



MUSTARD SEED LEADERSHIP PODCAST

- BY BRENT BRADING



Part 3: The Fruitful Leader

7 Truths about fruitfulness

Exodus 1:7 (NIV)

7 but the Israelites were exceedingly fruitful; they multiplied greatly, increased in numbers and became so numerous that the land was filled with them.

Introduction:

The Israelites were in a bad situation

- They were enslaved in Egypt
- They were under an oppressive dictator
- They were set up for failure

Exodus 1:12 (NIV)

12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites

How is it that the Israelites were so fruitful in a such a bad situation?

7 Truths about Fruitfulness

1. The God of the Bible is the God of fruitfulness
2. God commands us to be fruitful and so expects us to be fruitful - it is a command not an option
3. Fruitfulness is not season dependent or circumstance dependent but God dependent

Want to share with you three biblical examples to illustrate this important truth:

EXAMPLE 1: There is a very strange story in the the Gospels that has at times made Jesus unpopular with some:

Mark 11:12-14 (NIV)

12 The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. 13 Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. 14 Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it.

- That's not fair!
- It was not the season for figs - too hot or too cold or too dry or too wet - the season was wrong
- Unless Jesus was trying to teach the disciples something

BIG IDEA: It is the presence of Jesus and not the season that produces fruitfulness! Jesus expects fruitfulness in every season.

EXAMPLE 2: Jacob's story reveals this truth from the Old Testament - He planted in a famine season and reaped 100 fold return in a single year

Genesis 26:1 (NIV) “Now there was a famine in the land—besides the previous famine in Abraham's time”

Genesis 26:12-14 (NIV)

“12 Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the LORD blessed him. 13 The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. 14 He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him.”

BIG IDEA: Fruitfulness is not season dependent but Covenant dependent. Not what is the season but what has God said!

EXAMPLE 3: Joseph’s second son who was born in Egypt whom he named Ephraim

Genesis 41:52 (NIV)

52 The second son he named Ephraim and said, “It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.”

Joseph had endured betrayal, being forgotten and mistreated yet had seen how God had worked all this into His saving plan for Israel

BIG IDEA: Joseph received the revelation that fruitfulness is not circumstance dependent but God dependent

Closer to home:

- Have a good friend in a wheelchair suffering MS - can’t imagine the frustration of being a great athlete now confined to a wheelchair as you watch your body shutting down on you! Yet he is a teacher of our Believers Training and leading a discipleship group. God is using him for fruitfulness even in the season of suffering.

2 Building projects:

- First one started (2008) and then the economic recession started
- Second one started and then so did COVID!
- God made both projects fruitful - not because they were done in the right economic season but because God told us to do them

KINGDOM FRUITFULNESS IS NOT SEASON DEPENDENT

That means we need to guard our hearts about making excuses for a lack of fruitfulness!

- It is easy to blame the economy
- Or blame the culture
- Or blame the time of year

This truth gives us faith for fruitfulness in every season but also strips us of our excuses for a lack of fruitfulness

QUESTIONS:

1. If you were honest, have you been blaming the season or circumstances for a lack of fruitfulness in certain areas of your life, work or calling?
2. How has your faith attitude changed to these areas now?
3. Looking at the examples shared in the teaching today, which one grabs your attention the most and why?