he said that a tree is known or recognized by its fruit?*
5. *Is it possible for a diseased tree to produce good fruit? How would you go about making a bad tree good?*
6. *Why does Jesus call these Pharisees a brood of vipers? What is the source of their criticism?*
7. **Jesus said, "For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks."** *What does Jesus mean when he says that we will have to give an account for every careless word we have spoken on the day of judgment?*
8. *Does the thought that our words will either condemn us or acquit us on that day scare you or encourage you? Why or why not?*
9. *What real difference does Jesus' power make in your daily struggle against evil? In your freedom to be honest with God? In your daily speech with others?*

For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.

Matthew 12:34