**Jesus Curses the Fig Tree**

*Mark 11:12-14, 20-26*

**Introduction**

1. The day after Jesus’ triumphal entry, on His way to Jerusalem He cursed a fig tree.
2. The next day He taught His disciples what His actions meant.
3. There are a few lessons to be learned from this interesting account of Jesus’ actions.
4. Teaching Opportunities
5. Jesus is Omniscient

* *“for it was not the season for figs”* (v. 13)
  + Jesus was aware of the season for figs. His humanity did not limit His divine nature.
  + *“having leaves”* – In Palestine fig trees normally produced fruit and then leafed out.
* The sight of leaves suggests to the average eye that it was with figs.
  + Jesus knew this, but knew that it had no figs.
  + Why then did he go to see *“if perhaps He would find something on it”?*

1. Jesus saw a teaching opportunity

* His disciples were with Him.
  + *“They had come out”* (v. 12); *“And His disciples heard it”* (v. 14)
* Jesus used this instance to teach His disciples at that moment, and later when they were impressed with how soon it had withered away.
* Some claim that this was an unnecessary attack on nature, and was out of character for Jesus. Was it?
  + All things are for Him – Colossians 1:16; Psalm 148 *(“Let them praise the name of the Lord”*)
  + He used the tree to serve His purpose – John 13:13 (He is Teacher and Lord – talking to disciples after washing their feet)

*What was He teaching?* 🡪

1. Bear Fruit!
2. Jesus used the tree as a teaching metaphor.

* It had leaves, which usually meant there would be fruit. – But there wasn’t any fruit.
* The tree had a purpose to fulfill. Instead of fulfilling that purpose, it merely gave the appearance of fulfilling that purpose.
* Luke 8:15 – Jesus used this form of teaching often (parables – the sower).
  + The purpose of sowing the seed was for it to bear fruit. The seed that found good soil fulfilled its purpose.

1. Christians have a purpose.

* John 8:31; 1 John 3:7-9 – A disciple is one who abides in His word, and bears the fruit of righteousness.
* Matthew 7:15-20 – False teachers are known by their fruits. This is only so because everyone is known by their fruits.
* 1 Peter 3:15-16 – Our fruits reflect who we really are. Those who defame us are ashamed because they realize that we are a good tree bearing good fruit.
* *What if we bear bad fruit, or no fruit at all? 🡪*

1. Consequences of Fruitlessness
2. Jesus cursed the fig tree.

* We find that what Jesus said was a curse (cf. 11:14, 21).
  + Curse – an imprecation of doom.
  + Immediate signs of change (cf. Matthew 21:19), but later they saw it had dried up from the roots (cf. 11:20)!
    - In other words the tree was destroyed.

1. There are consequences to not bearing fruit.

* John 15:1-8 – Jesus requires that we bear fruit. If we do not we are no use.
* Matthew 25:41 – Those who do not bear fruit are those who are cursed.

1. Immediate context gives an example.

* 11:15-19 – The temple was purposed toward prayer and worship, but was being used for something else.
  + In addition, the scribes and chief priests, who were supposed to be religious leaders, were tolerating such.
  + They had an appearance as the tree, but were indeed fruitless. (or bearing bad fruit)

*While there is the obvious lesson of bearing fruit, and the consequences of not bearing fruit, notice the lesson Jesus taught the disciples when they saw the tree.* 🡪

1. The Necessity and Power of Faith and Prayer (cf. 11:22-26)
2. Faith is necessary, faith is sufficient.

* Romans 10:17 – Before considering Jesus’ teaching, we must remember where faith comes from.
  + Jesus is not saying if you have faith you can accomplish whatever YOU want, but that you can accomplish whatever GOD wants you to accomplish.
* Luke 16:27-28 – Rich man wanted to warn his brothers. Abraham said they had the word of God.
  + Hearing the word of God is sufficient, for it produces faith, and with faith we can accomplish anything God would have us to.

1. Prayer shows faith, and is beneficial. (cf. 11:24-26).

* James 1:5-7 – God will give us what we need in order to please Him.
  + However, when we ask, He will only give it to us if we ask in faith.
* A lack of faith hinders prayers…
* Matthew 6:14-15 – Our relationship with others can hinder our prayers.
  + (cf. 11:26)