



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Show no Fruits!

**Matthew 22:18-22**

**Mark 11:12-14 & 20-24**

**Matthew 21:18-22**, *Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. <sup>19</sup>And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away. <sup>20</sup>And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither away so soon?" <sup>21</sup>So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done. <sup>22</sup>And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."*

It is Passover time in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is filled with pilgrims.

Jesus walked in with multitudes from Perea, Jericho, Bethany and Bethpage.

A great multitude from the city move out because the word is out that Jesus is coming.

Jesus got on a colt, the foal of an ass, and rode triumphantly into the city of Jerusalem. The people were rejoicing and making huge cry *“Hosannas to the son of David, blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord”*.

They hailed Him as their Messiah, who could raise the dead and had demonstrated that by raising Lazarus.

They believed that Jesus would now come as the conquering king to throw the Roman and liberate the children of Israel from their bondage.

The parade ended at the temple.

After the conclusion of that procession, He returned to Bethany.

Jesus spent the night in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

The next day Jesus again entered Jerusalem.

This time He went directly to the temple not to the Fort Antonio.

Upon entering the temple, He said, *“My house should be a house of prayer, but you made it den of thieves.”*

Jesus cleansed the temple. As a result of that, the religious leaders began to look for a way to kill Him because He was a threat to their system.

Again, Jesus went back to Bethany and stayed there.

The next day Jesus came again to the city of Jerusalem confrontation with the religious leaders.

That confrontation is recorded for us in verses 23 and following.

When Jesus came to cleanse the temple and the next day to confront the religious leaders on both the days there was a fig tree on their way.

The Gospel of Mark tells us the first meeting with the fig tree was on the first day He came in to cleanse the temple. **Mark 11:12-14.**

Then the second day, when He came back again, there was a second encounter with the fig tree. **Mark 11:20-24.**

Matthew condenses both of those into just one narrative. In **Matthew 21:18-22** which we will study today.

Matthew isn't so concerned with the chronology, but he was concerned about the message of the fig tree, and we ought to as well.

Jesus came as King and this was foretold many times.

**Genesis 49:10**, *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*

As we study the Old Testament, this has been repeatedly told. In **2 Samuel 7**, God promised that David would have a greater son, who would be an eternal King.

In **Psalm 2, Psalm 45, and Psalm 72**. There is the promise of a King coming.

**Psalm 2**, the one who would have power over the nations, who would rule them with a rod of iron, the nation's being placed under His feet.

**Isaiah 9:6**, *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

**Zechariah 9:9**, *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.*

Micah tells us also that the King would be none other than God.

**Micah 5:2**, *“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”*

Jesus on Friday rode in, listened to the jubilant shouts and the hosannas and accepted the coronation.

Having been affirmed and inaugurated as King, He then proceeds immediately to do two kingly things.

The first thing He did was cleanse the temple.

The second thing He did was curse the tree.

Both of those are acts of sovereign authority.

Jews believed that their King would be a military leader.

- ✓ He would save the State of Israel from Roman rule.
  - ✓ He would bring the prosperity promised in the Old Testament.
  - ✓ He would be an economically successful leader.
  - ✓ He would bring together all the factions of society together.
  - ✓ He would be able to make it all work out the way it was supposed to.
- 
- Instead of attacking Rome, He attacked Judaism.
  - Instead of becoming a conqueror, He was a confronter.

- Instead of talking about revolution, He talked about righteousness.
- Instead of cleaning out the enemy, He cleaned out His own house.

This was not consistent with what they expected.

This was not the kind of King they looked for, and still.

- They are still not interested in the Jesus of the Bible.
- They are still not interested in the one who is the Son of Righteousness.
- They are still looking for a military leader.
- They are still looking for an economic deliverer.

This is the reason that they will make peace with the Antichrist, mentioned in **Daniel 9**.

Still, it's hard to genuine Christian in Israel.

The State of Israel is not interested in that kind of Messiah.

They are not interested in One who will confront them about their sins.

They are interested in a political, military, economic, and social Saviour.

Nothing really has changed. They misunderstand the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Messiah today as much as they did in the past.

When Jesus comes, just after He has been inaugurated King,

He does two things immediately.

- Cleanse the temple.
- Curse the tree.

They are monumentally significant things.

- Cleansing the temple was a denunciation of their religion.
- Cursing the tree was a denunciation of them as a nation.
  
- Cleansing of the temple was a denunciation of their worship.
- Cursing of the tree was a denunciation of their nation.

So, instead of overthrowing their enemies, in a sense He denounces them.

It is inconceivable to them that their own Messiah could come and condemn them. That is why they put Him to death.

They said it, *“We will not have this man to reign over us.”*

**Pilate** even asked Him, *“Are you a king?”*

Jesus replied, *“You said it, but My kingdom is not of this world. I Am a King, but not the kind of king you are used to.”*

What we see here are two acts of kingly authority.  
Cleansing of the temple and the cursing of the tree.

## **The cursing of the tree.**

### **1. The predicament.**

*V 18, Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry.*

This is returning after His coronation He was hungry.  
So human.

Jesus was hungry.

**How did He get hungry?**

**Hadn't Mary, Martha, and Lazarus provided food for Him?**

Surely, they would have.

In Israel breakfast is a big thing.

A very big event.

They would have provided that. But it may have been that He had been praying or having a spiritual battle.

Walking from Bethany to Jerusalem is uphill and rough road and He was hungry.

The divine God, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and He gets hungry. But that is the essence of His humanness.

Along with Him are the disciples, desperately in need of another profound lesson about to receive.

**V 19**, *And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away.*

Coming to a fig tree in Israel isn't that unusual. Fig trees are very common in that part of the world.

But this fig tree was unlike most fig trees.

In the first place, it shouldn't have even been there with leaves on it, because it was only April. Though the fig trees bloom twice a year, the early fruit doesn't come until May or June.

For a fig tree to have leaves in April was very uncommon. Maybe in Jericho they had already eaten the figs, because everything blooms early in Jericho.

But up on the hilltop, it just didn't happen that in April fig trees bloomed and bore fruit.

It is almost like our cherry blossom in London, England.





Our Lord, in His hunger, sees this fig tree on the roadside. Jesus wasn't invading someone's private orchard. It was just a roadside tree.

*He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves,*

Jesus was attracted to it because it did have leaves. Palestine was a land of fig trees.

**Deuteronomy 8:8**, *a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey;*

The delicious fruit of the fig was abundant in the land.

The spies in **Numbers 13** went into the land, came out and reported that there were fig trees. A demonstration of the great treasure of that land.

**Zechariah 3:10**, *In that day,' says the Lord of hosts, 'Everyone will invite his neighbour Under his vine and under his fig tree.'* ”

Someday in the kingdom, every man is going to sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree.

The fig tree is a symbol of prosperity and wealth.

- The presence of fig trees is the mark of the prosperity of the land.

- The absence of fig trees, the mark of the judgment of the land.

In one period of Israel's history, they made a law that every man was taxed according to the number of trees he had on his land. So, everybody went out and cut down all their trees.

But the fig trees are coming back to the land. Their absence now may be a mark of God's judgment on that prosperity.

Fig trees can get **20 feet high**, and then get **20 feet wide**, and their great shade trees.

**John 1:48**, *Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."*

The fig trees bear fruit twice a year.  
May/June and then later in the year.

The fruit comes before the leaves.  
If you see a tree with leaves then you can expect a fruit.

When the Lord saw the tree with leaves.  
It should have had fruit because it had leaves.

The Lord came near because He was anticipating having His hunger met by this wayside tree.

When He got there it says He found nothing on it but leaves only.

It was a fruitless tree, and it became for Him a profound illustration. Jesus is the master of capturing the illustrations out of nature. He uses water, birds, animals, weather, wineskins, trees, and flowers.

Jesus uses anything and everything to teach spiritual truth.

## **2. The parable.**

**V 19**, *and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again."*

Peter said He cursed the tree.

**Mark 11:21**, *And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away."*

Jesus pronounced its destruction.

He pronounced its death.

He killed that tree with His word.

**V 19**, *Immediately the fig tree withered away.*

When we study the comparative passage in the Gospel of Mark on the first day, He cursed it and when they came back to same place on the second day, they saw it was already dead.

It wasn't dying but it was already dead.

It had died immediately from His curse.

They just didn't see its death until the next day. He cursed it and it died.

### **What is the parable?**

Obvious.

### **The context. The circumstances.**

The first day Jesus on His way to the temple, He stops and curses a fig tree because it has nothing but leaves. It has a pretense of fruit, but no fruit.

Then from there, Jesus goes straight to the Temple and cleanses it.

That fig tree is symbolic of Israel.

The leaves are symbolic of Israel's religious activity.

The fruitlessness is they have a form of godliness but without fruit.

**Romans 10:2**, *For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.*

- ✓ Jesus cleansed the temple, and thus He denounced their religion.
- ✓ Jesus cursed the fig tree, and thus He denounces their nation as fruitless.

Fruit is always the indicator of salvation.

**Matthew 7:16**, *You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?*

**Matthew 7:20**, *Therefore by their fruits you will know them.*  
chapter 7, and our Lord simply says, in the Sermon on the Mount, “By their fruits you shall” – what? – “know them.”

**Matthew 13:8**, *But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*

**John 15:5**, *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

Fruit is ever and always the manifestation of true salvation.

What God is saying here is Israel is a nation with a pretense of religion that is unsaved, unredeemed, lost, and cut off from God.

Jesus has in mind not only Israel but particularly Jerusalem, which demonstrates this holy zeal for God's name, which busily engages in religious activity, all utterly fruitless.

It is still so.

### **When you watch thousands of people laying their hands on the wall and wailing and praying?**

Even today there are plenty of religious activities but there is no real fruit.

Exactly that is what our Lord saw, and He pronounces judgment.

It has been a patient pronouncement. It could have been done a lot earlier.

**Luke 13:6-9**, *He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'"*

Give it a little more time Lord.

The Lord did.

It wasn't just after the three years of His ministry that the fulfillment of that curse came. It wasn't until 70 A.D., when the Romans came and sacked the city and totally leveled the temple.

The Lord was patient, but He cursed the tree.  
It never did bring fruit, and it still hasn't brought fruit.

The cleansing of the temple and the cursing of the tree is very dramatic.

No wonder they hated Jesus Christ and wanting Him dead. Jerusalem and Judaism is spiritually fruitless, sinful, cursed for judgment.

This is the message of Jesus as the King on the day one of after His coronation.

They really didn't expect their Messiah to come to deliver that word.

But had they forgotten what **John the Baptist** said.

**Matthew 3:10-12**, *And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup>I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is*

*mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.<sup>12</sup> His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”*

He was pronouncing judgment.

**V 19,** *“Immediately the fig tree withered away.”*

When He cursed it, it died.

**Mark 11:20-21** the next morning when they came by it had died from the roots up. It had dried up.

**V 20,** *And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, “How did the fig tree wither away so soon?”*

It died that fast. The next day they came by it was already dead.

What a symbol of what was coming to Israel.  
It's suggestive of Old Testament passages.

Deuteronomy chapter 28.

**Deuteronomy chapter 27,** deals with whether or not Israel's going to be blessed or cursed. Whether they are going to be in the land or out of the land.

**Deuteronomy 28:1-3**, *“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.<sup>2</sup> And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God: <sup>3</sup>“Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country.*

Further blessing is pronounced until 14.

**Deuteronomy 28:15-20**, *“But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: <sup>16</sup>“Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. <sup>17</sup>“Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. <sup>18</sup>“Cursed shall be the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. <sup>19</sup>“Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out. <sup>20</sup>“The Lord will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.*

The curses go all the way to **verse 68**.

**Deuteronomy 28:49**, *The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand,*

You obey then you are blessed.

You don't obey then you are cursed.

**Isaiah 5:1-5**, *Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill. <sup>2</sup>He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes. <sup>3</sup>“And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. <sup>4</sup>What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes? <sup>5</sup>And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down.*

*I have planted a noble vine: **The nation Israel.***

*And a very fruitful hill: **the land of Canaan.***

*I took all the stones out: **Removed all the enemies.***

*I built a tower around it: insulated it with a protective ceremonial system and social system.*

*I gave a winepress: sacrificial system.*

**What more could I have done to my vineyard?**

**Answer:** Nothing more.

God cursed the people.

In chapter 5, it is cursed six times.

They are cursed.

It was all established in **Deuteronomy 28**.

You obey then you are blessed.

You disobey then you are cursed.

They disobeyed, repeatedly and they are continuing today to disobey.

Israel today is still under a curse from God.

Not a very happy message to give them, but that's the fact, because they continue to reject the Messiah.

They continue to demonstrate a religion that is leaves without fruit. It's religion without reality, and they are cursed.

➤ **They are preserved, but they are not blessed.**

They are preserved because God will redeem them in the future when the Messiah comes.

What we are witnessing now in Israel is not the regathering of the nation prophesied in the Bible. That regathering is going to be done by the Messiah in a redeeming work.

They are regathering themselves on a political basis not being regathered redemptively or messianically.

It has been created as a political state, but they are still cursed. They know no rest. They patrol their borders constantly. Everybody's in a constant state of alert. Everywhere you go there are soldiers who are armed with machine guns all over the place.

They believe that the whole Arab world, at any moment, would like to put them out of existence.

The Holocaust Museum is a reminder to them to reiterate that is what our enemies want to do to us again.

The Arab world, whatever Allah says, we do. If Allah says we have peace with Israel, we have peace. If Allah say we have a holy war, we have a holy war.”

They don't know what Allah's going to say.

But if somebody stands up, like Khomeini or anybody else and says, "Allah says war with Israel," then they know war will break out. They are in a constant state of vigilance.

Life for them in Israel is reduced to the basic things:  
Survival and defense.

They are under a curse.  
The curse that our Lord pronounced upon them.

God preserves His people in an unblessed situation, and someday they are going to enter into that blessing.

Someday they are going to look on Him whom they have pierced and mourn for Him as an only son.  
Someday the people are going to be redeemed.

Then they will know what it is to be at rest from their enemies.  
Then they will know what it is to be at peace.

But until then, they are so paranoid about that, that they are student up in a perfect condition to accept a contract with the Antichrist, who will bring them a moment of deliverance, a moment of prosperity, a false security.

They are still a cursed people.  
So, the parable is understood. Powerful.

### **3. The Principle.**

Remember that the Lord had His disciples with Him.  
The Lord wants to use this to teach them something.

#### **a) Profession without reality is cursed.**

It doesn't do any good to profess to be religious if there is no fruit. A profound lesson.

While it is a national illustration in the parable, it certainly has individual implications.

If your life is a life of leaves without fruit, you are cursed and doomed just like the nation Israel was.

God is going to judge the religious.

God is going to damn to eternal hell those people who have had a show of religion without the truth.

The first principle.

If you are living a lie, if you are masquerading as one who is religious, but there is no fruit in your life then you are cursed.

But there is a lesson that He wants to give to His disciples. There's a principle that they need, too. Jesus takes this illustration, and He turns it to a spiritual principle for them.

**V 21-22**, *So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done. <sup>22</sup>And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."*

This doesn't seem to be connected with the lesson. It isn't really connected with the lesson of the parable, but it's connected with their response to the lesson.

Their response to the lesson's in verse 20.

**V 20**, *And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither away so soon?"*

What power! This is what they are saying. Jesus cursed that thing, and it was dead.

So, Jesus says to them that if you have faith and don't doubt, you will not only be able to do things like that, but you could say to this Mount of Olives be cast into the sea.

The sea that was on the backside of that would have been the **Dead Sea, 4,000 feet** down

Obviously, that's not literal but a picture of power.

In Jewish literature, a rooter up of mountains was a metaphor for a great spiritual leader.

In the Babylonian Talmud that they call the great rabbis "rooter up of mountains." People who could remove great obstacles, solve great problems, people who express great power.

Rooting up mountains became a metaphor for dealing with difficulty, dealing with impossible situations.

Lord is saying that I want you to know that You have this power.

This power is available to you through faith. If you would believe and not doubt, you can see God's power.

**John 14:12**, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father."*

There is great power available.

**V 22**, *"All things whatever you shall ask in prayer believing you shall receive."*

They are saying, “Lord, what power. You wish that tree dead, and it was dead.”

Jesus says that you have got the same power available. You have got the same power.

He turns it into a lesson about prayer for them, that you can see the same power working if you believe.

Faith is not faith in nothing, and faith is not faith in things that you think ought to be, and faith is not faith in you or your ideas or your dreams or your ambitions.

Faith is placing your confidence in God.

Faith is placing confidence in something you know that is true. It is believing in God as God has revealed Himself.

**V 21**, *if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain,*

God is able and will do what He says He will do, then you can see it done.

People do preach and say if you have enough faith, you can have everything. It is not so!

There are many false teachers who preach saying that if you have the faith to do it and just claim it, it's positive confession faith. You claim it. It is yours.

Recently a well-known Tamil preacher who said the same thing for Corona and then he finally blamed it on the people saying that someone did not have enough faith that is the reason. Same thing for the election too!

This is not what Jesus is talking about. Having faith is trusting in the revelation of God.

If we know that something is consistent with God's mind, if we know it is consistent with His will, if we know it is consistent with His purpose and desire, then we believe that, and we can see that come to pass.

It is faith in God as God is and God as God has revealed Himself to be.

## **b) Petition.**

**How is that appropriated?**

**V 22**, by prayer.

Our faith is activated in petition.

**James 4:3**, *You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

**1 John 5:14 -15**, *Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears*

us. <sup>15</sup>And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

**John 14:13-14**, *And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

But as we ask consistent with God's revelation of Himself, consistent with the name of Jesus Christ and His purpose, consistent in an unselfish way to the glory of God, we can know we will receive it.

Remember earlier the disciples came back to Jesus because they couldn't do a miracle of their unbelief.

**Matthew 17:20**, *So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.*

Faith of a grain of mustard seed, that is the smallest seed. This is not talking about small faith.

The faith of a grain of mustard seed is this. A mustard seed's a small seed that produces a very large bush.

The idea is that if you have faith that starts small but gets larger and larger, you are going to see God work in power.

So, you start out small, and if it doesn't happen, you don't say I give up. But your faith grows and strengthens and strengthens. It is like the same kind of faith that is illustrated to us in the Gospel of **Luke chapter 11 and 18**.

Both of which give us the stories of persistent people where the person gets his answer because he knocks, and knocks. The lady gets her response because she begs and begs.

The Lord is saying that if you believe in God enough to be persistent in your prayers, and to start out small and keep praying, and keep praying. Let that faith strengthen, and strengthen, then God's going to respond to that.

But some are going to say that God is going to do what He is going to do anyway. **What about God's sovereignty?** We can't ask for stuff that's out of His will.

We can get all tangled up in the sovereignty of God and make your prayer life literally impotent.

There are paradoxes in the Bible that I don't understand.  
I know God has a sovereign will.  
I know God answers prayer sovereignly.  
I know God is in charge of everything.

I know He does exactly what He wants to do.

But I also know the Bible says that I am supposed to pray persistently.

I am supposed to pray faithfully.

I am supposed to pray believing that what God says is what God wants, and what God says He is able to do!

If my faith will grow, and grow, and persist, and persist, I will see the power of God.

Some of us are not seeing God work in our life simply because there is no persistence in our prayer.

We don't get an answer, so we quit.

It is not mustard seed because mustard seed starts small, gets big.

**V 22,** *"All things whatever you shall ask in prayer, believing you shall receive"*

A dynamite promise.

If you understand that that means all things in the will of God, it doesn't hurt it, it just makes it all the better.

**Because what do you want?**

You only want what God wills.

I want whatever God wants for me.  
I want the best that God wants for me.  
I want the best that God wants for you.  
I want the best that God wants for our church.  
I want the best that God wants for this ministry.

God says then let us see the exercise of our faith in persistence. Some of us have not received the blessing of God in our lives simply because we have not persisted in prayer.

Loads of people start their prayer and they give timeline for only one day to God to answer their prayer.

If they don't get an answer in the next 24 hours, and that is it, they quit. That is not mustard seed faith in prayer.

You keep pursuing, keep persisting, keep knocking, keep crying out.

Christ, when He prayed in the garden, cried out to the point where He sweat great drops of blood because of the soul anguish that was poured out in His prayer.

We throw superficial, shallow, little prayers at God that are so trite, lack so much intensity and so much passion that they dishonour God by even being offered.

We think that God builds His Church by better programs.  
We think God builds His Church by better plans, by better ideas.  
We fail to realize that where God really wants to reveal His power is through persistent prayers of His people.

I am committed in my own heart to a greater commitment to the life of prayer and less involvement in trying to think up better ways to do things.

When I see a problem that I can't solve, instead of running up the street and trying to get best person to help take it to God in prayer and let God do the things that He wants to do through His own power.

A greater help to each other if we spent more time in prayer than more time in giving advice.

## **Conclusion:**

Jesus is the King.  
The King does what the King wants to do because He is the King.

What He wants to do is show to Israel the nature of His kingliness, and it isn't political, or social, or military.

First of all, it's spiritual.

Jesus cleanses the temple and curses the tree.

He says to them, "Your religion is corrupt, and your nation is corrupt, and they are doomed to judgment.

Sad day.

He laid the ax at the root of the tree, and He did it because there was nothing but leaves.

Examine your own heart.

You are a Christian and there is fruit, may you be more fruitful.

If you are a Christian and Jesus says nothing but leaves!

God for those we pray save them.

Infuse Your living power into the deadness of their life through Christ, that they may bear fruit and not be cut down and cast into the fire like so many Judas branches.

For those of us who are fruit-bearing Christians, but who have will be faithful to persistent prayer and O God, by Your Spirit to a more faithful prayer life, through greater diligence.