

Palm Sunday 2025
From Hero to Zero and a Dead Fig Tree
Mark 11:1-25 and Mark 15:6-15
April 13, 2025

I. Declaring the TRUTH but not UNDERSTANDING. (11:1-11; Mark 8:29)

- A. Jesus RIDES into a long awaited MOMENT. (11:1-7; Zech 9:9)**
- B. The people PROCLAIM the coming KING. (11:8-10; 2 Kings 9:12-13; Ps. 118:25-26)**

Have you ever had a teacher tell you to “show your work”? Sometimes we may have the right answer, but no clue as to how we got there or what it actually means. Palm Sunday is a good example of people understanding that Jesus was the Messiah, but totally missing the implications of that truth.

1. Kid’s Question: When have you had a chance to see someone famous? What was that like for you?
2. What stands out to you about the ride Jesus makes into Jerusalem as Mark tells it? What questions do you have about the event?

II. What a DIFFERENCE a few days MAKES. (15:6-15)

- A. The ONES who should see DON’T. (15:1,3; Mark 8:31-33)**
- B. They are BLINDED by their own SELVES. (15:9-11)**
- C. The CROWD follows right ALONG. (15:12-15)**

Because they weren’t clear on what the Messiah had come to do, the actions of Jesus, coupled with the rejection by the Jewish leaders made the circumstances change quite quickly.

3. Place yourself in the shoes of those chanting by the road on Palm Sunday. Do you think you might have been disillusioned by Jesus if you were them? Why or why not?
4. When has envy pushed you into making bad decisions? How can we be aware of envy in our own lives?

III. Mark makes a FIG TREE sandwich. (11:12-24)

- A. LOOKING but not FINDING food. (11:12-13)**
- B. Understanding CURSES and fig tree PRODUCTION. (v.13; Hos. 9:10)**
- C. This isn’t JESUS’ first FIG TREE. (Lk.13:6-9)**
- D. The TEMPLE has LEAVES but no FRUIT. (11:15-18; Jer. 8:13; Mic. 7:1)**

The weird part of these texts is this story about the cursing of the fig tree. It seems a little out of place, and makes Jesus appear a little more hangry than we would expect from the Messiah. But Mark puts it here for a reason, so let's dig into it a bit.

5. What have you thought about this fig tree story in the past? How do you see it now? Do you still have unresolved questions about it?
6. What's the difference between understanding a curse as a judgment on bad actions and a way of bringing bad things to a person or situation? How do you think "curse" was used in this passage?

IV. Our own RESPONSE during HOLY WEEK. (Mark 8:29)

- A. Speaking TRUTH or SURRENDERING to it? (Mark 11 and 15; Is. 29:13)**
- B. An APPEARANCE of fruit when there is NONE? (Ps. 139:23-24; Gal. 5:22-23)**
- C. LETTING Jesus be JESUS. (Mark 11:1-11; Jn 6:15)**
- D. FOLLOWING His WAY, not OURS. (Mark 15:12; Mark 8:34)**

Today we celebrate the arrival of the Messiah into Jerusalem. We talk about it, we sing songs that express our excitement and joy, but do we understand what accepting Jesus as our Messiah actually looks like? How will we respond to our king riding into our lives on a donkey?

7. How can you tell if the truth you know is just words or something that you live by? What role does Christian Community play in this.
8. In ways does the call of Jesus to "take up your cross and follow" challenge you where you are in your life right now? What does taking up your cross look like this coming week?