

# MARK

*The Week that Changed the World*

CHAPTERS 11-16

## A Fruitful or Fruitless Life This Year Mark 11:12-26

### The problem: an empty unfruitful life.

- **Jesus curses the fig tree that looked prosperous but was fruitless. Mark 11:13** - *"Seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves..."*
- **Jesus curses the Temple "worshippers" that looked prosperous but were fruitless. Mark 11:15** - *"Then they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves..."*

**Application:** We can appear fruitful, even doing "the Lord's work," but in fact are fruitless to Jesus. It is easy to be deceived into a false appearance of prosperity when in fact we are fruitless for what really matters to God.

**Jeremiah 9:23-24 contrasts God's view of a Fruitless and Fruitful life** (see Digging Deeper on the back)

**We must choose from two options: Mark 11:17** - *"Jesus said, 'Is it not written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL THE NATIONS?' But you have made it a ROBBERS' DEN."*

### Two options for us:

- **"A robber's den"** - We pursue our personal desires, selfish purposes and neglect God.
- **"A house of prayer"** - We pursue God's priorities as we prayerfully seek to know Him and live for Him.

### The solution: two ways to gain a fruitful productive fulfilling life. "Have faith in God."

**Mark 11:20-22** *"Peter said to (Jesus), 'Rabbi, look, the fig tree which You cursed has withered.'" And Jesus answered saying to them, 'Have faith in God.'"*

**1<sup>st</sup> - Pray with faith in the power of God. Mark 11:22-24** - *"Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him.' Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you."*

- **Faith** that no problem is too big or small to ask God for His help.
- **Your Fruit:** God's powerful response.

*What obstacle (mountain) will you prayerfully ask God to move for you this year?*

**2<sup>nd</sup> - Pray with forgiveness for any person. Mark 11:25-26** *"Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions."*

- **Forgive** = aphiemi: apo = from and hiemi = to send. "To be set free from this offense."
- **Your Fruit:** a new intimacy with God where you experience His mercy and grace.

*What offense or wound will you ask God to remove for you this year?*

## Digging Deeper + LifeGroup Discussion:

What goals or desires do you have for 2019? What are you praying for this year?

It is hard to imagine that anyone wants to live a fruitless life. A fruitless and fruitful priority for our lives is contrasted in Jeremiah 9:23 - <sup>23</sup> *Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; <sup>24</sup> but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.*

Vs. 23 is fruitless living: I boast about my wisdom (my intellect knowledge degrees), my power (my position at work, people and things I control) and my wealth. It is fruitless when I gain my identity and value in these three areas.

Vs. 24 is fruitful living: Boast that I understand and know the Lord and pursue His love, justice and righteousness. I delight in what the Lord delights in. My identity and value: to know the Lord and pursue His love, justice and righteousness.

Which verse, 23 or 24, best describes your priorities this year? What steps will you take to pursue a fruitful life?

**Fruitful living comes from a prayerful faith in God.** Mark 11:23-24

What conditions and promises on prayer do the following verses offer you? Matthew 6:9-10; John 14:13-15; John 15:7; John 16:23-24; 1 John 5:14-15. How do these verses help your prayer life?

**Fruitful living comes from forgiveness for others and from God.** Mark 11:25-26

Two key words describe forgiveness.

1. Aphemi in Mark 11:25 "apo" = from and "hiemi" = to send. Forgiveness is "setting free" the fault or sin of another.
2. Charisomai in 2 Corinthians 2:10 from charis meaning "grace." Forgiveness is giving an offender grace or kindness. Grace is unfair and gives someone something they do not deserve.

Is there anyone in your life to forgive? Prayerfully ask the Lord for strength to set them free and offer them grace. This also sets your own heart free from bitterness and pain. You may need to seek counsel and support from a godly mature person to help you process this forgiveness.

## In Response:

**COMMUNION:** Communion is a "meal" for believers in Jesus Christ to help us give thanks and remember His death on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. The matzah bread represents the body of Christ given for us. The cup of juice represents the blood of Christ that was shed to pay the price for our sins. We are called to examine ourselves before taking communion (Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-34). We typically pass communion elements the first Sunday of the month. Most other weeks, communion is available at tables around the room after the sermon.

**GIVING:** The offering is received during each Sunday service. This is a way to express a wholehearted trust in God and worship Him through giving. It is also an act of obedience to God that helps free us from money having mastery over us. Tithing is a biblical command of 10% as a baseline of giving, but the New Testament calls us as followers of Jesus to give even more. Our prayer is that you plan ahead to give purposefully and joyfully to God, helping to further ministry locally and globally in Jesus' name. Discover ways to give on the front of the bulletin or [calvarylife.org/give](http://calvarylife.org/give)

**PRAYER POINTS:** These locations at the front right and left of the Worship Center will have people available to pray with you during the time of singing after the sermon and after the service as well. These people are excited to pray with you about anything in your life, including praying to tell Jesus that you believe in Him as God and trust Him for salvation. They will also pray for any health needs, stresses, worries, family members, temptations or anything else.

**PRAYER ROOM:** The Prayer Room is located at the front right of the Worship Center Auditorium through the doorway behind the Prayer Point. This is a quiet space that you can go to at anytime during the service to be able to pray and reflect on what God is doing in your heart.

