

Matthew 7:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Analysis

Good trees cannot bring forth bad fruit; corrupt trees cannot bring forth good fruit. This absolute statement emphasizes the impossibility of faking spiritual fruit long-term. Eventually, true character shows. Hypocrites may deceive temporarily, but fruit-testing reveals truth over time.

Historical Context

Pharisees presented as good trees but bore corrupt fruit—hypocrisy, pride, hardness toward people, externalism. Jesus exposed them repeatedly. Paul warns of those having 'a form of godliness but denying the power thereof' (2 Timothy 3:5).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How long does it typically take for someone's true character to become evident?
2. What fruit in your life is inconsistent with a profession of faith in Christ?

Interlinear Text

οὐ	δύναται	δένδρον	ἀγαθὸν	καρποὺς	πονηροὺς
cannot	G1410	tree	A good	fruit	evil
G3756		G1186	G18	G2590	G4190

ποιεῖν	οὐδὲ	δένδρον	σαπρὸν	καρποὺς	καλοὺς
bring forth	neither	tree	can a corrupt	fruit	good
G4160	G3761	G1186	G4550	G2590	G2570

ποιεῖν
bring forth
G4160

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 5:17 (Parallel theme): For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.