



Journey through the Gospel of Mark: Fruitfulness and Forgiveness

August 13, 2023

Speaker: Pastor Heather Zempel

Scripture: Mark 11:12-26, Zechariah 9:9, Isaiah 56:6-8, Jeremiah 7:9-11, Mark 4

Sermon Overview: Mark shows how Jesus leads the disciples to a higher level of understanding and faith as they journey “up” to Jerusalem. Mark connects Jesus’ cursing of a fig tree with His cleansing of the temple. Neither the fig tree nor the leaders in the temple were producing fruit. Jesus then used these pictures to teach His disciples: fruitfulness stems from faithfulness, and faithfulness is rooted in forgiveness.

Sermon Series Question:

1. Who do you say that Jesus is? Does your answer match how you live your life?

Sermon-Specific Questions:

1. Read Mark 11:15-17. The commercial activity in the temple was occurring in the outer court – the only place where Gentiles could come and pray and worship God. How was Jesus’ actions a picture of His passion for the salvation of the outcast?
2. Read Mark 11:21-23. We must plant in faith to produce good fruit. Why did Jesus curse the fig tree even though it was not the season for figs? How did Jesus use the fig tree as a picture of the temple?
3. Read Mark 11:24-25. Faithfulness is rooted in forgiveness. Why does Jesus say that we should practice forgiveness? How does unforgiveness stunt the seed of faith? Think of a situation where you have experienced deep hurt. How can you let go of your right to return eye for eye?

Digging Deeper:

1. What does faithfulness, forgiveness, and fruitfulness look like in your own life?
2. Read Galatians 5:22-23 and Mark 11:12-25. What are the fruits of the Spirit? When a tree grows fruit, for whom is the fruit? What fruit are you producing? Read Mark 4:1-20, 26-32; and 1 Corinthians 3:7-9. Knowing how good fruit grows, how can you cultivate more fruit in your life?

3. Reread Mark 1-11. Where do you see Jesus defer His preference to the will of the Father? How does He make other people's greatest good His top priority? Where do you see Him taking up His cross (before He was actually crucified)?

Practical Application:

- **New to NCC?** Whether you are new to the DC campus, Nova campus, or online in the past year, we'd love to get to know you better and answer any questions you may have. Join Pastor Mark and some of the pastoral team, Sunday, August 27, 4-6:30pm at the Capital Turnaround campus. [Register here](#). Child care is available.
- **Worship with NCC Worship at Nats Park!** Saturday, September 2, 4:05pm. To purchase tickets and get more info, [click here](#).
- Make a daily discipline and connect with NCC Daily. (Download the [NCC app](#) to find our plan).
- House of Prayer is on summer hiatus. The fall season of [House of Prayer](#) begins, Thursday, September 7, 7:14pm