

Title: Have Faith in God

Passage: Mark 13:12-26

Summary:

Mark 11:12-25 brings us to the final week of Christ's mortal life. The Triumphal Entry happened the day before, ending with Jesus speechlessly surveying the corrupt Temple. He curses a fruitless fig tree, which represents faithless Israel. He commands His Disciples to pray God's promises without doubting. True fruitfulness is defined as faith in God, and forgiveness toward one another—a vital lesson for the difficult times ahead.

Context of Passage:

Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem with Him riding a donkey and people welcoming Him with waving palm branches, lying down coats, and shouting "Hosanna!"

Mark 11:11

And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

- after the initial large welcome, he goes away quietly. Then...

EXPOSITION

Overview

Jesus acts a parable

Jesus attacks the temple

Jesus explains the parable

I. JESUS ACTS THE PARABLE (v.12-14)

Mark 11:12

On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry.

Fig Tree

- symbolized Israel (its fruitfulness and strength)
- Malachi and Zechariah (Messiah's reign will flourish like a fig tree)
- Hosea, Haggai (Lack of figs = Absence of faith)
- Jeremiah, Joel = (Israel is fig-less)
- Good figs = faithful Jews; Bad figs = vile Jews
- Nathaniel = Jesus complimented
- Zacheus = saved off a sycamore fig tree

Mark 11:13

And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.

- Jesus is echoing OT prophecy

Micah 7:1-2a

Woe is me! For I have become as when the summer fruit has been gathered, as when the grapes have been gleaned: there is no cluster to eat, no first-ripe fig that my soul desires. The godly has perished from the earth,

When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves,

- Jesus spoke a parable a year ago about a barren fig tree

Luke 13:6-9

And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

- Now, what does Jesus find? All leaves but no figs.

for it was not the season for figs.

- unripe figs before the season would be enjoyed normally. Yet no figs could be found here.

Mark 11:14

And he said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it.

Fig-less tree = Symbolism of Israel's lack of faith

- God's prophets continuously ignored or rejected
- John the Baptist ignored and beheaded
- Jesus arrives and ministers yet still no fruit among Israel.
- Passage is the only destructive miracle that Jesus ever performs

II. JESUS ATTACKS THE TEMPLE (v.15-19)

Mark 11:15a

And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple

- Temple = fig tree

And they came to Jerusalem

- They = Jesus and the disciples arrive

And he entered the temple

- But Jesus entered alone
- Previously, Jesus had visited the temple (from age 8) among the money-changers and did nothing. Now, this time is different.
- Temple = overall 35 acres as included various courtyards for Jews and Gentiles

Mark 11:15b-16

and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple.

Drive out

- not a sudden angry outburst
- But a deliberate act of aggression

And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple.

- supernatural effort for Jesus to clear out 35 acres of the temple grounds.
- Who driven out? He drove out everyone (both money changers and those buying from them)
- Why? Justice
 - Jesus defines justice objectively in relationship to God.
 - Not subjective or relative.
 - God sees everyone before God sinners apart from Christ. Here, He saw everyone complicit to the faithlessness of Israel.

Mark 11:17

And he was teaching them and saying to them, "Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations"? But you have made it a den of robbers."

- Jesus' extraordinary patience in teaching at this moment.

Isaiah 56:10-11 (Israel's leaders condemned)

His watchmen are blind; they are all without knowledge; they are all silent dogs; they cannot bark, dreaming, lying down, loving to slumber. The dogs have a mighty appetite; they never have enough. But they are shepherds who have no understanding; they have all turned to their own way, each to his own gain, one and all.

Jeremiah 7:11

Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the LORD.

- Meaning = this temple will be destroyed. It had become a safe place for sin, detestable in God's sight.

Mark 11:18

And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching. And when evening came they went out of the city.

- The only people who were afraid of Jesus were the religious leaders. Why? Because of Jesus' teaching
- Not afraid of what He just did in clearing the temple but what He taught.

Mark 11:19

And when evening came they went out of the city.

- Jesus taught all day long after arriving in the morning.

III. JESUS EXPLAINS THE PARABLE (v. 20-26)

Mark 11:20

As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots.

the fig tree withered away to its roots

- the entire tree to its roots was destroyed.
- Now, not any more fruitful than before = was and now fruitful.
- Didn't destroy all fig trees, just this one. Why? Symbolized the temple.

Mark 11:21

And Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered."

- Marveled at how quickly the tree died.
- Concern: what about the temple?

Mark 11:22

And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God.

- Faith in God is fast and firm in what God has said. He will do what He has promised to do as He has promised to do it.
 - God is not a liar or deceptive
- Faith tests and affirm's God's promises and truth.
- Question: What has God said in His Word that You are struggling to believe?
 - Have faith in God. He will do it!

Mark 11:23-24

Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

- Meaning? The humanly impossible because explicably possible if you believe what God is what He says and believe He will act as He says.

Isaiah 65:1-3a (OT reference)

I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, "Here I am, here I am," to a nation that was not called by my name. I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices; a people who provoke me to my face continually

Jesus returns to the fig tree parable

Mark 13:28-30

From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

Mark 11:25

And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

Application: Forgive

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Matthew 18:21-22, 35 (The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant)

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times....So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Application: Have faith in God

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Psalms 91:2-4, 14-16

I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler

and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

"Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation."

How produce fruit?

John 15:4-5, 11, 16

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing....These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full....You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

Not faith in your faith (preconceived ideas) about God.

- Have faith in God
- Discouraged? One little fig is proof that one is a fig tree and not a thorn bush.
- Any amount of faith can produce fruit.

Matthew 17:20

He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you."

- Take heart in who God is and His promises, which are sure.

Ephesians 6:14

Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

- Ground yourself in God's truth.

Application: Pray

- Importance of prayer is clear
- Jesus is in heaven interceding for you.

Romans 8:34

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

- Jesus finds comfort and pleasure in responding to prayers of His people

Matthew 7:7-11

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

- What can we pray for?
 - Joy
 - Peace
 - Patience
 - Discipline
 - Boldness in evangelism
 - Be mighty to save our loved ones
 - Leaders to repent
 - Sight of sin, shame of sin, hatred of sin, sorrow of sin
 - Confession and repentance of sin
 - Victory over sin
- Not necessarily individual prayer alone but corporate

Hebrews 10:23-25

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.