

CAN WE KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS?

EVALUATING SALVATION BY WORKS

"Ye shall know them by their fruits.
Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"
– Matthew 7:16

1. A Favorite Proof text

- a. Proof that a ministry is ordained of God by their numbers
- b. Proof of spirituality based on tithing or other law keeping
- c. Proof of true converts based on changed behavior
 - i. Fruits meet for repentance - Mat 3:8-10
 - ii. Repentance is NOT turning from sins – repent AND turn - Eze 18:30
 - iii. The signs of repentance are – Psalm 34:18, 51:17

2. The Red Letters – Mat 7:16

- a. The context is covenant, prophetic, kingdom oriented Israel – Mat 6:10,33
- b. These people are giving no thought to their necessities – Mat 6:25
- c. Ask and receive, and the golden rule – Mat 7:8, 12
- d. **Beware of false prophets** – Mat 7:15-20
 - i. Who are "them"? → false prophets - Jer 23:1-4
 - ii. What are the "fruits"? → Mat 3:8-10, 1 John 2:3, 4:1-3, Isa 5:1-7
 - iii. The weightier matters were lacking in the Pharisees – Mat 23:23
 - iv. Jesus looking for fruit – Luke 13:6-9
- e. **The Generation of Vipers** – Psalm 52, 140:1-3
 - i. What's the difference between the Pharisee and publican? Luke 18:10
 - ii. The fruit of the Pharisees - Mat 12:24, 31-37
 - iii. Woe to the fruitless Pharisees, scribes, lawyers - Luke 11:37-48
 - iv. Hearing the word and receiving it bears fruit - Matt 13:23
 - v. What is the word? → Matt 3:1, Mark 1:3 – "Repent and be baptized"
 - vi. The rulers, elders, and priests did not bear fruit - Matt 21:43
- f. The consequence of not bearing fruit - Mat 7:19 – this is Rom 11:21-22
- g. Their kingdom entrance was based on the covenant – Mat 5:19-20
- h. James taught they needed works to make faith perfect – James 2:14,22,24

3. Can We Know Anything Under Grace?

- a. We know we are not kingdom Israel, covenanted, or a tree!
- b. We are members of the body of Christ! 1 Cor 12:13 – a member is not cut off
- c. Our faith is not in our work, but the cross work! - Rom 4:24-25
 - i. Is this man saved or not? → Romans 7:18-19
 - ii. Are these people saved or not? 1 Cor 3:3, 5:1, 6:1, and 1 Cor 6:11
- d. We can know the flesh and Spirit - Gal 5:16-19
- e. We can know and do good works – Eph 2:10, Titus 3:8
- f. We can know wrong doctrine or immaturity but not justification – Rom 4:5