

# More than Marking Time

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## Figs and Temples

Mark 11:12-25

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### Summary

Like the fig tree, the temple looked good from afar - sacrifices and prayers took place in the temple. But on closer inspection Jesus found that there was no fruit - no welcome for non-Jews.

Jesus rejects the temple because the people are excluding non-Jews and arrogantly assume that they're OK with God. They feel they've earned the right to have a relationship with God.

Instead, Jesus calls on his disciples to have faith, which means to realise that they are weak and don't deserve their privileged position, but to rely on God for him to save. Jesus talked about moving mountains to emphasise that saving people like us is a big deal; it is impossible without God. Once we realise our own helplessness there is no basis to exclude others. We need to be forgiving others as God forgives us.

### 5 Reflection Questions

1. What were Jesus' reasons for clearing out the temple? Do you think he overreacted?
2. Do you ever feel you've earned the right to have a relationship with God? How can we stop ourselves taking our relationship with God for granted?
3. How can we include others rather than exclude them?
4. What practical steps can we take to help us forgive more quickly?
5. Do we think of God saving us as God moving mountains i.e. doing the impossible?