

# Matthew 21.18-46 - Sermon Notes - October 24, 2021

## QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS

- Christianity in the West is at a very crucial point
- we have so many "flavors," and so many opinions that no one really takes the Church seriously anymore
- we have done our best to separate our spiritual life from our secular life
- some of the most popular politicians speak about having deep faith yet support things like abortion, lying, and lawlessness
- even when our churches gather, there seems to be no common ground, and we seem to be more concerned with theology than with life
  - we need to understand that what we believe has a profound impact on the way we live
- there is great doubt on the trustworthiness and authority of the Bible
- maybe it's time for us as individual believers to follow the example of David and have a time of self-evaluation
  - [Psalm 139.23-24](#) - Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if [there is any] wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.
- we are at the section on Matthew where Jesus is in His final week
- it is the time of His coming to the Jews as their long awaited Messiah, but they will reject Him as they had rejected John the Baptist
- during this last week, Jesus had things to say to the religious leaders and to the nation
- He has the same things to say to us today, and I have used this confrontation with the religious folk to look at four questions that need some serious attention

## (21.18-22) WHAT IS YOUR LIFE PRODUCING?

- on the Monday after His triumphal entry, Jesus is returning to the city of Jerusalem after an overnight stay in Bethany
- He comes to a fig tree, looking for fruit, but finds nothing
- through several Old Testament passages the fig tree was used to represent the nation of Israel

- As the fig tree was barren, so was the nation of Israel
  - they had centuries of history of rejecting God, his ways, His Word, and His prophets
  - Is the church any different
- The Lord, the King, comes to each one of use who have been saved and is looking for fruit
  - what does He see in your life?
    - not the outward things that we so often focus on
    - our actions, attitudes, words, thoughts
    - how do we act away from Church
- the disciples were amazed a how quickly the fig tree had withered from the roots
- His response is key to what needs to happen to produce godly fruit
  - have faith in God without doubting
  - trust God completely
  - pray, believing that God hears and answers prayer

### **(21.23-27) WHO SPEAKS WITH AUTHORITY INTO YOU LIFE?**

- the outwardly religious had no desire for Jesus, and challenged Him about what He had done
  - Who gives you the right to do what you do?
- He answers their question with a question of His own
- here, the very people who should have acknowledged that God was the One who had spoken through John, couldn't even give a straight answer
- they were unwilling to even consider that God had something to say
- I find it every interesting that we often do the same thing. We will discuss theology and the influence of the great preachers of the past without being aware that God wants to speak with authority into our lives
- do we really listen to what God says to us in His word
  - How's it going with all those verses you have underlined in your Bible
  - Remember the warning of James - ([James 1.22](#)) - But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

### **(21.28-32) WHAT KIND OD SON ARE YOU?**

- a comparison of those who were really obedient to the father
- those who were only religious in name were like the second son, who gave lip service, but were actually in rebellion to the rule of God

- those who realized that they were living in rebellion to God, made the decision to get right with God
- even the repentance of sinners was not enough to soften hearts of the religious dead
- which son are you?

### **(21.33-46) ARE YOU REALLY LISTENING?**

- this is another illustration from a different angle, but the message is clear - the nation of Israel is spiritually dead even though they are the people of God
- the vineyard is another illustration of the nation of Israel
- the Father sent His messengers often, but they were rejected
- finally, the Father sent His Son, whom the vinedressers (religious leaders) killed
  - Jesus was actually telling us what would happen to Him at the hand of the religious leaders
- the religious leaders rightly answer Jesus when He asked them what the Owner would do the vinedressers
  - spoke of their judgment by the Father
- Jesus then quotes from [Psalm 118.22-23](#) - The stone [which] the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing; It [is] marvelous in our eyes.
- even though the religious leaders realized that Jesus was talking about them, they refused to listen
- what about you, are you listening to what God is saying to you?

CN

October 24, 2021