

# James 3:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

## Analysis

---

**Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.** Can a fig tree bear olives or a grapevine figs? Neither can saltwater produce fresh. Identity determines fruit. Likewise, redeemed tongues should bear godly speech, not contradictory fruit.

Reformed teaching on union with Christ emphasizes new identity; speech inconsistent with that identity must be addressed through repentance and faith.

## Historical Context

---

Agrarian imagery resonated with diaspora Jews familiar with fig and olive cultivation. Mixed fruit signified corruption or disease. James warns that duplicity indicates spiritual sickness.",

## Related Passages

---

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

---

1. What mismatched fruit do you observe in your speech?

2. How can you address root issues producing inconsistent words?
3. What reminders of your identity in Christ keep speech aligned?

## Interlinear Text

---

μὴ	δύναται	ἀδελφοί	μου	συκῆ	ἐλαίας	ποιῆσαι	ἢ
Can		brethren	my	the fig tree	olive berries	bear	either
G3361	G1410	G80	G3450	G4808	G1636	G4160	G2228
ἄμπελος	σῦκα	οὗτως	ούδεμια	πηγὴ	ἀλυκὸν	καὶ	γλυκὺ
a vine	figs	so	can no	fountain	salt	and	fresh
G288	G4810	G3779	G3762	G4077	G252	G2532	G1099
ποιῆσαι	ὕδωρ						
bear	water						
G4160	G5204						

## Additional Cross-References

---

**Matthew 12:33** (Parallel theme): Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

---

From KJV Study • [kjvstudy.org](http://kjvstudy.org)