

DAY 7: June 9, 2025, Monday (Believe and Fear)

Mark 11:11-14, “11Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve. 12The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. 13Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. 14Then he said to the tree, ‘May no one ever eat fruit from you again.’ And his disciples heard him say it.”

The disciples and Jesus had just experienced the welcoming and worshiping of Jesus as he entered Jerusalem on the colt. People threw their coats on the road and spread tree branches to honor his entrance. They were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!” After this, Jesus leaves with the disciples and heads to Bethany because it was late.

The fig tree. This situation really confused the disciples. Jesus was looking for actual figs to eat and found none. The lack of figs for food isn't why he cursed this tree. Step back and look at the overall picture. In Mark Chapter 10, we see hypocrisy from the Pharisees, no shocker there, regarding marriage. The disciples rebuke the children and are seeking favoritism. Jesus was welcomed with great fanfare into Jerusalem and is soon to walk into the temples and witness the abuse in his house of buying and selling.

The fig tree represented judgement on the Jewish church. It was the appearance of a church but had not yielded any spiritual fruit. Jesus left no room for hypocrisy. If we don't bear fruit, we are like the barren fig tree. We should be fruitful. We should desire to produce spiritual fruit.

The manner Jesus came into the temple was more than bold, it was reckless. Not haphazard, though. He had motive and intention. Jesus had every right to be angry at what was happening in his house. It was being used as a common place, more of a marketplace. He made it clear that the temple and all parts of it had meaning and purpose. His house was to be used as a house of prayer.

Aligning ourselves to believe Jesus' way will require more than just reading our Bibles. God asks all of us to hide his Word in our hearts. Memorizing scripture is more than being able to quote verses back to someone. Hide means to protect and reserve it. What an

interesting thought. We protect what we know, love and understand. And, when we love something usually we want to talk about it. Knowing God's Word well, we will fall in love with it and Him more and more daily, and we will want to share it. It will give us the boldness we need to share God's love and truth with others.

A few months ago I was talking with a fellow Christian about Bible memorization. We were tasked with memorizing quite a few verses for a study we were doing. She didn't even try. She came up with some phrases, I mean very short phrases, to summarize the verses. She boiled down each verse into three or four words. She is a singer, and she mentioned she had no trouble memorizing song after song. I suggested she put some kind of tune to the verses and that would help. She shot me down quickly. "No, I've never been able to memorize anything but songs, and I'm not going to try."

It really saddened me. God's Word is living, breathing, and such a comfort and encouragement to us. The Holy Spirit teaches us through his Word. I know we have our Bibles to read, but we don't always have the privilege of it being in our hands. Our phones? We can just pull up Scripture on our phone. What if we're faced with an opportunity to lead someone to Christ in an instance or in a life-changing situation and we can't pull out our phones? We must do our work so the Holy Spirit can do his.

We will be helping the children understand how important it is to:

- ⇒ Read the Bible
- ⇒ Memorize Scripture
- ⇒ Hide it in their hearts (love and protect it)
- ⇒ How has the Bible or a particular passage been helpful to you recently. Be prepared to share a life story to encourage the children, or anyone God places in your life. Prayerfully consider what God would have you share.

MEMORY VERSE: "...For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"