

SERMON OUTLINE

In Mark 11:20-25 Jesus teaches us 3 truths about faith in God based on His cursing of the fruitless fig tree.

- I. Israel lacked faith in God so their fruit was fake (vs. 20-21).
- II. You must have faith in God (v. 22).
- III. When you have faith in God your fruit will be real.
 - A. The fruit of powerful prayer (vs. 23-24).
 - B. The fruit of forgiveness (v. 25).

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, January 24, 2016

Passage: Mark 11:20-25

Memory Passage: Mark 11:23-24

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 11:12-25.** Review from last week's lesson: what does the fig tree represent?
- (b) What did Jesus do to the fig tree, and what did His action symbolize?
- (c) How is Jesus' act of cursing of the fig tree related to His act of clearing of the temple?
- (d) What literary technique did Mark use to show us that these events are to be linked in our interpretation?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 11:20-25 & 4:1-20.** What does "withered away to its roots" tell you about the extent of the destruction?
- (b) What kind of soil has fruitless Israel proven to be according to Jesus' important parable in chapter 4?
- (c) Why was Peter surprised at the state of the fig tree?
- (d) Why is it important to observe the fact that "the disciples heard" what Jesus said (v. 14) and "Peter remembered" what Jesus said (v. 21)?
- (e) If you were walking with the disciples, what would you have expected Jesus to say next?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 11:20-25.** How does the lesson, "have faith in God," flow from the object lesson of the fig tree and temple?
- (b) Is the promise that one who believes and does not doubt will move mountains into the sea hyperbole or literal, and how do you know? If hyperbole, then what is Jesus' intended meaning of this intentionally overstated statement?
- (c) To what does the "therefore" that begins v. 24 refer? The prayer? Believing? Not doubting? Faith? God? Something else?
- (d) What is the connection between praying, believing, and receiving (v. 24)?

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark 11:20-25, Matt. 6:10, John 15:7, James 1:5-8, 4:3, 1 John 3:21-22, & 5:14-15.** How does James 1:5-8 help you understand the relationship between faith, doubt, and whether prayer is answered or unanswered?
- (b) According to James 4:3, asking in what way will guarantee that your prayers are not answered?
- (c) What does it mean to ask "according to God's will" (Matt. 6:10, 1 John 5:14-15)? What is, and how do you know, God's will?
- (d) According to John 15:7 & 1 John 3:21-22, how does our obedience affect the way God answers your prayers?
- (e) Write a paragraph explaining how all of these verses explain the parameters of "whatever you ask" in Mark 11:24.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Mark. 11:20-25 & Eph. 3:20-21.** Examine your prayer life in light of what you have learned this week, including Ephesians 3:20-21. Does it reflect God's goodness, power, and promise? Does it reflect a desire for the kingdom of God to advance (Matt. 6:10)? Does your prayer life scream that you have faith in the powerful and generous God of the Scriptures?
- (b) In what areas are you not obedient that may be hindering your prayer life and how will you address these areas today?
- (c) List at least 4 things you will more boldly pray about that will better reflect the power, goodness, and promise of God.
- (d) How can the Bible Church of Cabot more boldly pray for God's will to be accomplished through us?

DATE: January 24, 2016

PASSAGE: Mark 11:20-25

Pray, Believe, Receive