

SERMON BASED CURRICULUM

**Date & Sermon Series:**

September 12/13, 2015; The Moral of the Story

Speaker:

Pastor Mark Batterson

Scripture Focus: Luke 13:6-9

Note To Leaders:

This weekend we discussed the parable of the barren fig tree. These questions provide a framework to prompt or foster discussion in your small group. Don't feel you have to use all or any of these questions and you don't have to make it to the end! Use the questions that best fit your group and let discussion flow.

Icebreaker Suggestions: Pastor Mark described a good meal as being, "Fourth of July in his mouth," and "wanting to sing the Aladdin song," after eating it. What does good food make you want to do?

Sermon Series Questions:

1. What thoughts are still resonating with you from the sermon?
2. What was most encouraging or challenging about this weekend's message?
3. In what ways did this parable speak to where you are now in your life?

Specific Questions:

1. While telling the parable, Jesus stated, *"A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'for three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"*

Pastor Mark summarized the parable by saying that there are things in our life we need to *dig*, to *dung*, and to *cut*.

- a. What in your life do you need to dig? How can you go about doing so?
- b. What in your life do you need to dung? How can you go about doing so?
- c. What in your life do you need to cut? How can you go about doing so?

2. Pastor Mark states frequently that our potential is God's gift to us; what we do with it is our Gift to God. How are you using the gifts God has given you? What could you do to use them better?
3. Referring to the need to "dig," Pastor Mark contrasted those with a "comfort mindset" and those with a "growth mindset" as people who think, "I don't really want you to dig around here," as opposed to "lets not just dig, lets dig deep!" Do you have a comfort or growth mindset? Is one more natural to you than the other? If you're in a "comfort mindset," what can you do to move to a "growth mindset?" If you're in a "growth mindset," what can you do to continue growing?
4. Goals and desires we have often take longer than we hoped or planned because we still need to spend some time "digging." When in your life has a goal or desire taken longer than planned to come to fruition? Looking back, what "digging" needed to happen in your life first? In what ways have you grown since? How can this testimony help you when you're in a season of "digging" in the future?
5. Who do you allow to speak into your life to help you grow and help do the "groundwork" necessary in your life? Who should you?
6. Pastor Mark introduced the idea of "recrap" in the sermon, stating that God wants to take the bad in our lives - wasted years, relationships, and decisions you've made - and fertilize it and recycle it for good. In other words, "He makes all things work together for my good." (Romans 8:28) Looking back at your life, when is a time God has taken something "bad," and recycled it for good?
7. When discussing the need to cut some things out of our lives, Pastor Mark asked us to consider, "What am I doing that accomplishes nothing and leads to nowhere?" What are you doing that falls into that category? What changes do you need to make to avoid being the trap of being "busy?" In other words, what do you need to prune and how can you go about doing so?

Challenge:

Read, Pray, Act: Pray through Luke 13:6-9 while writing it down – it's short, so use those motor skills! While writing it down, be open to the Holy Spirit's promptings of things in your life that you need to dig, things you need to fertilize, and things you need to cut down. Pray that the Lord will continue to reveal these things to you and that you will be willing to take the necessary actions.