

# One More Year To Live

- Bear Fruit
- Fruit Expected
- The Sentence
- Resolutions

Today, being December 31<sup>st</sup> is the Last day of the year 2023.

**Tomorrow**, with its rights and wrongs, the year 2023, will then be **HISTORY**; it will be **in the PAST**.

Annually, we say goodbye to another year **LIVED**, to reflect on the **DECISIONS** made, and **LESSONS** learned;  
But, **HOW MANY MORE, WILL BE GIVEN TO US?**

Consider with me, the parable of the barren fig tree, recorded in [Lk.13:6-9](#), which among other things, discusses the sin of **USELESSNESS**.

- It reads, "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.  
<sup>7</sup> Then said he unto the dresser (or keeper) of his vineyard, Behold, these three years, I **COME** seeking **FRUIT** on this fig tree, and find **NONE**: cut it down; why cumbereth it (or use up), the ground (or soil)?  
<sup>8</sup> And he answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this **YEAR** also (one more year), till I shall dig about it (or cultivate it), and dung it (or put in fertilizer):  
<sup>9</sup> and **IF** it bear fruit, well (or fine): and **IF** not, then after that, thou shalt cut it down."

Notice the Vinedresser asked for "One More Year", for the fig tree to show signs of fruit bearing. There **WILL** come a time, in each of our lives, **WHEN** we shall have lived, our last year. With these thoughts in mind, the lesson is entitled, "**One More Year To Live**".

In considering the parable of the fig tree,  
One of the applications that could be made is, **God expects our lives to...**

## I. Bear Fruit

- "Herein is My **Father GLORIFIED**, that ye **BEAR much FRUIT**; so shall ye **BE My DISCIPLES**." ([Jn.15:8](#))

**A. The Owner of the Vineyard, Expected more than just foliage,  
He EXPECTED the promise of FRUIT!**

**B. This Tree was Not an Accident, but PLANTED** (Lk.13:6a)

NOT unproductive ground, but the ground of a VINEYARD, which should have the BEST of soils. The soil of a vineyard carried with it, the privilege and responsibility to bear fruit, with ample time to do so (3 years in this context).

Comparably,

**C. WE are Not in God's Vineyard Accidentally**

- "Of His own will begat He us, with the Word of Truth, that we should be, a kind of first fruits, of His creatures." ([Jas.1:18](#))
- "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will **RAISE** him up at the last day. <sup>45</sup> It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all **TAUGHT** of God. Every man therefore that hath **HEARD**, and hath **LEARNED** of the Father, **COMETH** unto Me." ([Jn.6:44-45](#))
- "the Spirit and the bride say, **COME**. And let him that heareth say, **COME**. And let him that is athirst **COME**. And whosoever **WILL**, let him **TAKE** the water of **LIFE** freely." ([Rev.22:17](#))
- Peter said, "**REPENT**, and be **BAPTIZED** every one of you, **IN** the **NAME** of Jesus Christ, for the **REMISSION** of sins, and ye shall receive the **GIFT** of the Holy Spirit." ([Acts 2:38](#))
- "the **Lord ADDED** to the **CHURCH** daily, such as should be **SAVED**." ([Acts 2:47b](#); [Col.1:13-14](#))

We are not in God's Vineyard accidentally,  
But **Nourished, with Indescribable blessings.**

- "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
Who hath **BLESSED** us, with **ALL Spiritual blessings**, **IN** heavenly places, **IN Christ**:" ([Eph.1:3](#))

**We are Called OUT of the world.**

- Peter said, "ye are a **CHOSEN** generation, a **ROYAL** priesthood, an **HOLY** nation, a **PECULIAR** people;  
that ye should **SHEW** forth the **praises OF Him**,  
Who hath **CALLED** you **OUT** of **darkness**, **INTO** His **marvellous LIGHT**:" ([1Pet.2:9](#))

We are Called OUT of the world, **Into a most Exalted relationship.**

- "to redeem them that were under the law (Jews),  
that we might **RECEIVE** the **ADOPTION** of sons." ([Gal.4:5](#); [2Cor.6:18](#) – ...and "daughters" also.)

We are not in God's Vineyard accidentally,  
But Nourished, with **Unspeakable privilege.**

- "God is a **SPIRIT**: and they that worship Him, **MUST** worship Him, **IN** Spirit and **IN** Truth." ([Jn.4:24](#))
- Jesus said, "...the **WORDS** that I speak unto you, they are **SPIRIT**, and they are **LIFE**." ([Jn.6:63b](#))

**Christians have the Richest of promises.**

- We are given "...exceeding **GREAT** and precious **PROMISES**:  
that **BY** these, ye might be **PARTAKERS** of the **DIVINE nature**,  
having **ESCAPED** the corruption, that is in the world through lust." ([2Pet.1:4](#))

**We have, Incomprehensible Hope.**

- Paul said he was "a **SERVANT** of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the **FAITH** of God's elect,  
and the **ACKNOWLEDGING of the Truth**, which is after godliness;  
<sup>2</sup> **IN Hope of eternal LIFE**, which God, that cannot lie, **PROMISED** before the world began;" ([Titus 1:2](#))

**There is NOTHING lacking, for God's children.**

- Paul said, "And now, brethren, I **COMMEND** you to God, and to the **WORD** of His Grace,  
which is able to **BUILD** you up, and to **GIVE** you an inheritance,  
among all them which are **SANCTIFIED**." ([Acts 20:32](#))

**Is God's care justified?**

- Paul said, "I beseech (or urge) you therefore, brethren, by the **MERCIES** of God,  
that ye **PRESENT** your bodies a **LIVING sacrifice**, **HOLY**, acceptable unto God,  
which is your reasonable (or spiritual) **SERVICE**." ([Rom.12:1](#))

**Is There Any reason for us to stay around?**

- Paul said, "And I myself also am **PERSUADED** of you, my brethren, that ye also are **FULL** of goodness,  
**FILLED** with all knowledge, **ABLE** also to **ADMONISH** one another." ([Rom.15:14](#))
- Peter said, "For **IF** these things be **IN** you, and **ABOUND**, they **MAKE** you,  
that ye shall **NEITHER** be barren, **NOR** unfruitful, **IN** the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." ([2Pet.1:8](#))

The lesson is entitled, “*One More Year To Live*”.

As we consider the parable of the fig tree,  
We must realize, there is,

## II. Fruit Expected

...Of our Father, in Heaven.

### A. God Expected the Jews to be holy (Lk.13:4-5)

God nurtured them a long time, with tender care.  
But the Nation, was barren of the fruit expected.  
Destruction was decreed, except they repent.

The Gospel was given, to bring them to repentance.  
They didn't repent, so the Nation was destroyed.

- “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and **ye would NOT!**  
<sup>38</sup> Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” ([Matt.23:37-38](#)).

There is Fruit Expected,

### B. Especially of us, Who are Most Richly Blessed

- “...For unto whomsoever much is **GIVEN**, of him shall be much **REQUIRED**:  
and to whom men have **COMMITTED** much, of him they will **ASK** the more.” ([Lk.12:48b](#))

**Hearts produce the fruit of holiness.**

- The Bible says, “the **FRUIT of the SPIRIT** is love, **JOY**, peace, **LONGSUFFERING**, gentleness, **GOODNESS**, faith,  
<sup>23</sup> **MEEKNESS**, temperance: against such there is no law.” ([Gal.5:22-23](#))

**With our LIPS, We offer the Fruit of Thanksgiving and Praise.**

- “**By Him** therefore, let us **OFFER** the sacrifice of **PRAISE** to God, **CONTINUALLY**,  
that is, the **FRUIT** of our lips, **GIVING** thanks to His **NAME**.” ([Heb.13:15](#))

**With our WILL, We offer the Fruit of Obedience.**

The Bible says of those who,

- “...have **OBEYED** from the heart that **FORM of doctrine** which was **DELIVERED** you.  
<sup>18</sup> Being then made **FREE** from sin, ye became the **SERVANTS** of righteousness.” ([Rom.6:17-18](#))

What **FORM** of doctrine was he speaking of?

A form of the **Death, Burial & Resurrection** (which was referenced 13 verses earlier in Rom.6:3-4):

- Coupled with Repentance, We **DIE** to sin through a watery grave of Baptism,  
which is a form of the **DEATH** of Christ;
- We are **BURIED** with Him, by Baptism,  
Which is a form of the **BURIAL** of Christ;
- We are **RAISED** in newness of life, AFTER baptism  
Which is a form of the **RESURRECTION** of Christ;  
And a form of Eternal LIFE.

## In All, We offer Fruit of Usefulness.

- Jesus said, “Thou shalt **LOVE** the Lord thy God with **ALL** thy heart, and with **ALL** thy soul, and with **ALL** thy mind.  
<sup>38</sup> This is the **FIRST** and **GREAT** commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the **SECOND** is like unto it, Thou shalt **LOVE** thy neighbour **AS** thyself.” ([Matt.22:37-39](#))

Fruit is Expected!

### C. Will God Be Disappointed, As He Examines Our Fruit (both individually & collectively)?

- “For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.” ([1Jn.3:20](#))
- IF we’ll, “Be ye **DOERS** of the **Word**, and **NOT** hearers **ONLY**,...” ([Jas.1:22a](#))  
...it will help keep us, from falling beneath our capacities (Lk.13:7a).

The parable of the barren fig tree, is LONGSUFFERING (Lk.13:7-9).

- Truly, “The Lord is **NOT** slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but **is longsuffering** to us-ward, **NOT** willing that **ANY** should **PERISH**, but that **ALL** should **COME to REPENTANCE**.” ([2Pet.3:9](#))
- “For **IF** there be first, a **WILLING** mind, it is accepted **ACCORDING** to that a man **HATH**, and **NOT** according to that he hath **NOT**.” ([2Cor.8:12](#))

The lesson is entitled, “*One More Year To Live*”.

As we consider the parable of the barren or unfruitful, fig tree,  
One of the applications that could be made, is we should realize,

### III. The Sentence was Just and Fair (Lk.13:7)

The Bible says, that the unprofitable servant will be cast,

- “...into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” ([Matt.25:30](#))

#### A. This sentence of the unfruitful fig tree, was not made without consideration.

The fruit tree, was given three years of care, and opportunity.

Regarding Israel’s opportunity, Paul said,

- “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be **SAVED**.  
<sup>2</sup> For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but **NOT** according to **KNOWLEDGE**.  
<sup>3</sup> For they being **IGNORANT** of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their **OWN** righteousness, have **NOT** submitted themselves **UNTO** the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of God.” ([Rom.10:1-3](#))

God waits long for us to bear fruit.

- [Rom.13:11-12](#) reads, “**KNOWING** the time, that **NOW**, it is high **TIME**, to awake **OUT** of sleep: for **NOW** is our salvation **NEARER**, than when we believed.  
<sup>12</sup> The **NIGHT** is far spent, the **DAY** is at hand: let us therefore **CAST OFF** the works of **DARKNESS**, and let us **PUT ON** the armour of **LIGHT**.”

The decision or Sentence of the owner,  
was to cut down, the barren or unfruitful fig tree.

His,

## B. Reasoning for the Sentence: Why Cumbereth it (use up) The Ground (soil)?

The unfruitful tree was taking up resources.  
This sentence or judgment, creates an urgent need for fruit bearing.

[Rev.3:1-2](#) reads,

- “unto the angel of the church in Sardis write;  
These things saith He, that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;  
I **KNOW** thy works, that thou hast a **NAME** that thou livest, and art **DEAD**.  
<sup>2</sup> Be **WATCHFUL**, and **STRENGTHEN** the things which **REMAIN**, that are ready to **DIE**:  
for I have **NOT found** thy **WORKS**, perfect **BEFORE** God.”

Half-hearted, may be worse, than useless (read [2Pet.2:21](#)).

The Biblical record tell us,  
That the church at Corinth was puffed up, and not remorseful, concerning the sin of an individual.

- The Bible says that their “glorying is not good.  
Know ye not that a little **LEAVEN**, leaveneth the **WHOLE** lump?” ([1Cor.5:6](#))

Sometimes the root cause of an unfruitful tree,  
can spoil the soil, and affect other trees to be unfruitful.

In response to the owner’s sentence of the unfruitful fig tree, We notice a,

## C. Request of the Vinedresser (Lk.13:8-9)

...which was to cultivate and feed the barren fig tree,  
To allow opportunity for change or repentance in fruit bearing.

The Bible says of Jesus,

- “Wherefore He is **ABLE** also to **SAVE** them to the uttermost, that **COME** unto God **BY** Him,  
seeing He ever **LIVETH** to make **INTERCESSION** for them.” ([Heb.7:25](#))

The Vinedresser didn’t deny the charge, or plead for overlooking.  
He asked for only a short time of probation, in which he would give it special tender care (Lk.13:8).

- [Rev.3:18](#) reads, “I counsel thee, to buy of me gold, **TRIED** in the fire,  
that thou mayest be **RICH**; and white raiment,  
that thou mayest be **CLOTHED**, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear;  
and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest **SEE**.”

Lk.13:9 says that the Vinedresser is willing to obey the Sentence.

- Jesus said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth **IN** Me, and I in him,  
the same **BRINGETH** forth much **FRUIT**: for **WITHOUT** Me, ye can do **NOTHING**.  
<sup>6</sup> **IF** a man abide **NOT** in Me, he is **CAST** forth as a branch, and is **WITHERED**;  
and men gather them, and **CAST** them **INTO** the **FIRE**, and they are **BURNED**.” ([Jn.15:5-6](#))

As we consider the lesson entitled, “**One More Year To Live**”,  
We should make or keep,

## IV. Resolutions

...as IF, it were our LAST year.

### A. It Coud Be!

- The Bible says, “whereas ye know **NOT** what shall be on the morrow. For **WHAT** is your life? It is even a **VAPOUR**, that appeareth for a **LITTLE** time, and then **VANISHETH** away.” ([Jas.4:14](#))

With so little time, We should,

### B. Use Opportunities (“redeeming the time” Eph.5:16)

...To Read and meditate.

- The Psalmist said, “his **DELIGHT** is **IN** the law of the Lord; and **IN** His law, doth he **MEDITATE** day and night.” ([Psa.1:2](#))

We should use opportunities, to,

- “**PRAY** without ceasing.” ([1Thess.5:17](#))

We should use opportunities,

To Determine to teach a specific person.

- “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, **LIFT UP** your eyes, and **LOOK** on the fields; for they are white **ALREADY** to harvest.” ([Jn.4:35](#))

We should use opportunities,

To Learn, to appreciate brethren more.

- Jesus said, “**A NEW** commandment I **GIVE** unto you, That ye **LOVE** one another; **AS** I have **LOVED YOU**, that ye also **LOVE** one another.” ([Jn.13:34](#))
- “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we **LOVE** the brethren. He that loveth **NOT** his brother, abideth in **DEATH**.” ([1Jn.3:14](#))

We should redeem, or use opportunities,

To Be nicer to our family.

- “Wives, **SUBMIT** yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.  
<sup>19</sup> Husbands, **LOVE** your wives, and be not bitter against them.  
<sup>20</sup> Children, **OBEY** your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.  
<sup>21</sup> Fathers, provoke **NOT** your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.” ([Col.3:18-21](#))
- “Children, **OBEY** your parents **IN** the Lord: for this is right.  
<sup>2</sup> **HONOUR** thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise);  
<sup>3</sup> that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.  
<sup>4</sup> And, ye fathers, provoke **NOT** your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” ([Eph.6:1-4](#))
- “and Be ye **KIND** one to another, **TENDERHEARTED**, **FORGIVING** one another, even **AS** God for Christ’s sake, hath **FORGIVEN YOU**.” ([Eph 4:32](#))

## V. IN-CLOSING

Am I, and are you, in the vineyard of the LORD,  
...**As** a fruitful tree?  
...or **As** a cumberer of the ground?

- “What? know ye not that your **BODY** is the temple of the **Holy Spirit** which is **IN** you, which ye **HAVE** of God, and ye are **NOT** your own? <sup>20</sup> For ye are **BOUGHT** with a **PRICE**: therefore **GLORIFY** God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” ([1Cor.6:19-20](#))

**Each one, needs to use our God-given time, before death closes the door of opportunity.**  
The Primary resolution of saints, or christians, is to Stay close to the Heavenly Father...

One Poet said,

“**God** of the years, that lie **BEHIND** us,  
    **Lord** of the years, that stretch **BEFORE**,  
  
**Weaver** of all the ties, that **BIND** us,  
    **Keeper** and King, of the open **DOOR**:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Build</b> with us, lest our great walls <b>CRUMBLE</b>,<br/>    Broken stone, upon useless <b>CLAY</b>;<br/><br/><b>Walk</b> with us, lest our slow feet <b>STUMBLE</b>,<br/>    Groped and falter, and lose the <b>WAY</b>.</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

All through seasons, of sowing and **REAPING**...  
    All through the harvest, of song and **TEARS**...

**Hold** us close, in thy tender **KEEPING**  
    O Thou **Maker**, of all New **YEARS**.”  
    -- Author Unknown

**All Should Resolve NOW, To Live this New Year, RIGHT!**

If you have a spiritual **NEED**,  
the Lord invites you, to **COME** without delay,  
by Believing ([Heb.11:6](#)), Repenting ([Lk.13:3](#)), Confessing ([Acts 8:37](#)) and Be Baptized INTO Christ ([Gal.3:27](#); [Rom.6:4](#))

...while **TOGETHER**, we stand and sing.

Source: Sermon Outline by Derrel Shaw  
His Sources: F. E. Sewell; Jabez Burns; Others now unknown  
Edited & Formatted: by Michael Wright