

In Mark 11:12-19 we find Jesus engaging in 2 acted-out parables in which He condemns Israel for their spiritual unfruitfulness.

- I. Jesus curses the fig tree (Israel).
 - A. The fig tree (Israel) appears to have fruit but is actually fruitless (vs. 12-13).
 - B. The fruitless fig tree (fruitless Israel) receives judgment (v. 14).
- II. Jesus condemns the temple.
 - A. Jesus interrupts the activities in the temple (vs. 15-16).
 - B. Jesus condemns the activities in the temple by teaching from the OT prophets (v. 17).
 - C. The leaders and crowd respond to Jesus' teaching.
 - 1. The crowd is astonished (v. 18c).
 - 2. The leaders are afraid (v. 18a-b).

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, January 17, 2016

Passage: Mark 11:12-19

Memory Passage: Mark 11:17

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 11:12-25.** This week we will first examine the condemnation of the temple and second the cursing of the fig tree, and next week we will examine the lessons Jesus teaches based on the withered tree.
- (b) What does Mark's "sandwiching" of these two events (i.e. fig tree/temple/fig tree) tell you about their interconnection?
- (c) What actions did Jesus take when he entered the temple (vs. 15-16), and why would each of these groups be there?
- (d) What is your current assessment of why Jesus might have taken these actions?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 11:15-19, Is. 56:1-8, & Jer. 7:1-15.** What is required for salvation and deliverance (Is. 56:1-2), and who will receive these blessings (Is. 56:3-6)?
- (b) What will be the benefit for these obedient, covenant-keeping foreigners (Is. 56:7)?
- (c) What does God require of His people if they are to continue living in the land and worshipping in the temple (Jer. 7:1-7)?
- (d) Who are the "robbers" (Jer. 7:11), what have they done (Jer. 7:6-9), and how have they justified their actions (Jer. 7:10)?
- (e) How does God promise to judge His people if they do not repent (Jer. 7:12-15)?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 11:15-19.** In Mark 11:17 Jesus "was teaching them" concerning His actions by using Is. 56:7 & Jer. 7:11. Review your answers to yesterday's questions so you are reminded of the context of the verses He quotes.
- (b) Why would the activity in the temple (the outer Court of the Gentiles) impinge upon God's command that His temple should be a "house of prayer for all the nations," and did Jesus' actions "cleanse" or "condemn" the temple?
- (c) Given the context of Jer. 7, when Jesus says "you have made (the temple) a den of robbers," what is He saying?
- (d) Why would the crowd be astonished at Jesus' teaching rather than His actions, and why does this cause the chief priests and scribes to fear Him?

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 11:12-14, 13:1-2, Jer. 8:12-13, Mic. 7:1-2, Hos. 9:10-17, and Luke 13:6-9.** What do you learn about the state of God's people and God's relationship to them from these OT passages that use the metaphors of figs & fruitlessness?
- (b) How should we interpret Jesus' parable of the fig tree in Luke:13-6-9?
- (c) How should we interpret Jesus' cursing of the fig tree in Mark 11:12-14? Remember to consider the Bible's metaphorical use of figs/fruitfulness concerning Israel, the theology conveyed in Mark's "sandwiching" of these two events, and Jesus' teaching in Luke 13:6-9 & Mark 13:1-2 as you formulate your answer.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark. 11:12-19.** Would you consider Jesus' actions in the temple as a "cleansing" or a "condemnation" (explain your answer)?
- (b) In what ways does your life look spiritually fruitful from a distance but upon closer examination is actually fruitless? Write down at least 3 ways you will apply the Scriptures in order to move from "leafy" to "fruitful."
- (c) If Jesus walked into the Bible Church today as He walked into the temple in the 1st century, what would He consider to be fruitful and what would He consider to be leafy with no or little fruit? What actions should be taken, by you individually and/or the church corporately, to facilitate fruitfulness in these areas?

DATE: January 17, 2016

PASSAGE: Mark 11:12-19

Cursing & Condemnation