

Mid-Week Devotion



Picking Good Fruit

Read Matthew 7:15-20 “...you will know them by their fruits.”

Usually at least once a month, my wife and I pack up the car with shopping bags and a cooler, and make that 50 minute journey to Hagerstown where we spend the day shopping for groceries, personal items, and the like. We spend a lot of time in Wal-Mart, where we get the bulk of our groceries for the month. It's my job to wield the shopping cart up and down the aisles, following Gilda as she hunts for just the right price, bargain, or item for which she has a coupon. One of my favorite times throughout the crusade is when we get to the produce isle; for according to the bible, it's there that you can tell the really mature Christians from the rest. How is that you ask? Well it is all in how they pick their fruit!

In what has been called Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warns us of false prophets. Now a false prophet is anyone or anything that leads you away from Christ. A false prophet can appear as a friend, a teacher, or even someone you have come to trust and love. It can also take on any one of the many forms of consumerism that bombards us every day. Anytime the world tries to tell you who you are or whose you are, in terms of what it has to give, offer, or sell you, well beware, for these are just other forms of the false prophets Jesus is warning you against.

In His sermon, Jesus equates false prophets to those trees that produce bad fruit. According to Him, good fruit comes only from good trees and bad fruit only comes from bad trees. So the way we can tell good prophets from the bad ones is to look at the fruit they produce. This means that we must examine the fruit very closely. This is where spending time in the produce isle really pays off. Some people, I have noticed, will pick up the fruit, and taking their knuckles, thump it, listening for just the right sound. Others will smell the fruit, while still others will squeeze it, look at it, and rub it! It is quite the science picking good fruit in the market and it is no different when it comes to picking those whom we will listen to and follow.

God didn't have to send Jesus to earth in order to save us. God being God, He could have done it any way He chose. Nevertheless, He did send His only Son, His beloved; it was God's way of saying check out my fruit and see if I am a good prophet or a bad one. Have you been struggling in your life with choosing the right fruit, the right prophet, the right someone in your life to share and follow? Have you been disappointed time after time with buying fruit that just looks good? Perhaps then, it is time to check out God's fruit, the Savior; touch him, smell Him, squeeze him, taste and savor Him, then listen to Him, and follow him. The best part is you don't need a coupon or have to wait for a sale, He's always in season, and you don't even have to leave your home. Just close your eyes right now, and ask God if you can sample His best fruit, the One named Jesus, and then see if your days of picking bad fruit aren't over forever.

Pastor Ed