

**"Tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"-1King 22:16**

**Mark 11:20 – Jesus Curses a Fig Tree**

There is a passage in Mark’s account of the life of Christ that puzzles many people. It reads as follows:



“And as they [Jesus and His disciples] passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance said unto him [Christ], ‘Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which you cursed is withered away’” (Mark 11:20-21).

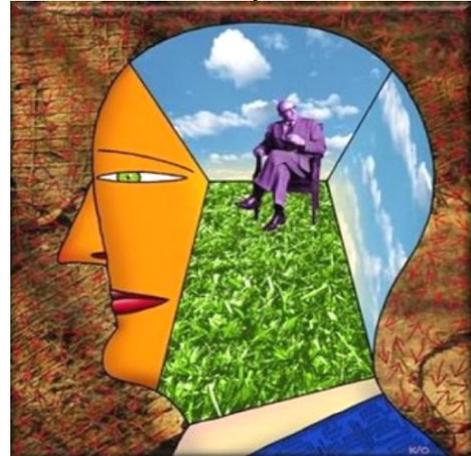
Did Christ, in a burst of temper, actually curse, i.e., use profanity, a fig tree? That simply cannot be the case since the New Testament repeatedly affirms the absolute perfection of the Savior (cf. Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22). Some enemies of the Bible, though, have charged the Son of God with intemperance in this matter. But what are the facts of the case?

First of all, “curse,” as that term is used in the Scriptures, does not carry the same meaning as the modern English word connotes. In ancient times, to “curse” a person or object was equivalent to pronouncing doom or destruction upon that person or thing. Under the law of Moses, one sentenced to death for a capital crime was said to be “accursed of God” (Deuteronomy 21:22-23). The writer of Hebrews speaks of land that brings forth nothing but thorns and thistles as being worthy of a “curse,” i.e., whose “end is to be burned” (Hebrews 6:8).

Second, a careful consideration of the entire context involving this incident negates that baseless and blasphemous charge against the Savior. Underline the word “cursed” in Mark 11:21, and in your margin write: *See verse 14.*

Now look at that verse and read the precise language of the curse: “No man eat fruit from you henceforth for ever.” Christ simply doomed the fig tree to perpetual fruitlessness, i.e., death. Why did our Lord do that? Because the fig tree was a symbol of the *fruitless Jewish nation*, and this was a visual aid lesson which prophesied the coming fate of national Israel. Jesus was not implicated in any wrongful activity. - Wayne Jackson

**What about my Conscience**



The word “conscience” is defined as, “the sense or consciousness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one’s own conduct, intentions, or character together with a feeling of obligation to do right or be good **b**: a faculty, power, or principle enjoining good acts **c**: the part of the superego in psychoanalysis that transmits commands and admonitions to the ego” (**Merriam Webster dictionary online**).

The conscience can be summed up as, the moral sense within us that determines whether we consider our own conduct right or wrong. It is the feeling of delight when we do what we think is right, and of pain when we do what we think is wrong.

Every human being has been created with a conscience, which accuses or excuses ones actions depending upon what he has been taught.

The time to which the apostle Paul referred, when he had acted in "good conscience," was a period in which he (Paul, Saul of Tarsus) was having Christians put to death (**Acts 23:1, 26:9-**

11). Hence, the conscience can be wrong, depending on the education it has received.

Should the conscience be our guide or the standard when it comes to matters of religion? No! If our conscience should be our guide, then truth is subjective and everyone who is honest is right no matter what he believes.

Our personal feelings can lead us astray. Solomon wrote, "There is a way *that seems* right to a man, But its end *is* the way of death" (**Proverbs 14:12**).

Our conscience is not the standard in determining what is right or wrong in regards to serving God, the Bible is (**2 Tim 3:16**). If we have been taught things that are not taught in the word of God, and we follow our conscience, then our conscience will advise us to do that which is wrong, and will keep us from doing what is right.

Our conscience is like a clock, it needs to be set properly. Will you allow the Lord to do so today? - Fred Singleton.

## Rooted and Grounded in Love

Think about this for a minute - Christians are to be rooted and grounded in love. Paul says: "For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height - to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (**Eph. 3:14-19**).

Containing one hundred six words, **Ephesians 3:14-19** is one of the most incredible sentences in the Bible. This sentence represents the beginning of Paul's prayer recorded in **Ephesians 3:14-21**. Paul prays for two things:

- First: that they are granted strength in the inner man (spiritual man - heart) by Christ dwelling in their hearts through faith.
- Second: that by being rooted and grounded in love they are able to comprehend the love of Christ in order to be filled with all the fullness of God.

What does it mean for Christians to be rooted and grounded in love? Webster defines root as: "the usu. underground part of a seed plant body . . . , functions as an organ of absorption, aeration, and food storage or as a means of anchorage and support . . ." Likewise, Christians must be rooted in the love of Christ wherein we feed upon the Lord, are anchored in the Lord, and are supported by the Lord. The word translated "grounded" comes from an architectural term representing a strong foundation - a Christian's foundation is upon the love of Christ.

What does Christ's love toward mankind have to do with Christians being rooted and grounded in love to be filled in the fullness of God - in the end yielding eternal life? If we understand the love of God and Christ, we will love them (**I John 4:19**). And if we love God and Christ, we will live in obedience to the commands of God revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ (**John 14:15; I John 5:3**).

Now ask yourself: Have I been transplanted from the lust of the world to live in the love of Christ? Do I comprehend the love of Christ? Am I filled with the fullness of God? If you answered "No," begin changing today by reading the word of God, learning of the love of Christ motivating us to love the Lord, and keeping His commands.

- Allan McNabb

**JUDGES 17:6 "IN THOSE DAYS THERE WAS NO KING IN ISRAEL; EVERYONE DID WHAT WAS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES".**

**HAVE YOU STUDIED YOUR BIBLE TODAY?**