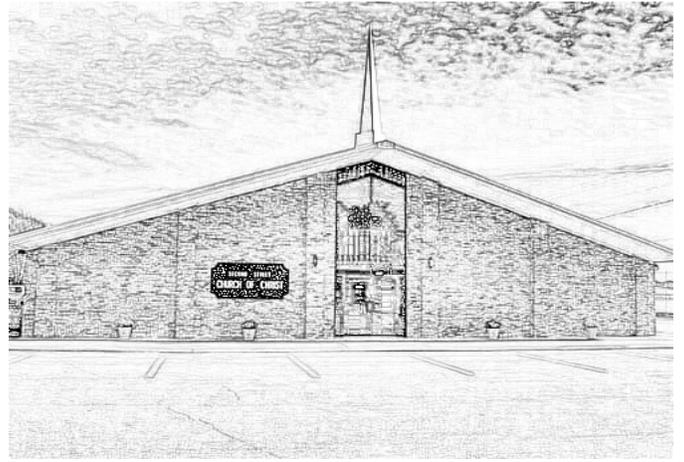


# Second Street Church of Christ



July 30, 2017

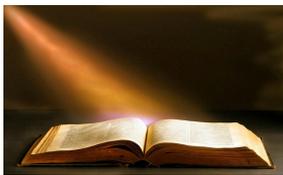
## MINISTER

### Office

662-454-9429

P.O. Box 126  
Belmont, Ms. 38827

Website:  
secondstreetcofc.com



## SERVICE TIMES

Sunday Bible Class....9:00am  
Sun. Morn. Worship.10:00am  
Sunday Evening.....5:00pm  
Wed. Evening.....7:00pm

*Endeavoring to keep  
the unity of the Spirit  
in the bond of peace.  
Ephesians 4:3*

## A worthless tree

“**E**arly in the morning, as Jesus was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, ‘May you never bear fruit again!’ Immediately the tree withered” (Matthew 21:18-19 NIV).

This incident may seem a bit strange and quite harsh to us. It was early morning and Jesus was travelling back to Jerusalem with his disciples. He was hungry – after all, it was breakfast time. They saw a fig tree and went over to it, but there were no figs on it. So Jesus, basically, cursed the tree: “May you never bear fruit again!” Why did Jesus do this?

If we lived in an area where there are fig trees, this would probably make more sense to us. These fig trees produced leaves when they had fruit that was ripe. This incident took place in the spring and normally fig trees did not have fruit on them yet. Yet this fig tree looked like it should have fruit on it – the leaves were there. Yet, when they went up to the tree, there was nothing: no figs whatsoever. It was a deceptive tree.

Some have suggested that this incident was a live-action parable, with the tree representing the Jewish nation of Jesus’ day. They looked to be a healthy tree, with all the signs of life – the sacrifices were being offered in the temple and people were worshiping God. But all was not well – there was no fruit. As a nation, they were not producing fruit in their lives.

Later in this chapter Jesus told a parable about a landowner trying to collect the fruit he was owed from tenants taking care of his vineyard (Matthew 21:33-41). He sent servants to collect what was due and they were beaten, killed, and stoned. Finally he sent his son, thinking they would respect him, but instead they killed him, too, thinking they could then control the vineyard.

(Continued on page 2)

## Announcements

**Welcome Visitors!!** You are our honored guest, and we are glad you came our way! We invite you back to our evening services at 5:00 and Wednesday Bible study at 7:00 pm.

### The Spring Will Come

In the dead of winter, a young man was told by his father to fetch some firewood. When he got to the wood box outside, he found it empty. Not wanting to disappoint his father, we went looking about their farmstead and found a tree that looked quite dead and he sawed it down and chopped it up.

In the spring, to his dismay, he found new shoots had sprouted from the trunk of the tree that he had cut down. He confessed to his father, "I thought sure it was dead; the leaves had dropped, the twigs snapped, it seemed as if there was no life there."

The father, wanting the boy to learn a lesson, told his son, "Never cut down a tree in the wintertime. It may look dead, but there may still life at the taproot. There are many things in life that may seem dead or hopeless, but still has life in it. Don't give up on it. Never make a negative decision in a low time. Wait. Be patient. The spring will come and reveal all."

*via Broadway church of Christ  
Campbellsville, KY*

*(Continued from page 1)*

The landowner then got rid of the original tenants and rented the vineyard to others who would give him his share of the fruit.

Did this not well represent the Jews? God had sent prophets to his people throughout their history, the last being John. Some were beaten, some stoned, and some (including John) were killed. God finally sent his son – and Jesus was within a few days of being publicly executed. What would happen? God would take his kingdom, represented by the vineyard, from the Jews and give it to another group who would produce fruit – the Gentiles.

Although this can be seen to be historical and what happened to the Jews and the good news of Jesus finally being proclaimed to Gentiles, there is a more personal application that we need to make.

Are we producing fruit for God? Are our lives producing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23)? Are we being led by the Spirit or are our lives producing the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). If we aren't producing the Spirit's fruit, we have a warning: "I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:21).

Let us not be a worthless Christian but one who is producing the fruit of Spirit. Let us not just look like we are faithful Christians, like the fig tree which looked like it had fruit, but actually be producing God's fruit in our lives.

What kind of fruit are our lives producing?

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## When God Is Silent

**T**hose reading this article will likely agree that we should do what God says in his word. When God has given a commandment, those who love God will obey (I John 5:3). But how should we interpret God's silence? In cases in which God has given no instruction, do we have the authority to engage in those practices?

This question is vital because, sometimes, good, sincere people will ask, "Where does the Bible say we are 'not' to do this?" Usually, such statements are made when someone wants to add something to worship for which there is no biblical instruction. Since there are cases in which God has been silent, some believe that God's silence is to be viewed as authority for adding anything to worship or religious practice that is not forbidden.

However, it would be good if we would consider the following examples: When God told Noah to build the ark of "gopher wood," did God then have to specify all the types of wood that Noah was "not" to utilize in building the ark—oak, hickory, pine, etc.? No, when God specified "gopher wood," Noah knew that all other wood was not to be used (cf. Genesis 6:22). When God told the Israelites to offer a lamb for the Passover sacrifice, did he then have to specify all the animals that the Israelites were not to use (Exodus 12:5)? When God specified that priests were to come from the tribe of "Levi," did God then need to specifically exclude all other tribes (Numbers 8:9-15)? No, the people understood that when God said "Levi," this would naturally exclude all other possibilities.

*All of these examples establish that God's silence does not authorize us to add whatever we want to worship*

Now, if we can understand this principle that is so clear from the Old Testament, I am certain that we can understand the following modern-day applications:

When God says that we are to "sing" in worship, is there any need for God to state, specifically, that singing and playing an instrument is not authorized by the New Testament (Ephesians 5:19)? No, the command to "sing" authorizes singing, not singing and playing an instrument. When God says that we are to pray to him through Jesus, does God have to specifically exclude praying through Mary (John 14:13)? When God says that those who are to be baptized must be individuals who "believe" and "repent," is there any need to specifically condemn infant baptism (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38)? No, infants cannot believe or repent and do not need baptism. When God states that baptism is an immersion in water, does he then need to specifically exclude sprinkling and pouring (Colossians 2:12)?

All of these examples establish that God's silence does not authorize us to add whatever we want to worship or religious practice. Rather, God's silence prohibits. Let us resolve that we will "speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent."

*Mark Lindley  
Ripley, MS*

*Bulletin Digest*

## SERVICE TIMES

### Sunday

**Bible Study**      **9:00am**  
**Worship**          **10:00am**  
**Evening**          **5:00pm**

### Wednesday

**Bible Study**      **7:00pm**

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Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is*  
for brethren to dwell together in unity!

**Psalms 133:1**

The process for becoming a Christian is  
the same as it was over 2000 years ago!  
To become a Christian, one must:

*Hear the Gospel - Rom. 10:17*

*Believe the Gospel - Heb. 11:6*

*Repent of Sins - Luke 13:3*

*Confess Christ - Rom. 10:10*

*Be Immersed Into Christ - Acts 2:38*

*Live a Faithful Life - Rev. 2:10*

None of these alone will make you a  
Christian. These commands are from  
God and must be obeyed from the heart  
to become a Christian.

### Prayer List

Paula Wanner	Dianne Vandagriff
Cassie Tierce	Kathy Alexander
Phillip Pharr	Stephanie Vandagriff
Stephanie Moore	Margie Pharr
Carolyn Holcomb	Ellie Sander
Lou Dodson	Lynn Sander
Tim Denson	Jim Johnson
Jimmy Searcy	Tim Brown
Christy Hickox	Mike Gaddy
Susan Vandagriff	James Bailey
Patsy Wanner	Ken Saylor
John Johnson	Cheryl Pardue
Kenneth Orrick	Brenda Leatherwood
Paul Meachum II	Barbara White
Fred Albers	Jo Vandagriff
Brenda Jourdan	Jimmy Higginbottom



### July Birthdays

*James Holcomb 7/18*

*LaSha Higginbottom 7/18*

*Barbara Livingston 7/22*

*Miranda Holcomb 7/30*

### July Anniversaries

*Wallace & Glenda 7/1*

*Rajama & Randy 7/2*

### Sympathy

*Cleghorn family*