

A Spiritual Fruit Inspection

Mark 11:12-14; 20-25

When Jesus was in His ministry years on earth, Jews everywhere were looking for the coming Messiah...

Many believed the timing was ripe for His coming...

So why did so many reject Jesus?

The primary reason why they rejected Him was because their FAITH was formed primarily through religious teaching, cultural setting, and disappointments...

The religious leaders were certain they would recognize the Messiah when He came...

Yet they stood face to face with Jesus and rejected Him because He didn't meet their requirements of Messiah...

The disciples believed Him to be Messiah and yet, even they didn't fully comprehend Him...

- ***They knew Messiah would be of the lineage of King David***
- ***They knew He would come as King...***

But they didn't know Messiah would be the Son of God!

Jesus: "But who do YOU say that I am?"

Peter: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus: "Flesh and blood didn't reveal that to you, but my Father in heaven..."

Even after this, His own disciples couldn't comprehend the Messiah coming as the Suffering Servant... dying for the sins of the whole world...

They didn't get it!

As a result...

Judas BETRAYED Him...

Peter DENYED Him...

They all ABANDONED Him...

Today, we look at that and think, "How could they not get this?"

I love reading the Bible!

There are some passages that bring me great encouragement!

Others that bring conviction...

Still others that seem hard to understand...

But there are also those passages that cause me to pause and ask myself some probing questions...

When Peter walked on water...

Matthew 14:30-31 (ESV)

³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

What Jesus said to His disciples on the night of His betrayal ...

John 14:12–14 (ESV)

¹² “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

These verses and many more like them cause me to ask a question.

... A question pertaining to my FAITH...

Hebrews 11:6a (ESV) — And without faith it is impossible to please him [God] ...

I want you to ask yourself this question...

QUESTION

How much of my FAITH is based on religious TEACHING, CULTURAL setting, and DISAPPOINTMENTS?

This is a MUCH bigger question that we may think...

We are in the last week of Jesus’ earthly ministry prior to His crucifixion...

The event we are going to be looking at this morning occurred during His last week before His crucifixion.

Mark 11:12–14 (ESV) — On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. ¹³ And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ And he said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard it.

1. What is Jesus INSPECTING?

Mark 11:12–14 (ESV) — On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. ¹³ And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it.

He is inspecting the productivity of our lives...

Romans 14:12 (ESV) — So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

1 Corinthians 3:11–15 (ESV) — For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— ¹³ each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer

loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

2. What is Jesus EXPECTING?

Mark 11:13 (ESV) — And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.

The fig tree blooms in March/April in Jerusalem

It, however, doesn't begin to produce figs until June.

Jesus knew these things, yet still cursed the tree

Why?

What kind of fruit is Jesus expecting? Out-of-season

Matthew 6:9–10 (ESV) — Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

John 15:1–2 (ESV) — “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

John 15:5 (ESV) — I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:1–2;5 (ESV) — “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit... I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Notice the ...

- *“bear fruit”*
- *“bear more fruit”*
- *“bear much fruit”*

3. What is Jesus REJECTING?

Mark 11:13b–14 (ESV) — ... When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. And he said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard it.

Whoa! That seems pretty extreme!

That's like giving the death penalty for a parking violation!

But what is Jesus ACTUALLY saying here?

Genesis 3:6–7 (ESV) — So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.

And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

He is rejecting the fig-leaf life of living in our own strength...

4. What is Jesus CORRECTING?

Mark 11:20–25 (ESV) — As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. 21 And Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.” 22 And Jesus answered them, “Have faith in God. 23 Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. 24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. 25 And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”

Hebrews 11:6a (ESV) — And without faith it is impossible to please him ...

How do we walk in this heavenly power?

1 John 5:4 (ESV) — 4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Luke 18:8b (ESV) – ... Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

The Lord is calling us to step OUT to the IMPOSSIBLE in order for us to step IN to the SUPERNATURAL

How much of my theology is based on religious teaching, cultural setting, and disappointment?

Mark 11:12-14, 20-25

Key question:

How much of my _____ is based on religious _____,
_____ setting, and _____?

1. What is Jesus _____?

2. What is Jesus _____?

➤ What kind? _____

3. What is Jesus _____?

4. What is Jesus _____?

Key Truth

The Lord is calling us to step _____ to the _____ in
order for us to step _____ to the _____!