

The Failure of Fruitlessness

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Matthew 21:18-22.

B. Jesus curses the fig tree because it did not bear fruit.

II. The parallel in Mark's account. It is common for the Gospels to compress events. (Mark 11)

III. The purpose of the cursing.

A. Jesus did not curse the tree simply because He was hungry.

B. Jesus was using an object lesson. (Isaiah 5:1-7)

C. Jesus was teaching that Israel was being rejected because they bore no fruit.

D. The Jews rejected Jesus and they continue to do so to today. Consequently, calamity has fallen upon them.

IV. Application.

A. When we pray, we ought to believe for what we are praying. There is faith that God will and faith that God can. (II Corinthians 12)

B. It is far more dangerous to give a false profession than no profession at all. Hypocrisy is dangerous.

C. It is more dangerous to give a false testimony than none at all.

Application questions:

1. What does the miracle of the fig tree teach?

2. What are the different kinds of prayer, and when should they be employed?

3. What areas of your life might show some signs of hypocrisy? How can you challenge yourself to grow in these areas in a practical way?
