

Holy Monday

Read Mark 11: 12-26

Today we'll look at two Holy Monday stories and consider a connection between them. Jesus is days away from the Cross, and the greatest Teacher of all time is teaching to the end. Every word, every action, is illustrating the kingdom of God and demonstrating what our lives in God's kingdom should look like.

In the first story, a hungry Jesus approaches a fig tree and finds it without fruit. Record what Jesus says to the fig tree in Mark 11:14.

God's Word is clear about the seriousness of our witness. We who claim to know Jesus aren't meant to be "Fruitless Followers." Look up John 15:16. What does this verse us that Jesus expects from us.

That's not a suggestion. Our lives in Christ are meant to bear fruit, that contains a seed, that bears more fruit, which contains a seed. You get the picture, right? In this way, Jesus explained how the kingdom would grow. He intends us to be givers, not takers. Which brings us to our second narrative.

In this story, Jesus enters the temple and finds "Commercial Christians", people profiting off of those who have come to worship. To be clear, they're buying and selling religious experiences. Can you think of ways we in the present-day church are guilty of this buying and selling that so angered Jesus? Record your thoughts below.

Later in the same passage the disciples are surprised to find the fig tree has withered and died. Jesus isn't. Having overturned what was passing as religion, He uses the dead tree as a teaching moment to explain what life in the kingdom

should look like and the power available to those who truly embrace the life He is offering.

Jesus encourages them to have faith and then He makes an amazing promise in Mark 11: 23. In your own words, what does He tell them?

That's a lot of power. Maybe, like me, you're thinking it's more power than you see in your life or in the lives of the believers you know. Let's keep reading and see if Jesus can help us find the disconnect.

According to Mark 11:24 , use one word to describe what we should pray about.

According to verse Mark 11: 25 , use one word to describe who we should forgive.

Jesus assures them, and us, that if we are living in communion with Him and living forgiving toward others, we can expect the full power of heaven to witness to our words, too.

Pray with me?

Father, help me learn to live talking to You and not think of prayer as something I do during a certain time of the day, or before a meal, or when there is a crisis. And help me live forgiving others, as I live being forgiven by You. Amen