

# Mark 11

Lesson for Sunday, August 13, 2023

SUMMARY: Jesus fulfills prophecy by riding triumphantly into Jerusalem on a donkey. He drives the corrupt merchants from the Temple and declines to answer a challenge to His authority by His enemies when they can't answer a question He asks them.

1. The Celebration (vs. 1-11)
  - a. The preparation (vs. 1-7)
  - b. The parade (vs. 8-11)
2. The Cleansing (vs. 15-19)
  - a. Jesus removes the money tables from the Temple (vs. 15-16)
  - b. Jesus rebukes the money takers in the Temple (vs. 17-19)
3. The Cursing (vs. 12-14, 20-26)
  - a. The reason for this judgment (vs. 12-14)
  - b. The results of this judgment (vs. 20-21)
  - c. The reflection on this judgment (vs. 22-26)
4. The Conflict (vs. 27-33)
  - a. Their demand (vs. 27-28)
  - b. His defense (vs. 29-30)
  - c. Their dilemma (vs. 31-32)
  - d. Their defeat (vs. 33)

## INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Option: What reasons do people reject God, Jesus or the Christian faith? *Allow for discussion...*
- ⇒ Mark 11-16 record the final week of our Lord's earthly life. Mark devotes more than one-third of his Gospel to "Passion Week."
- ⇒ By the time we get to today's text, Jesus has just cleansed and cursed the temple for its corruptions (vs. 11-25). In response, the religious leaders "sought how they might destroy Him" (18).
- ⇒ Mark 11:27-12:44 records five temple controversies in Jerusalem that parallel five earlier controversies in Galilee (Mark 2:1-3:6). In both cases His opponents are the religious leaders.
- ⇒ In this first controversy, we will see some common reasons people are not willing to come and follow Jesus. Not much has changed in 2000 years! The same kinds of reasons cause people to refuse Him today.

## BIBLE STUDY:

1. People don't want to submit to Jesus's authority (vs. 27-28)
  - a. Jesus has returned to Jerusalem and the religious authorities are looking for Him (27). These men were supersensitive to anything that could threaten their authority, and Jesus was clearly a threat.
  - b. They question Jesus regarding His authority, which clearly, they reject. The immediate context of their interrogation is His actions during the previous day in the temple.
  - c. In essence they are asking, "Who gave you the right to wreak havoc in our temple?"
  - d. Throughout Jesus's ministry, the issue of authority is a frequent topic. See Mark 1:22, 27; 2:10-11.
  - e. Jesus teaches with authority, casts out demons with authority and heals with authority. He does what only God can do! But the religious leaders request His ordination papers!
  - f. If Jesus admits He has no religious credentials and that He is acting on His own authority, He would probably lose the respect and following of the people and the Pharisee's would win.

- g. On the other hand, if He makes a claim to divine authority, then they could charge Him with blasphemy, arrest Him and start the process for His death. Either way, the religious leaders would win.
  - h. The question of authority is important. We all have a source of authority in our lives, someone or something that guides us and drives us, something that rules.
  - i. For most of us, like the religious leaders, our supreme authority is ourselves. We are not really interested in surrendering that rule to anyone else.
2. People refuse to examine honestly the evidence (vs. 29-32)
- a. Jesus turns the tables on the religious leaders. His counter question was a common debating technique among rabbis in that day.
  - b. Jesus points to the ministry of John the Baptist. Like Jesus, John came preaching a message of repentance. And, like Jesus, he bypassed the temple and the official religious authorities.
  - c. The issue for the religious leaders was the people's opinion of John. They understood what the people thought of John and verse 32 says they feared their reaction.
  - d. As the leaders huddle to determine their response, they do not deny the evidence. They struggle with how to set it aside. In spite of the evidence, the religious leaders had rejected John, just like they were rejecting Jesus.
  - e. Here's the point: The evidence was there, but the hearts of these men would not embrace it. They may attempt to put forth a rational argument against Jesus, but in the end it an emotional reaction rooted in fear of losing control, losing their position, and losing their way of life.
  - f. This is just as true for many unbelievers today. The problem is not the external evidence, it is the internal dissonance. The real issue are the idols of the heart. "If I accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior then my life will never be the same. But I like my life."
3. People fear men more than they fear God (vs. 32-33)
- a. Few things in life are more paralyzing than fear. What do most people fear? *Public speaking, snakes, heights, needles, flying, etc.*
  - b. In this text God's Word addresses a fear that is common to all people: the fear of man.
  - c. Verse 32 reveals what is at the core of the religious authorities being: "they feared the people." So they refused to answer Jesus.
  - d. What a sad picture! What was expedient and safe was more important to them than what was true and right. They would rather keep their position and live a lie than submit to Christ and walk in the truth.
  - e. The fear of man hindered their movement toward Jesus. Their fear of what others would think paralyzed them.

#### CONCLUSION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ Be honest with yourself today. How much of your hesitation to follow Jesus completely is really a mask to hide your fear of what faith in Christ might cost you socially, culturally, relationally, and financially?
- ⇒ What is the challenge in submitting to Christ's authority? What are the rewards?
- ⇒ How does the fear of man affect us? What does a fearless disciple look like?