

Mark: Come Follow Me
Mark 11.27-12.12
September 18, 2022

We're now a week into our last Life Group session for 2022. I hope that you're feeling back in the swing of it. Again, use this guide as a helper; tackle the questions *as you are able and have time*. You do not need to answer each one, so don't look at this sheet as an onerous task you have to take on. Just enjoy your time in the Scriptures.

Pastor Eric

Sharing: Can you think of a situation in which you grew progressively unaware of a loud noise that at first was disturbing? For example, have you ever lived by a railroad track?

It would be a good idea to go back to the beginning of Mark 11 to remind yourself what has been happening since Jesus first arrived in Jerusalem. Perhaps it's a good idea to write down the order of events and jot down the meaning of each one.

We have two scenes before us this week, and they belong together. Read **Mark 11.27-12.12**.

In last week's big clash in the temple, Jesus was the instigator, but here there is a group of them. Who are they, and what do you know about them? What's the core question they bring to Jesus? Why do you think they are asking him this? Why doesn't Jesus just plainly answer them? What's the question he asks them in return? Why are these guys in such a quandary over how to answer Jesus?

What is Jesus trying to do in the way he handled their question? What is his intention? Note the way the clash ends in verse 33. Why does he just seem to walk away without answering them?

Mark 12.1-12. Note again that all the chapter and verse breaks are artificial, they just help us keep on track. There is meant to be a flow from the previous story right into the parable Jesus now tells.

List the characters in Jesus' story and notice especially the image of the vineyard. The image of a vineyard is very significant in the Old Testament, primarily in Isaiah 5.1-7. If you have a moment, read that important passage and underscore who the vineyard represents. Jesus' story is more of an allegory than his usual parable. Who is the builder and owner of the vineyard? Who do the tenants represent? What about the various servants? The son?

Admittedly, Jesus is being a bit vague in verse 9. What do you think he means? In the last verse of the allegory, Jesus cites Psalm 118, the same passage shouted out at his triumphal entry. It's a bit of a metaphor shift, but a new building is now being built. What do you think that building is? Who's the stone that's been rejected but is the "capstone" for this new building? What happens after Jesus is done talking?

How is it that these religious leaders are guilty as charged? How is that they (and their predecessors) have beaten, shamed, and even killed the owner's servants? What were they supposed to produce from this vineyard? What had they produced instead?

*The Lord will enter into judgment
with the elders and princes of his people:
"It is you who have devoured the vineyard,
the spoil of the poor is in your houses."*
Isaiah 3:14

What's the link between their failure to bear fruit (illustrated in the parable) and the first story about these leaders not accepting Jesus' authority? How is their failure to accept God's messages the key to their failing to produce fruit?

*"It says something about the foolish hubris of those in every age and in every walk of life who think that they can seize control of everything in their lives and push God out of the picture."
David E. Garland, *The NIV Application Commentary**

If we're not really careful, how might we end up bearing the same sort of fruit as we tend to the work of the kingdom? What about in our own lives?

What did you learn about Jesus from this passage? What do you think you should do about what you've learned?