

Meet the Master's Mandate
Mark 11:12-25

I. Meet the Master's Mandate

A. The specific question we are asking

1. From the encounter with Bartimaeus, who, having genuinely met Jesus, made the choice to leave everything behind and follow Him in the way
 - a. **Mark 10:52 (ESV) And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.**
 - b. Each of us faces a Bartimaeus moment, a moment of choosing to follow Jesus or go our own way.
2. The question
 - a. **How do we follow Jesus in the way TODAY?**
 - b. What clues does Jesus Himself give us for how to follow Him as a wholly devoted disciple in our day and time, in our circumstances, in our culture, in our context?
3. The two part answer
 - a. Mark 11:1-11
 - (1) "The triumphal entry"
 - (2) Get ready for the return of the King
 - b. Mark 11:12-25
 - (1) The cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the temple
 - (2) **Meet the Master's mandate**

B. Mandates

1. Definition
 - a. Official order or commission to do something
 - b. The authority to carry out a policy or course of action
2. Discussion
 - a. Keep our feelings about current mandates separate from our understanding of the function of mandates
 - (1) Mandates are essentially not about outcomes but about the flow of authority in reaching a desired outcome.
 - (a) A recognized authority authorizes someone else to accomplish a certain task on their behalf; they are given a mandate.
 - (b) The authorized person authorizes others to perform certain task relative to accomplishing the main task;
 - i) they are operating under the original mandate
 - ii) they are participating in the flow of authority
 - (2) Mandates are how work gets done and goals are accomplished in organized society
 - b. **We have to keep our understanding of mandates separate from**

our feelings about mandates because mandates function not only among the kingdoms of the world, but in the kingdom of God as well.

3. The Divine Mandate
 - a. **Habakkuk 2:14 (ESV)** *For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*
 - b. Jesus authorized by the Father to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord
 - (1) **Matthew 28:18 (ESV)** *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."*
 - (2) Authority to bring about the kingdom of God, which, when fully realized, will mean the earth is finally filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD.
 - c. Jesus authorizes His disciples to participate in the mandate to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD
 - (1) **Matthew 28:19-20 (ESV)** ¹⁹ *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* ²⁰ *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*
 - (2) The flow of authority is from the Father to the Son to the church for the purpose of accomplishing the Father's will to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD.
4. How does the cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the temple fit into Christ's mandate to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD?

II. The Master's Mandate: Be fruitful!

A. The Fig Tree and the Temple

1. Jesus intentionally searches for figs on a barren tree just as He will search for holiness and devotion in a spiritually barren temple among an equally barren people.
 - a. Jesus knew the tree had no figs, because He knew it was not fig season.
 - b. Jesus, the sovereign King of the Universe, the Creator and Sustainer Who holds all life in His hands honored the tree by making it a living lesson to all who follow Jesus in the way.
 - (1) Some people accuse Jesus of acting out of character
 - (2) Anybody have bacon for breakfast this morning?
 - (a) The episode with the fig tree is not essentially different than the episode with the herd of pigs
 - (b) Jesus, as Sovereign Creator, stewarded creation for the eternal benefit of a human soul.
 - (3) We, who gladly suffer the death of a pig for our breakfast cannot fault the Creator when He uses creation to serve His

divine purpose in the redemption of a lost soul.

2. Jesus, who should have expected life and worship and obedience and faith in His Father's house, among His people, finds chaos, greed, disparity, disrespect, indifference, selfishness, and sin.
 - a. In the Court of the Gentiles
 - (1) Where the nations should come to find God in prayer
 - (2) They can only find a loud, smelly sin-ridden marketplace, a den of thieves
 - b. Israel has a mandate from God to be a conduit by which the nations come to faith in Him but they have abandoned their mandate.
 - c. Like the fig tree that showed all the signs of life but was fruitless,
 - (1) so Israel shows all the signs of religious vitality but is fruitless,
 - (2) and will suffer the same condemnation at the hands of the King as the fig tree did.

B. The Master's mandate to His people is this: be fruitful

1. **God has chosen you, set you apart, redeemed you, bestowed His promises upon you, moved you from death to life so that you will produce the fruit of faith and righteousness under the mandate to fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD.**
2. Jesus' teaching anticipates fruitfulness
 - a. Parable of the four soils
 - (1) **Mark 4:20 (ESV) *But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.***
 - b. The teaching of the Vine and the Branches
 - (1) **John 15:2 (ESV) *Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.***
 - (2) **John 15:5 (ESV) *I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.***
 - (3) **John 15:8 (ESV) *By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.***
 - (4) **John 15:16 (ESV) *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.***
3. How can disciples follow Jesus in the way TODAY?
 - a. **Meet the Master's mandate: be fruitful!**
 - b. How can we bear the fruit Jesus expects? 4 Lessons in Fruitfulness
 - (1) **Maintain the holy purpose and character of the house of God**
 - (a) You (singular) are a temple of the Holy Spirit
 - (b) You (plural) are a temple of the Holy Spirit

- (c) Keep the temple pure and holy, a place where even casual inspection points to Christ
- (d) Rely on the Holy Spirit
- (2) **Live by faith in the revealed will of God**
 - (a) Have faith in God
 - (b) The key difference between the world and the church is faith in God.
 - i) Without faith it is impossible to please God
 - ii) With faith you can move mountains
- (3) **Make the prayer of faith as integral to your existence as breathing**
 - (a) Prayer is an act of faith by which God transforms our life experience in conformity with Christ
 - (b) Prayer is not passive on either side but a vital dialogue between God and you.
 - (c) Through prayer God gives
 - i) **A new concern** (a new perspective on our heart and our circumstances that conforms to His nature and perspective)
 - ii) **A new courage** (the willingness and the confidence to act in faith, trusting God to make holy the actions that we take)
 - iii) **A new conduct** (the way we live when we are people of prayer changes from when we are prayerless people)
 - iv) **A new context** (God does, in fact, make changes in our circumstances and conditions when we pray in Christ's name and according to God's will)
- (4) **Forgive**
 - (a) Your eternal destiny is more important than whether someone who hurt you feels your pain!
 - (b) Forgiveness
 - i) Does not mean you simply let go of personal injustices and wrongs
 - ii) Means you actively and intentionally put that pain in its rightful place: on the cross!
 - iii) Does not mean treating hurt as meaningless.
 - iv) It means acknowledging hurt as meaningful enough to actually deal with and resolve.
 - v) Is not about how others interact with your pain.
 - vi) Is about how YOU interact with pain.
 - (c) Forgiveness is the choice you make to treat those who hurt you, and the memory of those occasions,

with the grace and mercy you have received from God,

- (d) Forgiveness is the choice to do unto others what you would have God do unto you.

III. How do we follow Jesus in the way TODAY?

A. **Meet the Master's Mandate: Be fruitful**

1. Tonight: the various fruit the Bible anticipates in the life of a believer
2. Not less than
 - a. Holiness
 - b. Faith
 - c. Prayer
 - d. Forgiveness

B. **Jesus and the world both looking at us from a distance**

1. What will they find?
 - a. A barren, fruitless life that makes a show of vitality but is in reality unproductive and empty
 - b. A life, a heart, a mind, a will, a spirit
 - (1) committed to following Jesus in the way
 - (2) committed to bearing fruit
 - (3) committed to the vitality Christ expects of His people
2. Christ offers grace and mercy and power and a changed, fruitful life to those who will trust Him and obey.
3. **Commit your life, your heart, your mind, your will, your spirit to Him and be fruitful.**