**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.
  + **Jesus maintained a spiritual perspective throughout His physical life.**
  + **Sometimes we tend to get caught up in the physical life, and fail to notice spiritual opportunities!**
  + **Colossians 4:2-4 –** We need to pray for opportunities for the word, and seek them out! When we find them, take advantage of them!
* 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”***)
    - **Our society has a skewed view of nature. These things don’t take precedence over lives of men, and they are here for us to use.**
  + 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.**

1. Christians have a purpose.

* **Luke 8:15** – Jesus used this form of teaching often (parables – the sower).
  + The purpose of sowing the seed was for the soil to accept it and bear fruit.
* **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.
  + **In the same way does the word work in men** – **Hebrews 4:11-12**
    - **If we hear the word and don’t obey it we are shown to be dishonest, and not lovers of the truth**.
* *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.**
  + ***“The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.” – Luke 18:27***

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.**
  + ***The whole concept of offering prayers to God with requests is having the mindset to receive them. Otherwise prayer is not an advantage or benefit.***
* A lack of faith hinders prayers…
* **Matthew 6:14-15** – Our relationship with others can hinder our prayers.
  + (**cf. 11:26**)
  + **Part of our bearing fruit includes the fruit of forgiveness. We cannot expect God to forgive us if we don’t want to forgive others ourselves!**

**Conclusion**

1. **We are expected to bear fruit, have great faith, and pray to our God.**
2. **We need to understand the repercussions of failing in these facets of our life.**
3. **Jesus has promised *“eternal salvation to all who OBEY Him” (Hebrews 5:9)*.**