

Luke 6:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

Analysis

For every tree is known by his own fruit (ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου καρποῦ γινώσκεται, ek tou idiou karpou ginōsketai)—recognition comes through fruit. The verb *ginōskō* (γινώσκω) means to know with certainty, to discern reality. Jesus provides specific examples: **For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes** (ἐξ ἀκανθῶν οὐ συλλέγουσιν σῦκα, ex akanthōn ou syllegousin syka).

Thorns (akanthōn, ἀκανθῶν) and brambles (batou, βάτου) represent cursed, fruitless plants—results of the fall. Figs and grapes represent valuable, nourishing fruit. The contrast is absurd—no one expects good fruit from worthless plants. Similarly, false teachers cannot produce godly disciples; corrupt doctrine yields corrupt practice. This validates testing teachers by their fruit (Matthew 7:15-20)—not charisma, popularity, or claims, but what they produce in disciples' lives.

Historical Context

Figs and grapes were staple crops in first-century Palestine, providing essential nutrition. Thorns and brambles were worthless weeds, good only for fuel. The image would be immediately understood: you can't get something valuable from something worthless; nature doesn't work that way. Jesus applies this to spiritual discernment—evaluate teachers and teachings by their results. The early church faced false teachers (Acts 20:29-30, 2 Peter 2:1-3), making this fruit-testing

principle essential. Modern application remains critical: test teaching by whether it produces Christlikeness, holiness, love, and truth.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How do you test the teaching you receive—by its attractiveness or by the fruit it produces in people's lives?
2. What 'thorns and brambles' (false teachings, sinful habits) are you tolerating that can never produce the fruit of righteousness?

Interlinear Text

ἐκαστον	γὰρ	δένδρον	ἐκ	τοῦ	ἰδίου	καρποῦ	γινώσκεται·
every	For	tree	by	G3588	his own	fruit	is known
G1538	G1063	G1186	G1537		G2398	G2590	G1097
οὐ	γὰρ	ἐκ	ἀκανθῶν	συλλέγουσιν	σῦκα	οὐδὲ	ἐκ
men do not	For	by	thorns		gather	figs	nor
G3756	G1063	G1537	G173		G4816	G4810	G3761
βάτου	τρυγῶσιν	σταφυλὴν					
a bramble bush	gather they	grapes					
G942	G5166	G4718					

Additional Cross-References

James 3:12 (Parallel theme): Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

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.

