

Still Fruitful

Pat Moore

"Yes," said the tree in the grove, "been giving apples for years now - well - pretty much all of my life!

I was worried at first, being a small sapling. (Thin I was in those days. I've put on a lot of weight since then.)

Oh, I was blown about by the winds of change. A whole year and - nothing. I kept at it, kept growing but the second year - still nothing.

Losing my leaves - that was the hardest. I mean, no-one could see the fruit and now I looked bare and boring, barely alive! Still, I stuck it out, got my roots in deeper, soaked up more of that river..... then it happened! A fruit! My first fruit!

Can you imagine my horror when the maggot got it? I was so distressed ... then I lost my leaves all over again!

Older trees told me to get used to it - that it was a yearly cycle -that I had to ride out the seasons. They didn't know how hard I'd tried to bear fruit. I mean, 'Apple Tree - that was my name!' I didn't know it was a declaration for the future. I wanted it all now!

Well, in the third year I had given up. I wasn't even trying to produce apples anymore, but then it started - seed after seed after seed; so many I couldn't hold them: fruit to see, fruit to eat, fruit to store. My branches were dripping heavy with fruit.

That was over fifty years ago.

Some of the young saplings look up at me and I can see it in their stares.

*When are you going to stop?
When will you dry up?
When will your fruit lose its quality?*

I don't let it get me down.

I am old
Old and fruitful
More fruitful than in my early years
And I don't think it will *ever* stop.

I'm not in this orchard for nothing!"

Based on Psalm 94:12-14

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