

Mark 11:20-26. Christ and His Disciples Pass by the Withered Fig-Tree.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and forgiveness in the Christian life, highlighting Jesus' power to destroy enemies and the need to forgive others in order to receive God's forgiveness.

Scripture: Matthew 5:44, Matthew 6:14, Matthew 21:20, 2 Corinthians 12:10

Topics: "Faith And Prayer", "Divine Authority"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the power of faith and forgiveness as demonstrated by Jesus and His apostles. The withered fig tree serves as a powerful symbol of Jesus' authority and the potential for believers to overcome obstacles through faith. Jesus not only had the power to subdue His enemies but also promised His followers the ability to do the same through unwavering faith. Through believing prayer and forgiveness, believers can experience victories over trials and challenges, following the example set by Jesus and His teachings.

Transcript

After having passed the night in Bethany, the Redeemer, with his little band, left his retreat to resume his labors in Jerusalem. In the course of their walk a very impressive object met their sight. It was the fig-tree that had been cursed the morning before. On passing by the fig-tree in the evening, the darkness must have prevented the apostles from seeing it; but the morning light revealed its withered state. Peter called the attention of his Lord to the circumstance, by saying, "Master, behold the fig-tree which you cursed has withered away." From this remark we are led to conclude that the curse pronounced by the Lord did not produce an immediate effect upon the tree, but caused it gradually to consume and to perish. The apostles, who knew the reason for its withered state, must have looked upon it with feelings of awe and astonishment. They had never before seen such a display of their Lord's power. They had seen life bestowed by his word, but never had they seen even the life of a tree TAKEN AWAY. Had the Son of God exercised his power as he might have done, his enemies had long before been blasted by the breath of his nostrils--for it is God who kills, as well as makes alive. But he refrained from executing judgment, for He came to draw sinners to himself by the riches of his goodness, and not to appall them by the terrors of his hand. But it was well that his apostles should have proof that he could destroy his enemies. They would soon be exposed to a tremendous trial of faith. They would behold their Master apparently overpowered by men. The remembrance of the fig-tree ought to have convinced them in that terrible hour

that he could have dried up the arms stretched out to take him, and struck mute the tongues that rose in judgment against him.

Nor was it Jesus alone who had power to subdue his enemies. He promised similar power to his apostles, even power to wither fig-trees and remove mountains. Matthew thus records the Lord's answer--"Verily I say unto you, if you have faith and doubt not, you shall not only do that which is done unto the fig-tree, but also if you shall say unto this mountain, 'Be removed, and be cast into the sea,' it shall be done." Matthew 21:26. It is evident that trees and mountains represent the difficulties and trials of the Christian life. By faith they may be overcome. The apostle Paul triumphed over the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him, and through faith learned to take pleasure in infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses, for Christ's sake, because he found the grace of God sufficient for him. (2 Cor. 12:10.)

It is by believing prayer that such victories are attained. Therefore the Lord gave his apostles some directions concerning prayer. He knew they were going to spend another day exposed to the malice of wicked men, and he warned them against cherishing an unforgiving spirit, by saying, "When you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against any--that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." There are few who are not sometimes injured or insulted. It is not enough for us to endeavor to banish the thoughts of our enemies from our minds, we must think of them for the purpose of asking, "Have I forgiven them?" We must mention them in prayer as objects for whom we especially desire mercy. One who has himself been forgiven by God will be enabled to forgive others. The spirit of revenge may arise occasionally in his heart; but the remembrance of what has passed between Jesus and his own soul will quench the vindictive feeling, and will make him desire to meet even his enemies in glory, and to live with them forever in love.

Source:

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