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Central Congregational Church
“For the Glory of God and the Good of our Neighbors”
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The End of Religion As We Know It

Mark 11:12-33

Series: Getting In on the Good News

The Gospel of Jesus Christ According to Mark

Central Passage

Mark 11:15–18 (NIV) — 15 On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, 16 and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. 17 And as he taught them, he said, “Is it not written: ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’” 18 The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

Central Thought: We get in on the Good News when we stop hiding behind religion, with all of its trappings and false securities, and step into the light of God’s love and authority in Jesus, submitting to him as he calls us to follow him into a life of genuine faith and faithfulness.

A Tree and a Temple: A Living Parable

- ❖ The lush leaves of religion easily hide the absence of godly fruit in our lives. (vs. 12-14)
- ❖ Religion easily becomes a place of hiding from God, ourselves and each other. (vs. 15-18)

Matthew 23:27 (NIV) — 27 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.

- ❖ Jesus calls us out of hiding into vibrant faith and vulnerable relationships. (vs. 19-26)

Matthew 22:34–40 (NIV) — 34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. 35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” 37 Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 **This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.**”

A Question of Authority

- ❖ Jesus’ authority – affirmed by God, his teaching, his miracles and his resurrection – is something to be accepted or rejected, not challenged. (vs. 27-33)

Mark 9:7 (NIV) — 7 Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “**This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!**”

1 Peter 3:21–22 (NIV) — 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

- ❖ When we follow Jesus and submit to him, we become channels of his loving authority on earth. (vs. 19-26)

John 20:21–23 (NIV) — 21 Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 **If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.**”