

Mark Chapter Eleven (Part One) – Teaching Notes

Introduction: A key idea in Mark is that Jesus is the servant of God. Today, we hope to discuss Jesus triumphal entry and cleansing of the Temple.

Body:

Read Mark 11:1-11

II. The Sacrifice of the Servant. A. Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem on Sunday. Jesus sent His disciples to get a colt for Him. They followed His instructions. As he entered Jerusalem, the people received Him with great joy, as a political messiah. He retires in Bethany with His disciples.

Applications –

- **Sendable disciples.** Notice in vss. 1-7 that Jesus had sendable disciples. This seems to be such a small matter, until you observe how few sendable disciples are in the church. First, there are two few people who can receive instructions and then carry them out with their name not being called. Some people lack the skills needed to do the work. And perhaps even more lack the humility needed to follow instructions about where to go, what to say, and what to do. Resistance to learning the Membership Orientation material and using the Pastor's teaching notes are evidences of the difficulty of finding sendable disciples. Second, leaders must work on developing sendable disciples. If leaders don't have followers and helpers then their leadership is extremely limited. Thus, the importance of Pastoral teaching, training, and interacting should be obvious. Third, there is a great need for more people to love God enough to be sendable disciples. This idea calls for the skill and will to do the job under the authority of the one God has sent to lead. *Let's work on having more sendable disciples for the sake of carrying out God's will for our lives.*

- **Faulty worship.** Notice in vss. 9-10 that the people had faulty praise. The placing of garments, waving of palms, and shouting of hosanna were expressions of praise and homage. However, the people were excited about a political messiah, someone to overtake Roman authority and restore the Jews to their own kingdom like that of King David. They were not interested in the spiritual messiahship of Jesus. In other words, they were very enthusiastic about the wrong thing. First, let's make sure we know what we are supposed to be shouting about. Study should come before worship, so our zeal will be based on knowledge. Woe unto those who shout without studying. They are often like stony hearers. Second, let's make sure we have some enthusiastic praise and worship. The more we learn about God, the more we ought to praise Him. The more we learn about corporate worship having a duty to build up the saints, the more we should bring energy to the worship, instead of soaking up energy by being dry bumps on a log. *Let's work on godly worship that has both zeal and knowledge.*

- **Timing.** Notice in vs. 11 that Jesus assessed the situation in Jerusalem, retired in Bethany, and will return to Jerusalem in the morning. There was a time table to be followed. If we are not careful, we will jump into matters before it is time. Some things are wrong, but it is not time to act. And sometimes it is time to act, and we are stuck in assessing or retiring. *Let's work on following God's time table.* An example of this application is that fixing a leak in the roof calls for researching what is the nature of the leaking, what quality contractor should do the work, and do we have the money and agreement to fix it. Given these things are in order then it is time to fix the leak. A more individualistic example may be that of getting your health together. If you are obese then you may want to check with your doctor about what is reasonable for you. Given your health condition, there may be some food restrictions or exercises that you cannot handle. After assessing and making up your mind to improve your weight then all that is left is to discipline yourself to limit calories and increase the burning of calories. Don't get stuck in assessing and retiring. But rushing into action without assessing and the energy to execute can be a grave mistake as well.

Read Mark 11:12-19

B. Cursing of the Fig Tree and Cleansing of the Temple on Monday. Jesus curses a figless fig tree. He cleanses the Temple of those things that are not aligned with the Temple's purpose. Religious leaders determined to kill Him. He retires outside the city with His disciples.

Applications –

- **Bearing fruit.** Notice in vss. 12-14 that the figless fig tree was cursed. The strange thing about Mark's account of this episode is that it was not the season for figs, but yet the tree was cursed by Jesus. Perhaps Jesus' hunger played a part in the cursing. *Let's work on bearing fruit, now.* God is hungry and desirous of His people to move past being lukewarm to being great disciples and churches. Too many are not bearing the fruits of study, serve, and give. Too many are not bearing the fruit of being a great and humble cabinet member. Too many are procrastinating. This episode should move us to do what God is calling us to do, right now, or face the negative consequences.

- **Keeping the main thing, the main thing.** Notice in vs. 17 the importance of keeping the main thing, the main thing. The Jews had put a greater priority on making money and doing what was convenient (i.e., short cut through the court yard) than on God's desire for the Temple to be known as a place of prayer for all people, including Gentiles. In other words, they put what seemed right to them above the revealed will of God. *Let's work on keeping the main thing, the main thing.* The mission of God's church is to evangelize and edify God's way. We should not allow anything else to be more important than the mission that God has given us. On a more individualistic note, the mission of the husband is to love and lead his wife. The wife is to submit to and be in partnership with her husband. Singles are live godly lives that are known for great service and celibacy. We should all strive to keep God's will above our own wills. /// Sometimes we have to tear some things up, in order to get from where we are to where God would have us to be. *Let's strive to have the wisdom and courage to do what is needed to get to where God would have for us to be.* As I reflect on this church, there is some teaching and training that is much needed to replace items that are not in line with God's will. For example, all teachers and managers must be trained for service. All leaders need to set an example of studying, serving, and giving. Some will allow me to lead them into doing better. Some will allow me to replace them peacefully. Some will simply fall by the way side. And unfortunately, some will go kicking and screaming. More closer to home for many of us is the reality that sometimes our relationships must be torn up for the sake of getting to where God wants us to be. Shaking and discipleship are always in tension with one another. Consequently, someone needs to leave here and evict his or her unwedded bed partner.

- **Religious and hostile opposition.** Notice in vs. 18 that fear and conflict can inspire murder. The religious leaders were so outdone by the bold actions of Jesus that they ignored the law that said "Thou shall not kill" and conspired to kill Jesus anyhow. As we strive to obey God's will, we should brace ourselves for hostile opposition. The devil loves to use religious people who can cause harm in the name of the Lord. On one hand, *let's brace ourselves for such hostility.* On the other hand, *let's make sure we don't allow the devil to use us.* When what we do causes harm, we need to revisit what we are doing. Sometimes it is God's will to cause harm (e.g., cleansing the Temple; church discipline I Cor. 5:6-7; II Thess. 3:14-15). But we should make sure that it is God's will.

Conclusion: Let's work on being servants of God. God has much for those who obey His will.