



# The Southeast Sower

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## “Will The Lord Find You Useful?”

Jordon Smith

*“He began telling them this parable: ‘A man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any. And he said to the vineyard-keeper, ‘Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?’ And he answered and said unto him, ‘Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; and if it bears fruit, fine, but if not, cut it down!’” (Luke 13:6-9). By studying this parable we are able to make important observations that are key to Christians being found worthy of a home with God in heaven.*

First, we must understand the man who owned the vineyard in this parable represents the Almighty God. God, just like this man, is patient and will allow

His children time to grow and mature in their understanding of His word before He comes to see what “fruit” they have produced. In this parable it is understood that the owner gave time for the fig tree to grow before going out to find it producing fruit. Many who plant their own gardens understand they cannot expect to plant the seed and then immediately find it producing food, or those who plant flowers understand the flowers won’t blossom immediately after being planted. Instead they have patience knowing that in a certain span of time or in a specific season they can expect to see the plant produce food or blossom. God is also patient with those who have become Christians, and grants us time to grow and mature in our faith.

Secondly, we need to understand that the fig tree mentioned be-

longed to the man who planted it. We are told in the beginning of this parable that the fig tree “had been planted in his garden” (v. 6). This tree did not belong to anyone else, nor was it without an owner. We are specifically told the fig tree was planted in his vineyard. So this parable is directed to those who are the Lord’s, who have taken the path to salvation and have been added to His church.

There is an expectation for the Christian to produce fruit just as there was for the fig tree. All Christians are expected to spread the word of God and help those who are outside the body of Christ realize their need to be saved. As was previously mentioned, yes God is patient but there will come a time when God will expect you to be mature in your faith and able to teach others the plan of salvation. “...*For though by*

*The Southeast Church of Christ meets at:*

*35 Walnut Ct.*

*Mogadore, OH 44260*

*Phone:*

*330.628.7432*

### **SERVICES:**

#### **Sunday**

*Bible Study:*

*10:00 am*

*Worship:*

*10:50 am*

*6:00 pm*

#### **Wednesday**

*Bible Study:*

*7:30 pm*

*this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food” (Hebrews 5:11b-12).*

Finally, if you are a Christian, meaning you have heard the word preached (Romans 10:17), believe Jesus is the Son of God (Mark 16:16), repented of your sins (2 Cor. 7:10), confessed Christ as the Son of God (Matt. 10:32), and have been baptized (Mark 16:16), then you are required to tell others about Jesus and His sacrifice and their need to be saved. It is so very important to understand it is not enough to just simply not do any wrong. If we do not wrong and at the same time we also do no right then we are like this fig tree that produces no fruit and will be cut down. God requires a complete sacrifice of each person so we cannot be lazy in our work to further His kingdom. To be saved we must, after being baptized, remain faithful (Rev. 2:10). This means the Christian is to study to grow in understanding, faith and trust and apply what they have learned. The Christian who applies the teaching of Christ could not do so without spreading the gospel message to those who are in the world, because Christ spent His entire time here on earth teaching others and so did the apostles.

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### “SAILING FROM TROAS”

Leon Mauldin

We remember Troas as the city where Paul and his travelling companions were during his 2<sup>nd</sup> Journey when they heard the “Macedonian call.” Having left the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man stood and pleaded with him saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them (Acts 16:6-10).

Immediately Paul made use of the Troas harbor, sailing from there (v. 11) to Neapolis (150 miles) to preach on European soil (Macedonia and Achaia). He would use that harbor on several occasions. Note that this (v. 10) begins the “we” sections of Acts (16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16) where Luke, the author of Acts, is with Paul as a coworker.

On his 3<sup>rd</sup> Journey Paul was en route from Ephesus to Corinth, he had planned to meet up with Titus at Troas. Paul was there at Troas to “preach Christ’s gospel,” and “a door was opened to me by the Lord.” But Titus was not there, and Paul was so concerned for his brethren at Corinth, he wrote, “I had no rest in my spirit...but taking my leave of them, I depart-

ed” (2 Cor. 2:12-13).

It was later on the return trip of that 3<sup>rd</sup> Journey that Paul and his travelling companions were again at Troas, this time to meet with the disciples on the first day of the week to break bread, to eat the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:6-7). It was a night Eutychus would never forget (v. 9).

Later Paul left a cloak at Troas, and asked Timothy to bring it when he came to visit Paul as a prisoner, facing execution. “When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments” (v. 13).

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### CHEERFUL GIVING???

- Author Unknown

A father gave his son a dollar for the Sunday school offering and fifty cents to buy himself a treat. Instead, the boy gave the fifty cents to the Sunday school and spent the dollar on himself. His father found out and asked him why he did it.

“The Bible says that God loves a cheerful giver,” the boy replied. “I decided I could give the fifty cents more cheerfully than I could give the dollar.”

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### Sentence Sermons

1. God sends no one away empty except those who are full of themselves
2. Parents do not bring up children any more—they finance them.