

# Reflection and Discussion Questions for Mark 11:12-25<sup>1</sup>

## Warm-up

1. For many people autumn is a favorite time of year. What are some reasons this might be so? Which season is your favorite?
2. In this time of late autumn we celebrate Thanksgiving in the U.S. What are some things we could be thankful for?
3. What are some ways you have noticed the goodness of God this past week?

## Reviewing the Word

AIM of studying all of Mark 11: To see the way in which Jesus' majesty and grace as the promised Messiah are revealed and to see the implications of this for the Christian life.

### Read together Mark 11:12-25.

1. Mark 11:11 portrays a very natural human act on Jesus' part. What would have been in his mind as he 'looked around at everything'?
2. In the light of 1 Peter 4:17, how would you apply 11:15-17 today to (i) the church in general; (ii) your church; (iii) yourself?
  - 2.1 Is the cursing of the fig tree still applicable to the Christian church? See Rev. 2:5; 3:16.
3. Mark 11:22-25 seems to suggest we can ask for whatever we like, but the rest of Jesus' teaching suggests that the faith which receives answers to prayer always operates in the context of God's Word and promises (John 15:5-8). Hence the exhortation in v. 22. Notice, too, the moral qualifications for true prayer in v. 25. How does all this fit together?
  - 3.0 Since the Dead Sea is visible from the Mount of Olives it is possible that v. 23 should be read as a specific reference to the dramatic events described in Zechariah 14:1ff, especially v.4.
    - Several allusions to Zechariah occurs in the Passion narratives (cf. also Zech. 9:9 with Mark 11:1-10; Zech 13:7 with Mark 14:27).
  - 3.1 What does this suggest of the kinds of things we should concentrate our prayers on?
  - 3.2 What does this suggest on the timing of the answers to our prayers?

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<sup>1</sup> Based on Exhaling Jesus in Mark by Danny Akin and Let's Study Mark by Sinclair Ferguson

4. CBC is a nondenominational bible church. What can be the main shortcomings of nondenominational bible churches?
5. How was the magnificent temple in Jerusalem insufficient for the ultimate plan of God? How can the church overcome those deficiencies?
6. How would you respond to someone who said Jesus was being unreasonable or even petulant when He cursed the fig tree?
7. How were the fig tree and the temple alike? Does our church or your group of partner churches exhibit any of those characteristics?
8. If hypocrisy always involves self-deception, how can a person find out if he is a hypocrite? If his church or denomination is hypocritical?
9. What is the definition of fruitlessness in regards to a Christian? a church? a denomination? What “fruit” does God see in you and your church?
10. Which is worse, a secular rip-off or a religious rip-off? Why?
11. How are our church and partner churches doing with regard to including all nations?
12. Why do you think the chief priests and scribes did not apprehend Jesus immediately? Were these valid and commendable reasons?
13. In what way is asking in prayer and forgiving in faith the opposite of what was taking place in the temple? Is our church exercising this kind of faith?

## Fruitfulness Together

In the CBC family we have adapted our purpose from Colossians 1:28 to “*Present everyone complete (or mature) in Christ*”. We envision working toward this end together by (1) living Christ-centered lives together; (2) raising up disciples; (3) multiplying gospel-communities.

1. In what ways does the *current phase* of the COVID pandemic present us with challenges in working out this purpose and vision?
2. How can we face these challenges and overcome them?
3. **Think** about the following...
  - 3.1 Did you have an *evangelistic* opportunity this past week to tell someone about the gospel (the saving work of God in the life, death, and resurrection, and reign of Jesus to rescue sinners from the right wrath of God and retire them to right relationship with him)? Did you take that opportunity? If so, how did it go?
  - 3.2 What opportunities might you have in the week ahead?
  - 3.3 Did you have a *discipleship* opportunity this past week to help someone to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ? Did you take that opportunity? If so, how did it go?
  - 3.4 What opportunities might you have in the week ahead?
4. Let us **answer** the following together...
  - 4.1 Are there some ways we can work together or support each other in evangelism and discipleship in the coming week?

- 4.2 What should we be asking God for in prayer that would help us become more faithful in the present pandemic situation?
5. What opportunities do we have to do good to someone together this week (Galatians 6:10)?

## **Prayer**

1. Gather prayer items that come to mind from the above discussion.
2. Pray for the spiritual health of our church and ourselves individually.
3. Prayer for starting more healthy communities of believers.