



Introduction

Jesus uses the cursed fig tree (Mark 11:12-14,20) as an object lesson to teach his disciples to have faith in God. The lesson was given not so that they would go and curse fig trees, but so that they, by trusting God, would not become like the barren, fruitless fig tree. God's original design in making people was for them to reflect Him by being like He is: fruitful and life-giving. Instead of being fruitful and life-giving, our sinful rebellion has caused a fall from the high purpose for which we were created. Jesus came to restore us from the depths to which we have fallen.

Observation/Interpretation

- What did the fruitless fig tree represent?
- What do the fruitless fig tree (Mark 12-14) and the prayer-less temple (Mark 11:17) have in common?
- Apart from clearly understanding that Jesus forgives our offenses, how is his command for us to forgive others, frustrating and impossible? (Mark 11:25)

Application

- How do actions like, "faith", (Mark 11:22) "prayer", (Mark 11:24) and "forgiveness" (Mark 11:25) work as God's instruments in bringing new life to "fruitless trees" and "prayer-less temples"?
- Are there people in your life that God is calling you to forgive?

Prayer

Take some time to pray for those who may have caused you offense. Ask God to give you the power to forgive them as he forgave you.

Community Group Discussion

- Read the passage together out loud.
- Involve your group by asking/answering the study questions, taking the time to share.
- Ask for prayer requests and be sure to pray together.

Family Discussion

- Have your child/children read the passage aloud, if old enough otherwise you read it aloud.
- Involve them by asking questions.
- Ask for prayer requests and invite them to pray together as a family.

A great way to use of these notes is to start/join a Community Group

These notes can be used for personal bible study, yet, another way would be to invite some people together. We call these intentional gatherings, 'Community Groups'.

What is a Community Group?

Community Groups are small gatherings of believers (non-believers welcomed too!) that meet regularly for accountability, friendship, study of the Bible and prayer. Community Groups are an essential part of the mission of Calvary SLO Church as they are a place where we wrestle with the truths of the Bible and encourage one another toward the life God intends. Each community group is unique and molded by the people who attend it. Most community groups gather weekly and involve food, dialog, prayer, discussion for applying the Bible to practical living, and loving service to one-another. They're meant to be an organic and authentic expression of the church, actively living like the body of Jesus.

Why should I join/start a Community Group?

God is a Trinitarian God who is revealed as one in three persons: Father, Son and Spirit. We've been made to image God, which means we're designed for community & friendship. We often suffer when we're not in community, due to the brokenness of life, complexity of this world and the temptation to isolate ourselves. We encourage you to gather with a small group of friends, family or roommates on a weekly basis and use these discussion notes to press deeper into God.

How do I join the Calvary SLO Community Group eco-system?

We're enthusiastic about all forms of biblical community, however there are definite benefits to joining with the Calvary SLO Community Group (CG) eco-system. In short, the benefits are:

- **Training:** We have trainings intent on equipping leaders.
- **Support:** Each CG leader is assigned a coach to provide assistance and ongoing support.
- **Visibility:** CG's are promoted via the bulletin, website & given access to The City (our online social network).

To join all you have to do is sign up for the next upcoming training! Info: pastor James: james@calvaryslo.com.