

Community Group Curriculum
For the week of April 13, 2014
“Presentation of the King”
Mark 11:1-26

BIG PICTURE

At the end of chapter 10 Jesus had just healed blind Bartimaeus. He then continues making his way toward Jerusalem. This begins the last week of Jesus' earthly life. As he reaches the Mount of Olives, Jesus starts his preparations to enter the city, but in the style of a King. We also read about Jesus cleansing the temple which is sandwiched between two parts of a lesson using a fig tree as an example.

LET'S DIG IN!

1. Read Mark 11:1-11 (The Triumphal Entry)

- a. It was Passover time – freedom time! But it was also kingdom time: the time when the dream of God's sovereign and saving presence being revealed would at last come true. Jesus riding over the Mount of Olives would clearly have called to mind the words of the prophet Zechariah for those watching. What do Zechariah 9:9-10 and 14:4 indicate Jesus is saying about himself?
- b. How does the reaction of the people confirm that they understand Jesus' symbolic message?
- c. Why would Mark bother to mention that Jesus looked around the temple and left (v. 11)?

2. Read Mark 11:12-14 (The Fig Tree) and 11:20-26 (Lesson from the Fig Tree)

- a. What is your initial reaction to the cursing of the fig tree? How does it differ from every other miracle Jesus performed?
- b. If the fig tree represents Israel, what point do you think Jesus is trying to make?
- c. Jesus also uses this incident as an object lesson for prayer (vv. 20-25). List the elements Jesus names for a strong prayer life. Compare with Matthew 6:9-15 and Luke 11:2-4.
- d. How does James 4:3 and John 15:7 further clarify Jesus' promises of answered prayer?
- e. Jesus cursed the fig tree which looked beautiful from a distance but bore no fruit. Is there an area of your life where you may appear spiritually mature at a glance, but where you have yet to bear significant fruit? Pray for growth in this area.

3. **Read Mark 11:15-19 (Jesus Cleanses the Temple)**

- a. After entering the city Jesus went to the temple, looked around, and left because it was late in the day. The following day Jesus returned. Describe his actions.
- b. What do both the cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the temple tell us about Jesus' attitude toward the spiritual condition of the people of Israel?
- c. Read Mark 11:17 in light of Isaiah 56:6-7. Why was Jesus so upset at the marketplace atmosphere in the "court of the Gentiles?"
- d. What was Jesus threatening when he called the temple a "den of robbers?" See Jeremiah 7:9-15.

PRAYER PLEASE

Pray for the Easter service at the Park. Praise for the many in our congregation who have stepped up to volunteer and serve that weekend, as well as those who have stepped out in faith and accepted the challenge of inviting people to the service. May the people who received this invitation be moved by the Holy Spirit to come and hear the truth about Jesus. May we be united as a body to be a light to the world and show Jesus at work in us throughout our community.

FINAL THOUGHT

The fig tree and the cleansing of the temple were both commentaries on judgment regarding Israel's spiritual condition. His actions at the temple and later his death gave the Gentiles the privileges long afforded the Jews. Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem showed him to be God's anointed King and Savior, but his conquest would be spiritual rather than military as the Jews were expecting. His triumph would be the victory of love over hatred, truth over error, and life over death.

COLLIDE: When Heaven Meets Earth

“Shallow Praise, False Promise and Empty Prayer”

Brent Van Elswyk

April 13, 2014

Introduction:

Scripture:

Mark 11: 1-26 Palm Sunday

Bottom Line:

Exposition:

1. The _____ of the Triumphal Entry! v. 1-11

2. The _____ of the Fig Tree! v. 12-14

3. The _____ of the Temple! v. 15-19

Application:

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