

LOOKING FOR THE GOOD FRUITS OF VISIONARIES WHO SUPPOSEDLY GET REVELATIONS FROM HEAVEN

Matthew 7:15-20 New International Version (NIV)

Jesus said 15 "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16 By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them."

Today belief in miracles causes trouble for people who feel they have no hope left. They are about to die and they have to be dragged on a dangerous and agonising trip to a miracle site of the Catholic Church. People at Medjugorje stare into the sun and damage their eyes forever thinking God will show them a vision and protect their eyes. Belief in miracles has led to Protestant evangelists and Pentecostalists deceiving the gullible and getting their money off them. Belief in miracles has led to people being more attracted to visions than anything else. When did you see a shrine created at the spot where a raging alcoholic converted and became sober and an outstanding blessing to society? You will see shrines at spots where the Virgin Mary supposedly appeared. Signs and wonders like that demean his "miracle". They are not about helping people though they like to appear as if they are. The help is only a bait that religion exploits to get power and money and prestige.

The fruits argument is used today by believers in apparitions of the Virgin Mary. The claim that the reported visions of her in Medjugorje are real are based mostly on the alleged good fruits - the conversions and prayers. But conversions and prayers follow fake prophets too. It gets confusing when Catholic tell us that even fake miracles and apparitions attract conversions and good fruits.

In America, when Spiritualism appeared, half the nation converted to it and felt happy. The good fruits were tremendous. But the Medjugorje vision says the Bible must be read and it is the word of God meaning approval for the severe condemnations of Spiritualism and the occult in the "inspired" pages. So Spiritualism is an example where the fruits are misleading. It may be that the good fruits have to be direct if a reported phenomenon is really from God. In other words, priority should be given to how the apparitions have spiritually benefited the visionaries. If there is nothing unusually good there then there is no point in thinking any other fruits indicate the truth of the visions.

Catholics pervert Jesus logic that bad prophets give bad fruits and good and real prophets give good ones to manipulate people today. The Catholics say that there are such a huge number of conversions over Medjugorje's alleged apparitions of Mary that the apparitions must really be of her and she must be sent by God. So the huge scale of conversions is supposed to point to the apparition being real. Some Catholics say it is the power of the Mass and prayer that is behind the conversions not the apparitions. Even the apparitions attribute the conversions to the power of Mass and prayer. It seems then that you cannot use good fruits to bolster your belief that an apparition is from God. The good fruits argument for thinking Catholics is really about the efficacy of prayer to Jesus and the power of the Mass. It is about what has a direct effect on the soul and on healing the mind of evil. An apparition or healing or any other miracle sign can never do that. That would be external help. We are talking about what is claimed to be the work of God from within the person. Suppose Catholicism is good. Then conversions to a more Catholic way of life would be good in themselves. It would not necessarily follow that the apparition that is linked with them is good.

Catholics point to the long queue of people going to confession in Medjugorje as proof of its good fruits. But that insults Catholic doctrine that confession is a good fruit in itself independent of any vision. People thinking of going to confession at an apparition site, might prove that confession is good but not necessarily that the apparition is good. To understand this point best, remember that there is no duty to believe in apparitions in the Catholic Church. The fruits argument only applies to Catholic essentials such as confession and communion and prayers to Mary etc.

The argument that conversions and prayer resulting from visionary claims support the claims or even prove them means you should only accept the claims that seem related to maximal praying and conversions. Thus the Catholic should regard the fruits argument as making the revelations of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet, the most convincing revelations ever reported. It is dishonest for the Catholic to focus on Medjugorje as authentic. And especially when the fruits are to be expected. And especially when the fruits could be down to how people respond to the vision and not to the vision itself. And especially when Medjugorje lacks miraculous healings. The healings are based on gossip and science sees nothing strange about them.

Speaking of the boast of many about the good fruits of Medjugorje, why is there no mention of Tomislav Vlasic (who was

the spiritual director of the Medjugorje visionaries and who got much praise from the Gospa) and the fruits he manifested? He is now promoting heretical apparitions and a heretical form of Catholicism www.towardsthenewcreation.com in defiance of the Vatican. Is it really right to boast about fruits when the one person who should have manifested the best fruits failed to do so? Good fruits only mean you must give the apparition claims serious consideration but it does not follow that they are evidence the claims are true and that the apparitions are from God. Mormonism has good fruits too and it contradicts the apparitions of Medjugorje. The fruits argument is being used to make Medjugorje critics feel bad and to silence them and that is unfair. It is a bad fruit itself when all pro-Medjugorje people promote it! Medjugorje is the best proof ever that you cannot read too much into good fruits!

Catholicism teaches that rather than messages from God, you just need the teachings of the Pope for he is open to the Holy Spirit who guides him as head of the Church. Catholicism teaches that rather than apparitions you just need Jesus in the Eucharist. It says that you should not find anything at an apparition site that you cannot get in the Church. An apparition encouraging devotion to itself more than prayer or Mass or whatever is not a true apparition from God.

Belief in miracles, when you see how fake miracles such as those of the US televangelists, Hindu "holy" men and Medjugorje and so on are the most popular, has mostly bad fruits. Religion, in its duplicity, ignores this in order to pretend that some miracle sites such as Lourdes are good. They say we are throwing out the baby with the bath water. We are not. There is not enough good coming from belief in miracles to make the propagation of that belief acceptable. If we refuse to believe in any miracles, we will not be led astray and fooled. It is better to wrongly think that miracles never happen, than to think they do happen. Not believing in miracles does no harm.

The good fruits and the joy at Medjugorje and the healings (not necessarily miraculous - feeling good can do a lot for your health) and the spinning suns are nothing unique. Fraudulent money-mad TV Evangelists in the states are popular for similar reasons. When people give loads of money to the evangelists, does that not prove that they are infinitely impressed by them and their alleged powers? Does their monetary approval carry more weight than the pilgrim's approval of the Medjugorje visionaries who do not money-spin in such a blatant way as the Evangelists do? The Evangelists are followed by those who put their money where their mouth is.

An individual case of good fruits hardly matters for there is a bigger picture to consider. The more amenable people become to visionaries the more false ones sprout up.