



Jesus then told them this story:

A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard. One day he went out to pick some figs, but he didn't find any. So he said to the gardener, "For three years I have come looking for figs on this tree, and I haven't found any yet. Chop it down! Why should it take up space?"

The gardener answered, "Master, leave it for another year. I'll dig around it and put some manure on it to make it grow. Maybe it will have figs on it next year. If it doesn't, you can have it cut down."

Luke 13:6-9 (CEV)

- Sermon in a Sentence: God is _____ and he expects _____.

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)

"I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

"Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father."

John 15:1-8 (NLT)

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)

- What this story reveals about God: He is _____ and _____.

God isn't late with his promise as some measure lateness. He is restraining himself on account of you, holding back the End because he doesn't want anyone lost. He's giving everyone space and time to change.

2 Peter 3:9 (MSG)

- What this story reveals about us: we are _____ and _____.

...Remember, we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For the Scriptures say,

*“As surely as I live,’ says the LORD,
‘every knee will bend to me,
and every tongue will confess and give praise to God.’”*

Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God.

Romans 14:10-12 (NLT)

- Final Thought: it takes _____ to grow _____.

We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves Him.

Romans 8:28 (CEV)

Discussion Questions

1. What area of your life could you use a little more patience? What area of your life could you use a little more of **God's** patience?
2. Where in your spiritual journey can you use a little pruning in order to bear good fruit? Meaning, what habits of thought and behavior might God be inviting you to tend to in order to be more like Jesus?
3. What spiritual disciplines or practices can you engage in to be more connected to Jesus?

Recommended Resources

- *The Cultivated Life*, by Susan S. Phillips
- *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*, by Jan Johnson & Dallas Willard
- *Life Together in Christ*, by Ruth Haley Barton

(CEV) Contemporary English Version (NLT) New Living Translation

(MSG) The Message

The Way of Fruitfulness - **FILL COPY**

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- Sermon in a Sentence: God is PATIENT and he expects FRUITFULNESS.

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- What this story reveals about us: we are RESPONSIBLE and ACCOUNTABLE.

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