

SERMON NOTES

Preacher: Kevin Hardy

Date: April 6, 2025

Text: Mark 11:12-25

Title: The Fruit of Discipleship

Big Idea: Disciples of Jesus are called to bear the fruit of godliness in all areas of life.



I. THE FRUITLESS TREE (vv. 12-14)

"When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves...And he said to it, 'May no one ever eat fruit from you again.'" (vv. 13-14)

The problem that Jesus is addressing has to do with fruit and fruitfulness. One problem that we see Jesus address in the gospels is having the appearance of godliness – but it all being empty ritual.

II. THE FRUITLESS TEMPLE (vv. 15-19)

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.'" (v. 17)

Jesus does three things here:

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

The Son of God is here to find true worship and what does He find?
Corruption. Desecration. False religion.

Isaiah 56:6-7 ← Purpose of the temple: a house of prayer for all the nations!

Two questions: What is the state of our worship? How are we hindering others from worship?

"Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God..." (Acts 15:19)

Jesus is concerned about the worship of His people and their witness to others!

III. THE FRUIT OF DISCIPLESHIP (vv. 20-25)

"True worship of God is foundational to a healthy, God-designed life. Above all, it is the right response to the character and nature of God. Followers of Christ can pray boldly and confidently (with faith) toward the end that God would remove all hindrances (the figurative meaning of "mountain") to true worship of the triune God."¹

¹ *ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible*

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

To be used for personal reflection and/or sermon-based small group discussion.

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READ Mark 11:12-25

Why do you think Jesus cursed the fig tree, even though it wasn't the season for figs? What might the fig tree represent?

How does the withered fig tree serve as a visual parable for what Jesus does in the temple? Are there areas in your life that have the appearance of fruitfulness but lack real spiritual fruit? What would it look like for God to prune or challenge that?

What do Jesus' actions in the temple reveal about His priorities for worship and prayer? How might Jesus challenge or "cleanse" the modern-day church (or our personal lives) in similar ways? In what ways can religious activity become a substitute for genuine relationship with God?

What does Jesus mean when He says, "Have faith in God" and talks about moving mountains? What kind of faith is He calling us to?

How do faith, prayer, and forgiveness all tie together in this passage?

Is there someone you need to forgive in order to experience unhindered prayer and faith? What might help you take that step?

What is one specific area where you feel God is calling you to bear fruit or walk in deeper faith? How does this passage challenge your view of what a faithful life looks like? What's one way you can respond this week—through repentance, prayer, forgiveness, or action—in light of this passage?

PRAY