

MATTHEW 21:18-22

JESUS WITHERS THE FIG TREE

Early in the morning, as Jesus was on his way back to the city, he was hungry. Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, **“May you never bear fruit again!”** Immediately the tree withered.

When the disciples saw this, they were amazed. “How did the fig tree wither so quickly?” they asked.

Jesus replied, **“Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”**

THEN

Jesus is Hungry – Finds a Fig Tree in leaf

- Jesus is not attempting to steal
- Jerusalem was surrounded by Gardens
- Caring for the Poor, in these gardens people could freely walk in and take a little produce
- Not like Gardens today, cannot even step on the grass...

What does Jesus do/say to the Fig Tree?

- **“May you never bear fruit again!”**
- Then the tree withers

What was the response of the Disciples?

- Amazed... I would be frightened... or worried for Jesus (“it’s just a tree buddy, it is ok...)

Why did Jesus wither the Fig Tree?

- Not bearing fruit

Was it Harsh – perhaps it was not the season for Figs?

- Figs before season, show little bulbs called pre-figs
- These pre-frigs allow you to see how productive the tree will become

So why did Jesus wither the Fig tree?

- Because it was not going to bear any fruit in the future either

Did Jesus know the Disciples were watching?

- Absolutely
- Was using this as a teaching opportunity for his disciples

NOW

Why is this recorded in the Bible? Purpose?

- To teach us about faith

What does this passage teach us about faith?

- That those who have faith can move mountains, wither fig trees
- And those who do not, end up like the fig tree

How does this fig tree represent a faithless follower of Jesus?

- Religious, actions without belief
- No convictions, just traditions, a deep lack of love for God

How can we tell if we are a faithless follower?

- By the fruit that we produce

What does producing fruit mean? BIBLE TELLS US!

- Making disciples
- Knowing the scriptures, but also acting on them
- Having our character changed by God and Jesus

APPLICATION

What are some ways in our lives while following Jesus, we only produce leaves and not Fruit?

- Open Discussion

What will happen if we do not have real faith, and truly follow Jesus?

- Open Discussion
- We will wither away

What will it look like to wither away? SPIRITUALLY

- Open Discussion
- Pray only when we are in need – no relationship with God
- Consult each other, more than the Bible
- Start conforming to the patterns of this word – LOOK no DIFFERENT

Do any of us want to end up the withered fig tree?

- No, it's depressing

EXAMPLE: Right after this bible talk, Jesus is walking past you on the street, he looks for fruit in your life

- How does he respond?

[Encourage seekers to study the bible to find out, and pray to finish]