

Providence Reformed Baptist Church – Sunday, August 13, 2023

Sermon Series: The Gospel of the Kingdom – Matthew

Message 100. “By What Authority?” – Matthew 21:18-27

Pastor Phillip M Way

A Curse and a Question prove to demonstrate by what authority Jesus is acting as He has during His entry into Jerusalem and His purification of the Temple. To the shock of the religious authorities, Jesus denounces them and their religion (fig tree, temple) instead of denouncing their enemies.

- I. A Curse – vs. 18-22
 - A. A Promise without Provision
 1. Leaves but no fruit
 - a. Outward religion
 - b. Spiritual barrenness
 2. Fig season? – Mark 11:13
 - B. Acting Out of Character
 1. Jesus used power to curse/destroy the fig tree
 2. Acting in line with OT prophets – Isa. 20:1-2; Ezek. 3:1-3; 24:15-17
 3. Drawing attention to a symbolic lesson
 - C. Figs and Fruit – Judging Israel – John 1:11; Rom. 9:30-33
 1. Fruit = behavior God requires of His people
 2. Parable in vs. 33-46 (see esp. vs. 45)
 3. OT lessons – Jer. 8:11-13; Hos. 9:10, 16-17; Micah 7:1-6
 4. Judgment – Isa. 34:4; Hos. 2:12; Joel 1:7
 - D. A Promise of Power (vs. 20-22)
 1. Faith = practical confidence in God’s power and willingness to respond
 2. Doubt = hesitation to trust, lack of faith
 3. “You” – plural – a praying community
 4. Moving Mountains – the impossible made possible
 5. Ask, believe, receive – in Jesus’ name, according to His purpose, character, and will – John 14:13-14; 1 John 5:14
 6. Pray for what God wants!
 7. We have unimaginable power available to us through our faith in Christ - MacArthur
- II. A Question – vs. 23-27
 - A. Who Do You Think You Are?
 1. “By what authority?”
 2. “Who gave you this authority?” (not the chief priests)
 - B. A Counter Question
 - C. Possible Answers
 1. From heaven
 - a. John was a God ordained prophet
 - b. Jesus was John’s successor – “the prophet from Nazareth” (vs. 11)
 - c. They have the same authority – GOD
 2. From men
 - a. The crowds will revolt as they revere John as a prophet
 - b. Fear of men
 3. We don’t know (we’d rather not say)
 - D. You Have Your Answer – Matt. 28:18

Cross References

Mark 11:13

13 And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.

Isaiah 20:1-2

20 In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and took it, 2 at the same time the Lord spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, “Go, and remove the sackcloth from your body, and take your sandals off your feet.” And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

Ezekiel 3:1-3

3 Moreover He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.” 2 So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll. 3 And He said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you.” So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness.

Ezekiel 24:15-17

15 Also the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 16 “Son of man, behold, I take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke; yet you shall neither mourn nor weep, nor shall your tears run down. 17 Sigh in silence, make no mourning for the dead; bind your turban on your head, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your lips, and do not eat man’s bread of sorrow.”

John 1:11

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

Romans 9:30-33

30 What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; 31 but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. 33 As it is written: “Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”

Jeremiah 8:11-13

11 For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, Saying, ‘Peace, peace!’ When there is no peace. 12 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed, Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; In the time of their punishment They shall be cast down,” says the Lord. 13 “I will surely consume them,” says the Lord. “No grapes shall be on the vine, Nor figs on the fig tree, And the leaf shall fade; And the things I have given them shall pass away from them.” ’ ’ ”

Hosea 9:10, 16-17

10 “I found Israel Like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers As the firstfruits on the fig tree in its first season. But they went to Baal Peor, And separated themselves to that shame; They became an abomination like the thing they loved.

16 Ephraim is stricken, Their root is dried up; They shall bear no fruit. Yes, were they to bear children, I would kill the darlings of their womb.” 17 My God will cast them away, Because they did not obey Him; And they shall be wanderers among the nations.

Micah 7:1-6

7 Woe is me! For I am like those who gather summer fruits, Like those who glean vintage grapes; There is no cluster to eat Of the first-ripe fruit which my soul desires. 2 The faithful man has perished from the earth, And there is no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; Every man hunts his brother with a net. 3 That they may successfully do evil with both hands— The prince asks for gifts, The judge seeks a bribe, And the great man utters his evil desire; So they scheme together. 4 The best of them is like a brier; The most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge; The day of your watchman and your punishment comes; Now shall be their perplexity. 5 Do not trust in a friend; Do not put your confidence in a companion; Guard the doors of your mouth From her who lies in your bosom. 6 For son dishonors father, Daughter rises against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; A man’s enemies are the men of his own household.

Isaiah 34:4

4 All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; All their host shall fall down As the leaf falls from the vine, And as fruit falling from a fig tree.

Hosea 2:12

12 “And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, Of which she has said, ‘These are my wages that my lovers have given me.’ So I will make them a forest, And the beasts of the field shall eat them.

Joel 1:7

7 He has laid waste My vine, And ruined My fig tree; He has stripped it bare and thrown it away; Its branches are made white.

John 14:13-14

13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

1 John 5:14

14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

Matthew 28:18

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.