

THE GOSPEL OF MARK: IT'S A SHOWDOWN

MARK 12:1-12

- 1st of 3 parables Jesus gives to demonstrate the stubbornness of the Jews and repercussions.
- Big picture: God's (owner) own leaders (tenants) who were over His people (vineyard) rejected His prophets (servants), even Jesus (owner's son). God destroyed them and gave the vineyard to other servants.
- They fulfilled **Psalm 118:22-23**. In Psalms it is Israel being rejected by other nations. It's fulfillment is found in the Messiah being rejected by His own people, Israel.
- **Matthew 21:43-44** "Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."
- Imagine what it was like for God to send His own Son to the vineyard. Imagine what it was like for Jesus to talk about His death in such a way.
- Take note of the next passage: **Psalm 118:24** "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

MARK 12:13-17

- Pharisees were a strict group wholly devoted to God. Herodians were sympathetic to the Herods because of their given position by the government. Typically enemies, but not this day.
- If Jesus sides with Herodians - the mass is against Him. If He sides with Pharisees - He's reported.
- "The coin itself has an offensive inscription: 'Tiberias Caesar, son of the divine Augustus' and on the flip side, 'pontifex maximus' ('the most high priest')."
- Jesus, the very image of God standing before them, just knocked them out in a few seconds.
- It's amazing. This dishonest duo know what godliness looks like: someone who truly teaches God's word. Someone who doesn't care about man's opinion. Someone who is objective - shows no partiality. They can say all the right things, but they're breaking every item right down the line.

MARK 12:18-27 And Sadducees came to Him, who say that there is no resurrection. And they asked Him a question, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. There were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and when he died left no offspring. And the second took her, and died, leaving no offspring. And the third likewise. And the seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman also died. In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife." Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong."

- Another group: Sadducees who say there is no resurrection. It's another trap Jesus avoids.
- Hypothetical situation. Are we being sincere when we ask questions? This can be dangerous.
- They don't know the power of God (we need to be careful - we don't know everything).
- What they could know they didn't (scripture implied they were still alive).
- Again, we're dealing with a dishonest crowd. Not an ounce of sincerity behind their question.

MARK 12:28-34 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that He answered them well, asked Him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." And the scribe said to Him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that He is one, and there is no other besides Him. And to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask Him any more questions.

- So, He's been challenged regarding His authority, paying taxes and the resurrection. Then enters this man. It is another challenge, but he's seeing what's going on. This man seems to be different.
- Remember, there are always individuals like this among the crowd. They're not the majority, but they exist. Sincerity vs. play acting. Seekers vs. the blind. Tender hearted vs. hard hearted. Loving God vs. desire of being loved.

MARK 12:35-37 And as Jesus taught in the temple, He said, "How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet." ' David himself calls him Lord. So how is He his son?" And the great throng heard Him gladly.

- **Matthew 22:42** "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" They said to Him, "The son of David."
- Now it's time for Jesus to question. No one can answer. This is what they should focus on. David, inspired by the Spirit, called the Messiah Lord. Why Lord if He's his son? How? And he sits at Jehovah's right side? How is this possible?

MARK 12:38-40 And in His teaching He said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

- See **Matthew 23** for fuller description ("Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" section).
- This isn't about truth. The leaders' problem is they love attention, praise and Glory. They prefer their man-made religion to God's divine will.
- These kinds of men take advantage of others. Meanwhile, Jesus is about to lay His life down for all.

MARK 12:41-44 And He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. And He called His disciples to Him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

- It's still moving that Jesus pays attention to such detail when He's about to die. The beauty of life wasn't overlooked even during the worst of times.
- In the midst of all this talk and hypocrisy is this poor widow. Jesus sees these kinds of people. He compliments them. Less talking and more doing. People with little bank accounts can have the biggest hearts.
- She's sacrificing all she has. She'll “feel” that contribution. Great sacrifices are something that can be felt. Jesus knows what that's all about. Many times we rob ourselves from knowing what it is to give to such an extent. Give to a point we can “feel it”.
- Listen, I have the privilege to talk about God's word with you. But many times the religious “leaders” are the ones sitting around debating while others are getting to work. You are the ones getting to work. Living day to day. Doing your part in different ways. When I see this woman I see the brethren. I don't see religious leaders - I see people who are doing their best to trust in God and love those around them. This is what it's all about.