

# Summary

In this sermon, Pastor Kevin explores how Jesus intercepts entropy (the natural tendency toward decay and disorder) in the temple, using the story of the cursed fig tree and temple cleansing from Mark 11. He begins with a personal story about his son Bolton bringing golf clubs to Hawaii for practice, illustrating how faithfulness in small, private things gives God something to bless publicly. Jesus confronted three problems in the temple: exploiting access to God through unfair pricing, obstructing sacred space by using it as a shortcut, and failing to welcome the nations as originally intended. The temple had become corrupt, showing outward religious activity but lacking God's heart for people.

Jesus teaches that prayer is the key to intercepting entropy in our lives. Through His sacrifice, we no longer need a physical temple because the Holy Spirit dwells within believers. The sermon challenges listeners to identify areas where they need to intercept entropy through faithful practice, prayer, and forgiveness, emphasizing that what we do in private with God affects our public lives.

## Intro Prayer

Father, thank you for gathering us together today across all our campuses. We ask that you would open our hearts and minds to what you want to teach us through your word. Help us to be receptive to your Spirit's leading and give us courage to face the areas in our lives where we need your intervention. We pray that you would speak clearly to each person here about where they need to experience your presence and power. Prepare our hearts to receive what you have for us today. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

## Ice Breaker

What's one hobby or activity that you know requires regular practice to stay good at, and have you ever taken a break from it only to realize how much you'd lost when you came back?

## Key Verses

1. Mark 11:15-17
2. Mark 11:22-25
3. Isaiah 56:7

## Questions

1. Pastor Kevin shared how Bolton brought his golf clubs for the 'boring' practice at the driving range, which led to an amazing opportunity. What are some 'driving range' activities in your spiritual life that might seem mundane but are actually preparing you for God's blessings?
2. The sermon mentions that 'faithfulness in the small things gives the Father something He can bless.' Can you think of a time when your faithfulness in something small led to an unexpected blessing or opportunity?

3. Jesus confronted three problems in the temple: exploiting access to God, obstructing sacred space, and failing to welcome outsiders. Which of these resonates most with challenges you see in modern church culture or in your own spiritual life?
4. The fig tree had leaves but no fruit, representing outward religious activity without genuine spiritual life. How can we guard against becoming 'all leaves and no fruit' in our own faith journey?
5. Where in your life do you currently see 'entropy' - areas that are deteriorating because they're not receiving proper attention? What would it look like to 'intercept entropy' in those areas?
6. Jesus emphasized that the temple should be 'a house of prayer for all nations.' How can we ensure our church and our personal lives reflect God's heart for welcoming outsiders and people who are different from us?
7. The sermon connects private prayer life to public spiritual effectiveness, comparing it to practicing at a driving range. How has your private time with God (or lack thereof) affected your public spiritual life?
8. Jesus taught about forgiveness being connected to effective prayer. Is there anyone you need to forgive so that your relationship with God can be unhindered? How might unforgiveness be affecting other areas of your life?

## Life Application

This week, identify one area of your life where you see 'entropy' - something that's deteriorating due to neglect. Commit to spending time in prayer about this area daily, asking God for wisdom and strength to take action. Also, establish or recommit to a consistent 'driving range' practice - a regular time of private prayer and Bible reading that can give God something to bless in your public life.

## Key Takeaways

1. Faithfulness in small, private things gives God something He can bless publicly
2. Entropy (decay and disorder) is the natural tendency of everything left unattended, including our spiritual lives
3. Jesus intercepts entropy through His presence and power, transforming us from the inside out
4. Prayer is the key practice for intercepting entropy in our personal lives
5. God's heart is for all nations and outsiders to experience His love and presence

## Ending Prayer

Father, thank you for this time together and for the truths you've revealed to us today. We pray that you would give us the courage and strength to intercept entropy in our own lives through faithful prayer and obedience to you. Help us to be people who welcome others as you have welcomed us, and to live lives that bear genuine spiritual fruit. Show us where we need to take action this week, and give us your grace to follow through. May our private faithfulness give you something to bless publicly for your glory. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.