



Week of Oct 22 - a

Scripture: Mt 21:18-22

Main Idea: In this reading is one of Jesus' last miracles and lessons to his apostles. He causes a fig tree to die immediately. The apostles are amazed. Jesus uses it as a lesson for them regarding faith. He emphasizes that praying with great faith is very powerful. Our heavenly Father loves when we have trusting faith in Him.

Questions

Preschool: When we have strong faith, does it please our Heavenly Father? Why do you think that is?

Grade school: Did you know that fig trees are listed in the Bible 44 times? The lesson of this fig tree is that we should bear spiritual fruit not just give an appearance of being good. Jesus saw the tree had leaves (appearance) and expected figs. What does it mean to "bear spiritual fruit?" (A: it means to do good things)

Teen: Is there power in our faith? Should we pray, in faith, believing God hears and answers? Is there ever a time we can not trust God?

Adult: Prayer. Do you struggle with prayer? Not with the concept of praying but with what the world considers "unanswered prayer?" I'm talking about the prayer which you pray but what you requested doesn't happen. This could be a sick loved one who dies, a relationship which ends in divorce, a wished-for promotion that goes to someone else, or any number of other pleas. You have probably experienced this in your life to some degree. How do you justify an answer of "No" or "Not now" with this scripture? Does it make you question your belief or your faith? How would you explain it to another Christian who is struggling with the concept?

PRAYER REQUESTS

PRAY: For our faith in God to grow stronger everyday

October Memory Verse:

Psalm 103:12 (ESV)
¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.



Week of Oct 22 - b

Scripture: Mt 21:28-32

Main Idea: Jesus challenges the chief priests and elders with a parable about two sons. The second son, who at first said he would be obedient but then disobeyed, represented these religious leaders. Jesus shocked them by pointing out how sinful people (tax collectors & prostitutes) were entering the kingdom of God before them, because they were listening to God and believing Him.

Questions

Preschool: Can people change their ways and become a follower of Jesus at any point in their lives? Even if they are old?

Grade school: The way the second son acted was exactly how the Pharisees acted. In their prayers they acted like they really believed in God and did everything they were supposed to do - but they acted totally different. They pretended to do good things, but didn't. Do we ever do this?

Teen: Will you be rewarded for your belief, and obedience to God and for regretting your wrongs? Will there be consequences for a lack of belief and obedience to God and not being remorseful of wrongs?

Adult: Sometimes a parent is unable to do what they told their child they would do. Maybe rain prevents an outing to the park, or another life event makes them postpone or abandon plans. Jesus isn't referring to something like this. He is talking about a conscious decision to do or not do what our heavenly Father has commanded. Jesus uses the phrase "Truly, I say to you," which is a strong affirmation. We might say "listen closely to what I say" or "pay attention." Why did he want the chief priests and elders to participate in the lesson by answering the question he posed of who did the will of his father? What do you think he wanted them to realize by first answering that, then hearing that people they considered grievous sinners would enter the kingdom and these religious leaders might not? Was it about them condemning themselves or something else?

PRAYER REQUESTS

PRAY: For us to obey God and be faithful to him always

October Memory Verse:

Psalm 103:12 (ESV)
¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.