

Mark 12

Mark 12.1-9 – events on Tuesday of the last week

V1 – Jesus began to speak to them the Parable of the Vine-growers

-This is based on *Isaiah 5.1-7*, so the general idea should have been familiar to the people

-**What did the man in the parable do?** Planted a vineyard, built a fence around it, dug a pit for the winepress, and built a tower with the stones he took out of the field (a place to watch for robbers, place to live, sleep)

-**Symbolism?** Vineyard = the nation of Israel, vineyard owner = God

V2 – **What did the owner do when the harvest came?** Sent a slave to get some of the harvest

V3 – **What did the renters do to the slave?** Beat him up and sent him away with nothing

V4 – **What did the owner do next?** Sent another slave

-**What did the renters do to him?** Wounded him in the head and treated him shamefully

V5 – **What else happened?** The owner sent many others, but they were all treated the same way

V6 – **Whom did the owner send last?** His beloved son

-**What was the attitude of the owner?** Surely they will respect him

V7 – **What was the attitude of the renters?** We can kill him and get the inheritance

-**Was this wise thinking on their part?** No, it was really stupid – just to kill the owner's son would not mean that they would get the inheritance

V8 – **What did the renters do?** Killed the owner's son and threw him out of the vineyard

V9 – **What was the answer to the question that Jesus asked?** The owner will kill the renters and give the vineyard to others

-**Symbolism?** Owner's son = Jesus, renters = Jewish leaders

-**"Others"?** Gentiles

Mark 12.10-12

V10-11 – Jesus began quoting here: **Read Psalm 118.22-23**

-**What was the message of that passage?** That the Jews would reject the "chief cornerstone"

V12 – **What was the reaction of the Jewish leaders?** Tried to seize Jesus

-**Why were they not able to arrest him?** Because of the crowd

-**Did they understand the parable?** Yes, that is why they wanted to kill him

Mark 12.13-17

V13 – **Who came next to try to trap Jesus?** Pharisees and Herodians

V 14 – **Did they mean all these things?** No, just flattery

- What was their question?** Is it lawful to pay a poll-tax to Caesar (and the Roman Empire)?
- They were trying to put Jesus on the "horns of dilemma" to trap him
- How?** If he said they should pay the tax, the crowds would be furious with him
- If he said not to pay the tax, the Romans would arrest him

V 15 - **What attitude did they really have?** They were hypocrites (from a Greek word meaning "false face")

- What did Jesus ask for?** Denarius (some Christian bookstores have duplicates of ancient coins for sale)

V 16 – **What question did he ask them?** Whose likeness is on the coin?

- They must have started squirming at this point – they hated Caesar, but they carried his coins around with them!
- Their answer?** Caesar's

V 17 – **Why was his answer so incredible?** He avoided the dilemma they had put him in

- What an amazing answer, even today
- Applications today?** We are to pay our taxes, and we are also to be loyal to God
- Read Romans 13.1-7** – God has ordained civil government – we are to pay our taxes and respect the government leaders, even though we may disagree with how the tax money is spent and how the government officials might behave
- What was the reaction of the people to this answer?** They were amazed

Mark 12.18-23

V 18 – **What was the next group to try to trap Jesus?** The Sadducees

- What was the difference between the Sadducees and the Pharisees?** The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection of the dead (the liberals of their day)

V 19 – **What did they start telling Jesus?** That Moses said that if a man died, his brother was to take his widow as a wife (a reference to *Deuteronomy 25.5-10*)

V 20-21 – **What was their story?** 7 brothers and 1 wife – they all died without any children

- Was this story realistic?** Of course not, it was just about impossible to ever happen
- It was a very, very hypothetical story to "prove" a point
- Today's version: A man on is an airplane, reading his Bible. He decides that he must be baptized to be saved, but the plane crashes before he can get baptized – how could God condemn such a person?" – There is also the "desert version" of this story....
- This was just a "test story" for them – they thought they had an airtight case against the resurrection of the dead – who could possibly answer their story?

V 23 – **The key question?** In the resurrection, whom would the woman be married to?

- Remember: they did not even believe in the resurrection! They were truly hypocrites

Mark 12. 24-27

V 24 – What was their basic problem, according to Jesus? They did not understand the Scriptures and the power of God
-So Jesus gave them an answer immediately

V 25 – What was his answer to their story? In the resurrection, there will be no marriage
-That immediately took care of their little test story
-The "power of God" is beyond our comprehension; the resurrection will be a new type of existence

V 26 – Now Jesus goes on the offensive – he is going to attack their belief that there is no resurrection
-**Where from the Old Testament did Jesus quote? Read Exodus 3.6** – burning bush
-**What did God say from the burning bush?** I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
-**Is the president of the U.S. the president over dead people?** Of course not
-**What conclusion did Jesus give concerning the Sadducees?** They were greatly mistaken
-So the resurrection of the dead is not a minor issue that we really don't have to worry about
-Jesus destroyed the "logic" of the Sadducees in his reference to the resurrection

Mark 12.28-34

V 28 – Who next spoke to Jesus? One of the scribes (an expert in the Old Law)
-**What was his attitude toward Jesus?** He knew that Jesus had answered them well; this scribe seems to have been sincere and honest
-**What question did the scribe have?** Which is the greatest commandment of the Old Testament?
-The Jewish leaders were always trying to classify laws of the Old Testament, so which one should come first?

V 29-30 – How did Jesus answer? He quoted *Deuteronomy 6.4-5*
-Interesting: he did not quote from the Ten Commandments
-Our friends in the Seventh Day Adventist Church ought to learn from this – the Ten Commandments are not the most important part of the Old Testament!
-Jesus quoted from the "Law of Moses" (as the Seventh Day Adventists call it)
-They say that the "Law of Moses" was done away with, but the Ten Commandments were carried over to the New Testament (including the commandment to worship God on the Sabbath Day)
-Notice the emphasis on loving God with heart, soul, mind, and strength

V 31 – Jesus did not stop with just the greatest commandment; he went on to the second greatest commandment
-**What was the second greatest commandment?** To love one's neighbor as one's-self
-A quote from *Leviticus 19.18* (again not from the Ten Commandments!)

V 32 – What was the reaction of the scribe? Deeply impressed; amazed at Jesus
-The scribe may have already been studying this question and may have come to the same conclusion that Jesus spoke of

V 33 – According to this scribe, what is not as important as loving God and one's neighbors?
Burnt offerings and sacrifices
-**Who in the Old Testament thought that offerings and sacrifices would be better than obeying God?** Saul – Read *1 Samuel 15.22-23*

V 34 – What was the reaction of Jesus to what this scribe said? Very impressed

-**Additional statement?** He was not far from the kingdom of God

-**Read Acts 6.7** – Maybe the scribe was in that group

-**How many more questions did Jesus get after that?** None – he had silenced his critics

Mark 12.35-37

V 35 – What was Jesus doing in the temple? Teaching (always teaching, because the time was short)

-**What was his favorite method of teaching?** Asking questions (still the best method even today)

-**What was the question?** How can the Messiah be the son of David?

-The Old Testament taught that the Messiah would be a descendant of David (*Isaiah 9.6-7, 11.1, Jeremiah 23.5*)

V 36 – Jesus quoted from Psalm 110.1 – very strange language – David spoke of the Lord as his father (Lord)

-In other words, the Messiah was a descendant of David, but David addressed him as Lord (unusual)

V 37 – A real thought question

-Answer: the Messiah would be more than just a descendant of David

-The Messiah would be a spiritual leader and the son of God (not just a political king or a general of an army, etc.)

Mark 12.38-40

V 38 – What did Jesus warn the people about? The hypocrisy of the scribes

-**How did they like to appear?** With long robes, respectful greetings, etc.

V 39 – What else did the scribes like? Chief seats, places of honor at banquets

V 40 – But what were they really like? They devoured (notice that word) widows' houses and gave prayers just for the sake of appearance

-Throughout the Bible, we are warned not to take advantage of widows – **Read James 1.27**

Mark 12.41-44

V 41 – Speaking of widows...

-**Where did Jesus sit down?** Opposite the treasury, where people dropped their money in for the temple

-**What was he doing?** Watching people put their money in

-**Would we be embarrassed to see Jesus watching us today?** For Christian men to serve the Lord's Supper and take up the collection, there are some that we notice who do not put anything into the basket (even though they are members of the congregation)

-A very tragic and terrible sin

-**How much were the rich putting in?** Large sums of money

V 42 – **What did the poor widow put in?** Two small coins (called lepta, equaled about a half-cent – it was the smallest coin in circulation at the time)

V 43 – **What comment did Jesus make?** She put in more than all the others

V 44 – **Why was that?** Because she gave out of her poverty, but others gave from their surplus

-Lessons on giving from this passage: it is not the amount that we give

-It is the amount compared to what we have

-**Read 1 Corinthians 16.1-2** – We are to give as we have prospered

-This should tell us that God really doesn't need our money and that giving is really a test of our faith

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