

WEEKLY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week of Sunday March 15, 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02

Introduction

03

Discussion Questions

04

Application Questions

05

Questions for Families | Bible Reading Plan

06

Commentary

INTRODUCTION

In **Mark 11:12–25**, Jesus confronts the difference between appearance and reality. He is not looking for people who simply look religious on the outside, but inviting people into lives that genuinely produce spiritual fruit. Many of us feel the tension between looking like we have it together and honestly bringing our struggles before God. This passage challenges us to consider the condition of our hearts—our faith, our forgiveness toward others, and whether our lives reflect the work of Jesus within us. As we discuss together, we will explore what it looks like to move from simply appearing faithful to actually living a fruitful life with God.

Main Passage:

Mark 11:12–25

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Fruit of Faith!

READ ALOUD

Mark 11:12–25

Opening Question: When people look at your life, what are some things they would immediately notice about what matters to you?

- What stands out to you about Jesus' interaction with the fig tree in this passage?
- What do you notice about what Jesus says and does in the temple courts?
- Why do you think the story of the fig tree appears alongside Jesus clearing the temple?
- Where might this passage challenge the difference between how our faith appears and how it is actually lived out?

APPLY

- In what areas of life is it easiest to “look like” a follower of Jesus without actually trusting Him fully?
- What “mountain” in your life feels difficult to trust God with right now?
- Is there someone you may need to forgive in order to move forward spiritually?

RESPOND

- What is one step you can take this week to grow in real spiritual fruit rather than just appearance?
- Who is one person you could encourage or pray for this week as a result of this passage?

DIGGING DEEPER *(optional)*

Read Aloud: Mark 11:12–25

- What connections do you see between Jesus' actions in the temple and the lesson of the fig tree?
- What do these events reveal about what Jesus values in the worship of God's people?
- How does the wider chapter deepen your understanding of faith, prayer, and obedience?

PRAY

Invite the group to spend a few moments praying honestly before God. Encourage them to ask Him to reveal any area where they have been more focused on appearance than real spiritual fruit. Lead them to pray for deeper faith, for help trusting God with what feels heavy or impossible, and for humility to forgive anyone they have been holding onto in their heart. Close by thanking Jesus for His grace, His forgiveness, and His power to change us from the inside out.

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILIES

Mark 11:12–25

- What happened when Jesus came to the fig tree?
- Why do you think Jesus cared about whether the tree had fruit?
- What does it mean for our lives to produce “fruit” that shows we follow Jesus?
- Why is forgiveness important for people who follow Jesus?

For younger children: Encourage children that Jesus loves them and helps them grow to do what is right and loving toward others.

For older kids or students: What is one way your actions this week could show that your faith in Jesus is real?

BIBLE READING PLAN (OPTIONAL)

Scripture to read as you pray this week:

- Day 1: Mark 12:1–12
- Day 2: Mark 12:13–17
- Day 3: Mark 12:18–27
- Day 4: Mark 12:28–34
- Day 5: Mark 12:35–44

What's Going On?

In Mark 11, Jesus' encounter with the fig tree becomes a living illustration of spiritual fruitfulness. The tree appears healthy from a distance but produces nothing when examined.

Mark places this event around Jesus cleansing the temple, highlighting a deeper message: religious appearance without genuine devotion to God is empty.

A Bit of Background

Fig trees in Israel normally produced small early figs before the full harvest season. When leaves appeared on a tree, people expected at least some early fruit.

Because of this, a leafy tree without figs signaled something that looked healthy but failed to produce what it should—making it a powerful image for spiritual life that appears active but lacks genuine fruit.