



A Withered Fig Tree

Text: Mark 11:12-26

Context: Jesus previously entered Jerusalem to cries of “Hosanna!” (11:1-10) This time tables are overturned and a fig tree withers.

Context & Fig Trees: This time of year in Palestine fig trees produced small edible buds in March followed by the appearance of large green leaves in April. An absence of these buds indicated it would bear no fruit that year. Eventually buds dropped off when normal figs were formed in summer. Thus it was reasonable for Jesus to expect to find something to eat even though it was not the season for figs.¹

Read Mark 11:12-26

1) Jesus became hungry. (Mark 11:12-14)

What do you do when you get hungry? How does learning that “Jesus became hungry” in verse 12 impact you personally? How do these three verses set the stage for the rest of the passage?

2) Jesus overturned tables. (Mark 11:15-18)

Context & The Temple: During Herod’s time the outer Gentile Courts surrounding the inner Temple structure had become a market place for traveling Jews to buy animals for ritual sacrifice and exchange money. The Temple, a sacred and holy place, had become a market place and short cut for people walking through the city (v16).

Why is Jesus so adamant about how the Temple is treated (see Hosea 9:15 and Malachi 3:1-5)? Why were the religious leaders afraid of Jesus? Why were the people astonished?

3) Jesus teaches that faith and forgiveness are connected. (Mark 10:51-52)

What is the explanation in the text for why the fig tree withered? What’s the relationship between faith and doubt according to Jesus in verse 23? How does Jesus connect faith and forgiveness in this passage?

BIG IDEA: Following the Servant King leads us to forgive others as we have been forgiven. (Mark 11:25)

How does personal convenience and the need for efficiency impact your worship behavior?

How are selfish or “convenient” religious behavior and doubting faith related? How does it impact your ability to forgive others?

How does Jesus teaching about forgiveness encourage you? Challenge you?

Next Week’s Passage: Mark 11:27-12:12 | Chief Cornerstone

¹ Grassmick, J. D. (1985). [Mark](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 157). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.