

Mt. 21:18 ¶ Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, **He was hungry.**

19 And **seeing a fig tree** by the road, He came to it and **found nothing on it but leaves**, and said to it, **"Let no fruit grow on you ever again."** **Immediately the fig tree withered away.**

- In this acted-out-parable, Jesus warned of coming judgment upon an unfruitful Israel. It showed God's disapproval of people who are all leaves and no fruit. "The story is clear and simple, and its point obvious, that **what counts is not promise but performance.**" (R.T.France)
- **Mt 7:15-23 ¶** "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 "Therefore by their fruits you will know them. 21 ¶ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither away so soon?"

21 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, **if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done.**

22 "And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

- **1Jo 5:14 ¶** Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything **according to His will**, He hears us.

- **Jas 4:3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

23 ¶ Now when He came into the temple, **the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him** as He was teaching, and said, **"By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"**

24 But Jesus answered and said to them, **"I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things:**

25 "The baptism of John--where was it from? From heaven or from men?" And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'"

26 "But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet."

27 So they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know." And He said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

28 ¶ "But **what do you think?** A man had **two sons**, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, work today in my vineyard.'

29 "He answered and said, **'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went.**

30 "Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, **'I go, sir,' but he did not go.**

31 "Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said to Him, "The first." **Jesus said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you.**

32 "For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.

- Which of the two did the will of his father? The point of this parable is clear. What matters is living for God, not saying the right words. The religious leaders were good at talking righteous talk, but their stubbornly unrepentant hearts showed that repentant sinners would enter the kingdom before them.

33 ¶ "Hear another parable: There was **a certain landowner who planted a vineyard** and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country.

- **Isa 5:1-7**

34 "Now when vintage-time drew near, **he sent his servants to the vinedressers**, that they might receive its fruit.

35 "And **the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another.**

36 "Again **he sent other servants**, more than the first, and they did likewise to them.

37 "Then **last of all he sent his son to them**, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.'

39 "**So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.**

40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"

41 They said to Him, "**He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.**"

42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: '**The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD'S doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes?**'

- **Ps 118:22-29** The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. 23 This was the LORD'S doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. 25 Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD. 27 God is the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. 28 You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You. 29 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.
- **Eph 2:19-22** Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

43 "**Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.**

44 "**And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.**"

- **Isa 28:16** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; Whoever believes will not act hastily.

45 Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, **they perceived that He was speaking of them.**

46 But when **they sought to lay hands on Him**, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.