

Embrace
Holy
Living

RE- FLECTING GOD

05/29/13 - Apples To Apples

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Matthew 7:15-23

Some years ago we moved into a house with what I thought was a large bush in the backyard. It was 10 to 12 feet tall with branches reaching all the way to the ground. That fall while raking leaves I noticed something hanging from a branch, a small shriveled apple full of worm holes. "We have an apple tree," I told my wife. I read up on the care of apple trees. I carefully pruned, sprayed, and cared for the tree. The next spring the tree was covered with beautiful blossoms. In the fall we picked buckets full of beautiful red apples. I recognized the tree by its fruit.

Jesus tells us to do the same with people who claim authority from God or to have a relationship with Him; "By their fruit you will recognize them" (v. 20). With proper care and attention a nearly barren tree with bad fruit can become a healthy tree with abundant fruit. However, even if you tied apples onto a thorn bush it would not become an apple tree. It would remain a fraud.

There is no substitute for genuine faith and a living day-to-day relationship with Jesus Christ.

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