Check Your Fruit

Sermon Title: Check Your Fruit
Sermon Number: 5543
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(Applause)

And we have been on the verse Matthew Chapter 7, Verses 16-24 for a long, long time. And I hope by now that these series of verses, they have gotten in our spirits, because they’re a serious set of verses. You should know them by their fruits. The men gather grapes of thorns, of figs, of thistles even so every good tree bringing forth good fruit, but every corrupt tree bringing forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. And people, we have to understand that every tree that does not bring forth good fruit shall be hummed down and cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits, ye shall know them. And I want to talk with you for just a few minutes from the subject of Check Your Fruit.

Now, these verses, they deal with being able to look at others and to know them by their fruit, to know them by what is manifested. And people that’s a very -- it’s a very real principle. Jesus spoke it, but it’s real. If you look long enough over a long enough period of time, you’ll be able to see what’s really inside someone. It will manifest itself in a material way, sooner or later. We can cover it up for a while, but you see there’s one thing about a tree. Trees don’t grow-up fast. They’re relatively slow growing. And a tree can live to be a thousand years old. So a tree takes time to grow. If you look at a person’s life over time, you’ll see what Jesus is talking about, but tonight, God has let me not to tell you to look at other folk's lives, but to check your own fruit.

Turn to the person next and just tell him, “Check your own fruit.” So we need to become a fruit inspector for our own fruit. And Jesus says that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, it can only bring forth evil fruit. It’s interesting that Jesus did not call the tree evil, he called the tree "corrupt." But the corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. Corrupt simply means, it doesn’t mean that the thing is bad all the way through. Corrupt means something bad has gotten in it and it has corrupted it. It has changed it from being pure to being impure and sometimes it doesn’t take but a little leaven to corrupt something.

It’s like the old story that goes, if you have a full barrel of fine, expensive wine and you take just a one drop of sewage, and put one drop of sewage in a barrel of fine, expensive wine, you have now ruined the entire barrel. So, Jesus said, “The tree was corrupt,” not evil corrupt. It was mixed in with some bad, impure stuff. And sometimes people, our lives and our philosophies, that’s why Jesus said, “Beware of the leaven of the scribes and the Pharisee.” Sometimes we can get one little thing and that one little bit of sewage corrupts us. And it changes the fruit from good to evil.
Now the world has a fruit. And the world's fruit is different from God's fruit. What the world looks at is entirely different than what God's. The world will look at what kind of car you drive. The world will look at your bank account. The world will look at how your hair is laid. The world will look at how your clothes drape on you. The world will look at your muscles or even your bosom or your behind. The world looks at something entirely different than what God looks at for your fruit. Turn to the person next to you again and tell them, “Check your fruit.” And see, we have to periodically check ourselves. We are so geared to check another folk, but we need to check ourselves. We are so geared to criticizing other folks, looking at what other folk is doing, and how other folk behave. We need to really check ourselves and there's a business principle that goes, you do not get what you expect. You get what you inspect.

If you don't inspect you for those and particularly this season of you, we make a lot of new goals and resolutions. One of the keys about succeeding in any goal or resolution, if you don't regularly check up on how you're doing on the goal, if you don't regularly inspect it, your chances of achieving the goal drop tremendously because you simply do not check your goals. And God's fruit of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, temperance, or self-control, the fruit of the spirit.

This is God's fruit but I want us to really check our fruit. And I want us to check our fruit in five different areas and I'm going to deal with some straight hard hidden areas that we can easily check ourselves in. Number one, simple question, very simple question, have you been heart warming or a headache to your parents? Simple question. Have you been heartwarming or a headache to your parents?

The Bible's first commandment with promise is Honor thy Father and thy Mother that thy days maybe long upon the land of the Lord thy God giveth thee. Have you been heartwarming when your mother -- and primarily, this weight rest more on mothers than it does on fathers. Momma will be up waiting on a child to come in and like daddy is sound asleep. That's why the Bible says, “A way were child is the heaviness of his mother.” It didn’t say it was the heaviness as of a daddy. It’s the heaviness of his mother, so you can generally even distill that question down to have you been heartwarming or a headache to your mother.

First, way you can check some fruit and you know it. We've been to funerals. And oftentimes what we'll find is when folk just cut the monkey out of funeral. I mean just cut the -- just fall. When we find out the background or (00:08:39), whether they have treated the folk right. And sometimes when we’re hollering about mama, we haven’t done momma right. Momma had stayed up at night, all night, worrying about the mist that sometimes her children. Have you been heartwarming to momma or have you been headache?
First way to check your fruit, real simple question and most of us know the answer to that question. Real simple -- and the deep spiritual, theological that just -- how did momma feel about you. Now see, momma will take up for a child no matter what the child has done. Momma will just take up for the child -- bad as he can be. Just riding to the core, he is a good child when you really know. He isn't. No, he ain't. He ain't good, (00:09:24).

But momma will take up for a child no matter what the child has done. But still momma knows and the child knows when that child has been just a major headache to momma. Have you been a heart warmer or a headache just to momma? First rule of checking your fruit. A simple thing but real important and real clear and real easy to check.

Second thing of area of checking your fruit, and this one is going prick some folks. What does your spouse thinks about you? What does your husband or what does your wife thinks about you? I'm not talking what the pastor thinks about you. You go, “Pastor, I don't know you.”

Let me tell you two things. Number one, pastors don't know you and you don't know pastor. Do you understand? A whole lot of folks in the congregation when he finds out some stuff by the path, “My goodness! I didn't know the pastor.” Yeah, you don't know the pastor and pastor don't know you. You in your best behavior in church and you cannot judge somebody. They're sitting up here all in a white suit, straight tie and looking good, not cursing, just never mad and in all nice looking nails, smiling, praising God, singing up to high. You can't judge from that. But when you get home lying in the bed together are not lying in the bed together, walking around. When you ask the spouse, the spouse knows.

So to check your fruit, ask just that one simple question right after what the mama. Have you been in heart warmer or a headache to mama? What does your spouse thinks about you. And when you ask your spouse, what would your spouse say about you with love? What would they say? Not the person even sitting next to you, not the people -- I mean the art of salvation. We have a great reputation. People will come in and say, "I just feel so loved. I feel so warm. I can feel the heart of the people. I feel so at home here. It's just such good." I'm talking about your spouse. What would they say about how loving you are? Check your fruit.

I mean, what would they really say? Be honest about it. What do you have to -- just tell them now. I'm just saying check yourself. See, I'm not, I'm not telling you to go home and say, “Look baby, pastor told me you aren't loving me.” I didn't say that. I told you to check yourself, not your spouse. Check yourself. What would they say just about that first when about love?
I had a long meeting recently with one of my managers. And he was telling me, he was getting rid to go into his anniversary. He's been married over 20 years. And he said, "Mr. Bronner, my wife is the best thing that ever happened to me." He says, "She changed me and she saved my life. And I want to give her on this anniversary -- I want to give her the world." And he told me. He said, "I tell her I love her every time I talk with her." He said, "If I call her during the day before I hang up, I say I love you. When I see her at home, I'll tell her I love her every time I see her." And he said, "She told me one day, she said, "Look, I know you love me. You don't have to tell me that much." And he told me some that -- he said, "I told my wife." He said, "I don't know when it will be the last time I'll get the chance to tell you." And when he told her that, she stopped and she looked at him and said, "I love you, too."

What would your spouse say about your love? What would your spouse say about your joy? Would they say you're joyful or pruned face? What would they say? I mean, if they have to ask about you, will they say, "I see my husband at home all the time and he's smiling and singing and he's full of joy. He's just bubbling over." Is that what they would say about you? Check your fruit. And see, the thing is most of us know what our spouses would say. You already know. What about your peace? What would they say about your peace? Are you at peace with yourself and the world, or are you just at war with somebody or everything.

I'm bringing it real and taking it out of the pulpit and take it at home and take it inside. What would they say about your long-suffering, about your patience? What would they say about your temperance, about your self-control? What would your husband or your wife say about your fruit? Check your fruit. It's a deep set of verses. I have given you two areas that you can check and you don't even have to ask.

Third thing, for those of you who are married and those who have children, have you shown your children Christ? What would your children say about your fruit? One of the things that the man who told me that he told his wife that everyday, several times a day, he says, "One reason that I tell my wife that is because I saw my mother tell my daddy all the time. My mother would never leave his presence or never hang up the phone without saying I love you." And he said, "My daddy was kind of rough. He was a tough man and all he would say is 'uhm'." I've got to admit the spirit of the mother moved to the child. Which one in the relationship are you? I love you baby. What word your spouse say about your fruit? A good tree cannot produce evil fruit. Never can a corrupt tree produce good food.

Sometimes that drop of wrong doctrine has ended into our worlds and the drop of wrong doctrine says, "Well you know I really can't be the good hymn. I got to keep them on the edge." Should we spoil -- Sometimes you can have a drop of sewage and that drop corrupts what is pure. What would your children say about? You see the children see mom and daddy all of the time. And they don't just see mom and
daddy. They’d become mom and daddy. And whatever you are, the children will become you especially the negative. There was a movie, it’s part two of Meet the Fockers and they had this little grandkid there and they had left him with the son-in-law, and he had never said a word for he did never thought. And the son-in-law was around and he fooled around as said a curse word. And when he said the curse word, the little boy perked up and start speaking and all that he would do was just speak the curse word back all and he said, "No, no." He tried everything in the work ---

So when the granddad had got back and the granddad didn’t like the son-in-law to start with -- when he got back, the little boy, his precious grandson -- all he would do was just repeating his curse word over and over. And our children can sometimes take the negative and they will grab on to what mama and daddy does negative and magnify that to the limit. Are you showing your children Christ? Check your fruit. Four things who have you helped? I mean who have you helped? And if you can’t immediately think of a list of people whom you have helped, you need to check your fruit.

Now, I'm not talking about necessarily -- because the first thing that will come, I need to help myself. I don’t have time to help but I need to help myself. All of us need help. I never will forget a road of mountain we use about years ago. My jeep was parked out in the front and there was this old bomb that I (00:18:38) and it came up to me and I knew he was coming up to ask me for some money. And he just begin complementing my jeep. I knew he needed some money and I asked him, I said, “Do you need any help?” And he spoke some very deep words. I am not even sure if that was an angel. He simply spoke three words. He said, “Don’t we all.” “Don’t we all.” All of us need help but the help has to come through human vessels. God has to touch someone's heart to move in your life and you need to have an open heart to be an open vessel, to move into people’s lives. Who have you helped and if you can’t list down anyone who you've helped, your fruit has become corrupt. Who have you helped?

The fifth one, who have you brought to Christ? Who have you brought to Christ? People, when our fruit is really blossoming -- and most of the time we will not bring people to Christ by preaching at them. We will draw them by the example of life and they will see the way that you’ve lived, and they will see the joy and they'll see the radiance. And there’s something about it that will say, “I want what they have.” They go through all of this and yet they just as happy. They just -- I want what they have. Who have you brought to Christ? Those are five simple areas that will allow us to check our own fruit, just with your mother. Are you a heart warmer or a headache? And if you’ve been a headache, it’s time to change.

Number two, what does your spouse think about you and what would they say about your fruit. Number three, number four and number five. Check your fruit.
Have you shown your children Christ? Have you helped anyone? Have you brought anyone to Christ? But this is the fruit that God is going to asks us about when we get to those gates. He has not going to ask us about all the other stuff we deemed important about man. He is going to ask us about those things that are important to him. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. Never can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Check your fruit. That’s all of us, be good trees and bring forth good fruit.

We thank you for joining us today at Brothers of the Word, because brother you need the Word.

[Applause]