

# Coming Into Focus: When Jesus Was Ticked

## Small Group Discussion Guide—3/24/2019

How easy or difficult is it to get you riled up? What's something that never fails to make you upset?

### Read Mark 11:12-14

- Jesus curses the fig tree because it was not producing fruit, and it should have been.
  - What is your reaction when you find something not doing what it is designed to do?
  - Does Jesus's response seem reasonable, harsh, or somewhere in between?
  - We learned that the fig tree was a symbol for the temple – what fruit should the temple have been producing at that time?
  - How is Jesus's response similar, or different, when we fail to produce fruit today?

### Read Mark 11:15-19 and Isaiah 56:1-8.

- Recall from Sunday's sermon that the area of the temple where this passage takes place was intended as a haven for foreigners, a place for anyone to have a chance at getting close to God's presence.
  - What did Jesus find the religious leaders doing? Why did this infuriate him?
  - Why were the leaders infuriated with Jesus's actions?
  - What did the leaders learn in this moment about Jesus's intentions for His kingdom?
  - What do we learn about God's heart for his kingdom even today?

### Read Mark 11:20-21

- Why was it important that the disciples saw the withered fig tree?
- What do you think was going through their minds at this time?
- The following verses shed light on what Jesus accomplished for us, relative to the Temple. Read and discuss what gifts you see here: Mark 15:38, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Revelation 21:21-23.

### Application

- How does God's desire for all to access his presence play out in today's world?
- Do you think it's easier or harder now, or back then, to access God's presence – both for believers and non-believers?
- To what degree are you taking advantage of the privilege of having your spiritual hunger satisfied in Christ?
- Do you think it's easier or harder now, or back then, to put up obstacles (intentionally or not) for non-believers to encounter God?
  - What are some of the obstacles we put up today that might keep people from God?
- Reflect in your own life – are there areas in your life – habits/routines, attitudes, etc – that might not be dissimilar to the obstacles created by the religious leaders?
- Are there any ways you can make changes to make sure that everyone in your circle has access to God?
- Who are the people that most come to mind – could be those of a different race, ethnicity, color, etc – that you can pray for, love, or otherwise reach out to, this week?

**Pray as a group and for one another. May God open our eyes to the people He loves that He's placed in our spheres, showing us what we can do to ensure all have access to Him.**