



The Gospel of Mark
Jesus
The King Who Came to Die

Faith, Prayer, and Forgiveness

Key idea:

The fruit of true worship in the New Covenant that God desires is faith, prayer, and forgiveness.

Key text:

Mark 11:20-25

²⁰ In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. ²¹ Peter remembered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!” ²² “Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. ²³ “I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. ²⁵ And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

Key points:

1. Jesus’ teaching Mark 11:22-25 is not a random teaching about faith, prayer, and forgiveness but is rather part of the teaching on the fig tree and the Temple, showing the fruit that God desires.
2. The fruit of true worship in the new covenant is evident in faith in God rather than myself, is sustained in prayer as we approach God with confidence, trusting that He gladly hears us and delights to answer the prayers of His children, and is completed as we forgive others as we have been forgiven.
3. There is a huge difference between the way of Law and the way of the Gospel:

Law	Gospel
Justification by flesh (ethnicity)	New birth by the Holy Spirit
Human works	Faith in God
Human power	Prayer
Forgive if they earn it	Forgive as I have been forgiven
God dwells in the Temple	God dwells in every believer

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. When I have read or heard this passage taught, was the context of the fig tree and the Temple considered in understanding Jesus' words? How does that context inform these words of Jesus?
3. How do I think the average person on the street would define "faith"? What does the Scripture mean by the word "faith"?
4. How did the religion of the Pharisees, the chief priests, and the scribes undermine the biblical teaching on faith? Where did their confidence and trust before God lie?
5. How important is faith in the Gospel of Mark? Can I think of examples of faith we have seen in the Gospel?
6. What is the difference between faith in God and faith in faith?
7. Why is prayer central to a life of trust in God?
8. Did the end of the Old Covenant and the destruction of the Temple minimize or magnify the place of prayer among God's people? Why?
9. How often do I pray? What practical steps can I implement to grow in my prayer life?
10. Why does Jesus relate my forgiving others to receiving forgiveness of sin and prayer? Can I think of other places where He does this?
11. Does Mark 11:25 teach salvation by works? Why or why not?
12. Look at the table above that contrasts the way of Law and the way of Gospel. Can I think of other distinctions between Law and Gospel?
13. When I consider the table above contrasting the way of Law and the way of Gospel, is the Spirit showing me any areas where I am trying to live by Law rather than by Gospel? What are some antidotes to my tendency to return to Law?
14. Who can I reach out to this week to share the Good News of God's grace?