

*Our text gives the sign that you can be used by God: **Fruitfulness!***

I. THE SIGN

A. Men want to be chosen: They think desire is enough: They wonder why they are not being chosen

1. Our text: Context - men thought they were ready to be spiritual leaders

2. But God tells Moses to look for a sign of who is ready: *Look for fruit!*

a. **Number 17:5** *And it shall be that the rod of the man whom I choose will blossom...*

B. We can ignore the hard truth about ministry

1. Everything else is useless without people! *The rod was just a stick – no fruit at all!*

a. Pioneering – no one is there: *Your skills do no good in an empty building*

b. Taking a church: *Almost always small – and some of those lack revelation (they do you no good)*

2. The indispensable factor of ministry: **The ability to bear fruit**

a. **Num 17:5** *And it shall be that the rod of the man whom I choose will blossom...*

3. Fruit is a sign: It is noticeable – evidence that you have a supernatural dimension at work in you

C. 2 supernatural dimensions of fruitfulness

1. **Fruit involves faith: Matthew 9:29** *According to your faith let it be to you."*

a. Fruitfulness is a practical area of life that you must develop convictions/find what God says

1. You have to find out what God says: And believe for that! In spite of...

a. **John 15:16** *You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.*

2. **Fruit involves labor:** *Farming involves plowing/sowing*

a. *Are you laboring – at all?* b. *Are you doing just enough?*

3. **Fruit involves dominion:** The Devil fights fruitfulness

a. You have to pray – fight the enemy off your fruit! Fight him off your converts. Enforce victory

II. THE REFERENCE POINT

A. God says that fruitfulness will become a reference point

1. **Numbers 17:10** *And the Lord said to Moses, "Bring Aaron's rod back before the Testimony, to be kept as a sign..."*

a. Long after the fruit appeared – it would still be referred to: used again

B. 3 lasting benefits of personal fruitfulness

1. **Fruit produces confidence:** The Devil will resist/assault your faith concerning fruitfulness

a. You can look back: I know God can do it! He doesn't change – He's the same God here...

2. **Fruit produces reference points:**

a. I see men who are confused about what building a church is based on: *Religious/odd people*

b. If you had good converts: *You know the difference – you pray for those; By name!*

1. *You learn how to fight for conversion: Fighting the Devil off your converts*

3. **Fruit produces people skills:** To have fruit that remains requires people skills

a. Knowing how to form relationships b. Knowing sensitivity: *When to speak/when to shut up*

1. Not giving too much, too soon

4. Fruitfulness will affect the rest of your ministry

III. THE MIRACLE

A. Our text says that fruitfulness is a miracle: **Numbers 17:8** *Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron, of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms and yielded ripe almonds.*

a. Overnight! Only God could do that!

2. There are so many factors that oppose fruitfulness

a. In us: Things we lack. b. Demonic resistance: The Devil hates fruit! Fights fruit

1. Many battles were fought over fruit – the ability to bear fruit

B. There are many stories of God helping people to be fruitful

1. Abraham/Sarah: 100/90 – only God could do that! 2. Isaac/Rebekah

a. If God did it for them – He will do miracles in us/for us/through us to give us fruit