

Fasting: Monday

FRUITLESS PRACTICES:

After Jesus triumphal entry, “12 On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. 13 And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14 And he said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard it. (Mark 11:12-14)”

“20 As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. 21 And Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.” 22 And Jesus answered them, “Have faith in God. 23 Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. 24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. 25 And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses (Mark 11:20-26).”

The fig tree had one job. Produce fruit for the people. When the tree had no fruit it was no longer doing what it was created to do, so it was removed. As I read what happened to the fig tree I cant help but wonder what kind of fruitless practices or daily habits or routines we have that don't produce fruit? When those habits and routines start to consume majority of your time that's when we start to feel depressed and worthless like the fig tree. During this Fast or today look at your day to day routine and habits. Are they producing fruit like the way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. Do you have a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people? Do you find yourself involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force your way in life, able to marshal and direct your energies wisely? These are the things that will produce the fruit in our lives and cause us not to wither and die. If you need help in how to do that, follow Jesus' words, “do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will come to pass, it will be done for you. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours (Mark 11:23-24)”.

DAILY PRAYER:

Pray: Heavenly Father, You are holy. Jesus' blood washes us clean, and Your Holy Spirit makes us new, sanctifying us. Today, we ask for idols to be cast down, for anything that takes the place of You in our lives to be stripped of its power. Forgive us for bowing to other gods, for allowing other things to take your place. We turn away from them and we ask for chains to be broken in our lives and in the lives of those we love. Holy Spirit, move in power and bring freedom from all bondage. I pray for freedom for _____. Help him/her to find that only You satisfy. Thank you for the freedom that is found in your presence. Amen.