

## **“Beware of All Show & No Substance”**

### *Mark 11*

#### **Introductory Question**

**Q** – What is the closest you have come to meeting a world leader or celebrity? What lasting impression, if any, did that meeting have on you?

#### **Discussion Questions**

- 1) **Read Mark 11:1-11.** What was unusual or unexpected about the way Jesus entered Jerusalem?
- 2) What evidence is there that Jesus had choreographed this event from start to finish (vv.2-7<sup>1</sup>)? What was message and significance was Jesus’ entry designed to communicate (vv.8-10; Matt. 21<sup>4-5</sup>)?
- 3) How did Jesus ride into your life: (a) as a conquering King forcing you into submission? (b) as a gentle King bringing peace? (c) as a white knight rescuing you? (d) other?
- 4) **Read Mark 11:12-25.** What does Jesus do when he gets to the temple courts? What reason(s) does he give for his actions (v.17)?
- 5) What connection, if any, can you see between the story of the fig tree (vv.12-14; 20-21)<sup>2</sup> and the clearing of the temple (vv.15-19)? What message(s) was Jesus sending through the “parable” of the fig tree (v.17b = Jer. 7:11; cf. Mark 13:2)<sup>3</sup>?
- 6) If you could change one thing about contemporary Christianity, what would it be? How might we be in danger of being all leaves but no fruit?<sup>4</sup>
- 7) Why was Peter amazed at the fig tree when he saw it the next morning (v.20)? Do you think he should have been? Why or why not?
- 8) What faith lesson(s) is Jesus teaching in verses 22-25? What amazing answers to prayer can you remember receiving?
- 9) **Read Mark 11:27-33.** Why were the religious leaders questioning Jesus’ authority? If you were a reporter, what would you tell your audience about Jesus response to them (v.29-30,33b) and their response to Jesus (vv.31-33a)?
- 10) The religious leaders in Jerusalem considered Jesus a threat. Have you ever felt like Jesus was a threat to you? Why?

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<sup>1</sup> In the OT only an unriden colt, meaning one not previously used by commoners, was appropriate for sacred use (cf. Num. 19:2; Deut. 21:3; 1 Sam. 6:7). “By conveying to the animal’s owner that *the Lord needs it*, he enacts a prerogative of the ruling monarch, impressing into official duty the property of private citizens.”(Geddert, *Mark*, 262)

<sup>2</sup> Hosea 9:10-16 provides the OT storyline to this NT fig tree story (e.g. “When I found Israel...it was like seeing the early fruit on the fig tree...Because of all their wickedness...their root is withered, they yield no fruit...”).

<sup>3</sup> See also Malachi 3:1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Malachi 3:5; Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6:8; Isa. 1:10-17