

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 13TH-14TH, 2025 // GOSPEL OF MARK

THE HUMBLE KING (MARK 11:1-11) THIS STARTS THE COUNTDOWN

Chapters 11-16 take place within one week, called *Passion Week*. This begins with Jesus making a triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

- In His omniscience, Jesus tells two disciples to go into town, borrow a specific colt, and tell the owners, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here right away."

A PRETTY DETAILED ACCOUNT

The details lead us to believe Peter was one of the disciples on the mission. They also lead us to believe the owners knew of Jesus and thought highly of Him.

- Once they brought the colt back, they "threw their clothes on it" to make a saddle of sorts for Jesus to sit on.

WELCOMING THE KING

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem, "Many people spread their clothes on the road," while others "spread leafy branches cut from the fields." This was a recognition of royalty.

- These people loved Him, but they misunderstood what kind of king Jesus was, and many would soon turn on Him.

THEY VIEWED HIM AS SAVIOR, KIND OF...

Hosanna means *save now*. They thought He was there to deliver them from Rome, but He actually came to liberate them from sin.

- The Bible gives clarity on God's mission, but **if we are ignorant of His intentions and don't trust His timing, we'll be disappointed or even hostile towards Jesus.**

TAKING A QUICK LOOK AT THE TEMPLE

After the parade ended, Jesus made His way to the temple and had a look around. Soon we will see Jesus' reaction to what He found.

- Like the writing on the wall in Daniel 5, Jesus went and examined **the state of the religious establishment and it "[had] been weighed...and found deficient."**

FLIPPING TABLES (MARK 11:12-19)

A KEY IN RECOGNIZING IMPORTANT THINGS

Oftentimes in the Bible the author will use *inclusio*, a literary device that kind of bookends important teachings. Before and after Jesus cleanses the temple, we get two short accounts about a withered fig tree.

- These bookends reinforce the point of the story in the middle.

"NOTHING BUT LEAVES"

On their way back to Jerusalem, Jesus gets hungry and sees a fig tree with leaves, but there are no figs.

After seeing no fruit, He curses the tree because it was **unproductive**.

- What is confusing is that Mark records it "was not the season for figs." Why did Jesus get mad at a tree out of season?

LOOKING GOOD BUT PRODUCING NOTHING

In His omniscience, He saw the tree would never produce fruit. It was also a perfect time to teach the disciples that **no matter how good something may look, if it does not produce godly results, it is useless.**

- **Religion is empty and unproductive if our hearts aren't in alignment with Jesus' heart.**

THIS WAS DELIBERATE AND THOUGHT OUT

Many think Jesus walked into the temple and went into a blind rage. This is not the case. Remember, He had gone in the night before and had seen the "buying and selling."

- The temple took up a large part of the city. The outer circle was a shortcut and became a place to sell sacrifices and other goods.

THE DEEPER REASON HE WAS ANGRY

The problem was much bigger than areas of the temple being a marketplace. Jews had access to the whole temple, but Gentiles could only worship in the outer circle.

- God welcomed everyone to worship Him, but the commotion and stench of the marketplace made it impossible for Gentiles.

"A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS"

After running the merchants out of the temple, Jesus teaches His followers that **the religious people put convenience and profit above honoring God and serving others.**

- Many reduce this to selling things in church. Though it may involve that, it goes much deeper into **the heart of why we assemble.**

SO, JESUS GETS ANGRY?

Jesus is not unreasonable. He is not against raising money for missions or having space within the church for casual conversation.

- But **when we become exclusive, arrogant, materialistic, flippant, self-serving, or sacrifice people for profit or notoriety, we can make Him quite angry.**

"FOR THEY WERE AFRAID..."

Jesus spoke with authority, cleared the temple that had become an idol to the religious leaders, and exposed that **they were much like the barren fig tree, which looked good on the outside but produced nothing.**

- The crowd loved Jesus, and this made the religious leaders afraid of Him.

PRODUCTIVE (MARK 11:20-25) SHOCKED, BUT NOT WHY YOU THINK

Jesus and the 12 slept outside of the city for safety. As they returned in the morning, Peter was shocked when he saw the withered fig tree.

- Peter was not shocked at the miracle. He had seen larger ones. He was astonished at what the miracle symbolized and how quickly it would happen.

MORE THAN JUST UNPRODUCTIVE PEOPLE

The curse of the fig tree shows that Jesus will judge those who do not produce "fruit." It also symbolized Jerusalem's destruction in 70 A.D.

- **God sometimes uses our enemies as a mechanism to humble and reset us. If we will be humble and wise, we will not have to face such drastic measures.**

"HAVE FAITH IN GOD"

The disciples understood that Jerusalem was going to suffer because of its people's selfishness and pride, but Jesus encourages them to trust in Him in that refining period.

- Like Habakkuk 2, **the righteous will live by faith in hard times. God is in control, and He knows what He is doing.**

WE CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS?

This is one of Jesus' most famous metaphors. Jesus is not telling us to move literal mountains, but that **through a relationship with Him we will see large obstacles and difficulties be moved by His power.**

- The caveat to seeing "mountains moved" is our **unwavering trust and faith** in Him.

"BELIEVE...AND IT WILL BE YOURS"

1 John 5:14-15 tells us that "if we **ask anything according to His will**, He hears us. And if we know that He hears whatever we ask, we know that we have what we have asked of Him."

- We don't get whatever we want. **We are to ask what Jesus wants and seek those things.** In that, **we receive what we need.**

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

To see the productive power of God in our lives we must not only live in His forgiveness but extend that forgiveness to others.

- Praying God's will is productive. God's will is to forgive us, but **if we don't extend grace and forgiveness to others, we are not in His will, therefore He does not hear us.**

UNDERSTANDING JESUS' MISSION

- If we fashion Jesus and His mission by our desires, we'll be disappointed or even ambivalent to Him. Reducing God down to just religion will also leave us unsatisfied.

- **Jesus did not come to satisfy our will or save our institutions and culture. He came to save us from sin and destruction.**

WHAT MAKES JESUS ANGRY

- Jesus is a God of **mercy, love, and peace**. He also **hates evil** and **upholds justice**.
- Religion over relationship, convenience over sacrifice, profit over people, arrogance over humility, and ease over productivity are things that spark anger in Jesus according to the Gospels.

THE COST OF COMPLACENCY

- When we choose to live selfishly, we may become "successful" to the world, but we become unproductive in God's eyes.
- We are invaluable to God, and our lives are a gift graciously given to us by Him. **If we squander that gift, Jesus places judgment on us.**

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

- Jesus came so we could have access to forgiveness at any time. We should live in His grace and in a **repentant lifestyle**.
- When we pray God's will, we receive what we ask for. **Forgiveness is God's desire for us, and when we extend grace to others, we channel His power because we're in His will.**

THE POWER OF BEING IN GOD'S WILL

- Are we **living repentantly** and **extending forgiveness** to those around us? Do we **seek His will above ours**? If so, we will be **productive** via His power and provision.
- Do we understand that **we are valuable and called to produce "fruit"** (Galatians 5), and that when we do not, this angers Jesus?