

Mark Chapter 12

7 teachings in this chapter:

V: 1-12 The parable of the vineyard.

V: 1 The man, the owner of the vineyard – God the Father.

- The vineyard represents the nation of Israel, intended to be a fruitful vineyard.

Isaiah 5:1-7 turn to / read.

- Setting a hedge about it: setting protections about it.
- Hedge: A boundary formed by a dense row of usually thorny shrubs. In ancient Israel hedges served to protect vineyards from damage by animals or intruders.
- Building a wine vat mean that there is an as yet un-fulfilled expectation that there will be fruit.
- Building a tower refers to gathering the stones from about the field, clearing the field so that the vineyard can grow.
- The husbandmen were those who were expected to oversee and care for the vineyard – meaning the priests

V: 2-5 At the time when the nation should be fruitful, the husbandmen were warned by the servants.

- There was and is an expectation of fruitfulness:

John 15:1-8 Turn to / read:

- The “husbandmen” basically killed the messengers of God. The Jews killed the prophets that were sent to warn them:

2 Chronicles 36:14-16

“¹⁴Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. ¹⁵And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place: ¹⁶But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy.”

Nehemiah 9:26, 30.

“²⁶Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets

which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations.”

“³⁰Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would thy not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.”

V: 6-8 In the Eastern culture, the Son would have the same authority as the Father, particularly when sent from the Father.

John 14:9 “... he that hath seen me hath seen the Father...”

Hebrews 1:1-2 “¹God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ²hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds;”

- Jesus was taken outside the city gates and crucified – outside the vineyard...

V: 9-11 Jesus was / is the chief cornerstone, rejected by the earthly builders.

Psalms 118:22 “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”

- This was the Lord’s doing?

Acts 2:23 “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

V: 12 They knew that Jesus was talking about them!

Matthew 21:43-46 Parallel – turn to & read:

Matthew 12:14 “Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him.”

John 11:47-48 “⁴⁷Then gathered the chief priests and Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. ⁴⁸If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.”

V: 13-17 Passover lamb: examination by the Herodians, the political leaders of Israel.

Exodus 12:5 “Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats.”

V: 13-14 Taxes / Tribute was viewed as a form of worship.

- They thought they had Him.
- To say “no”, don’t pay tribute to Caesar made you a traitor to Rome.
- To say “yes” and pay tribute to Caesar constituted “worship” of Caesar, which the Messiah wouldn’t do.

V: 15-16 Jesus perceives their wickedness; He already knew what they were up to.

- This could have been an exercise in His omniscience, or perhaps it was simply His knowledge of the word and discernment of the obvious.
- “Hypocrites” – not really looking for a true answer, just looking to entrap.
- Jesus didn’t already have a denarius of His own, apparently He wasn’t in the ministry for the money – which is a good example for the rest of us.

1 Peter 5:2 “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;”

V: 17 Later, the Jews would reveal their true allegiance and to whom they would pay tribute.

John 19:15 Pharisees – “we have no king but Caesar.”

- Later the Jews would lie and say that Jesus had forbid them from paying taxes to Caesar. (**Luke 23:2**)
- Jesus never taught disobedience or rebellion.

Romans 13:7 “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”

1 Peter 2:13-17 “¹³Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; ¹⁴or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. ¹⁵For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: ¹⁶As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. ¹⁷Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.”

The bottom line:

- Coins made in Caesar’s image belong to Caesar.
- Men made in God’s image belong to God!

Man vs: God; God wins!

1 Corinthians 3:19 “For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.”

Job 5:13 “He catches the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the cunning comes quickly upon them.”

Comparing earthly wisdom to heavenly or Godly wisdom:

James 3:15-17 “¹⁵This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. ¹⁶For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. ¹⁷But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

V: 18-27 *Examination by the Sadducees.*

V: 18 Sadducees don't believe in the resurrection of the dead, not an honest question.

Psalm 24:3-4 “³Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His Holy Place? ⁴He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.”

Psalm 51:6 “Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part Thou shalt make me to know wisdom.”

V: 19-23 Using an absurd hypothetical situation trying to prove their case against the resurrection of the dead.

Deuteronomy 25:5-6 What they are saying about the law is true, but as far as they are concerned, this is where the truth ends.

- Essentially, like the media today, and or liberal political groups, they are trying to define the debate, pitting Jesus against Moses – seemingly a no win situation.
- Common mistake then and now, they viewed Heaven as an extension of their current life, as opposed something much better.

V: 24 Jesus tells them that they don't know the scriptures

Romans 10:2 “For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.”

1 Corinthians 2:14 “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

- They don't know the power of God, they've limited Him to their own puny perspective.

- If they were to approach the scriptures honestly instead of looking for their own advantage or for their own agenda, they might just get saved

John 5:39-40 ³⁹“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.”

V: 25 Jesus testifies of the resurrection.

V: 26-27 The Sadducees tried to use Moses to test Jesus so Jesus used Moses to answer them and reveal their ignorance.

Exodus 3:6, 14 “*I am, that I am*” - not “I was”!

- Ours is THE God of the living.

John 10:10 “... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

Parallel account:

Matthew 22:33 “And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at His doctrine:”

- Everybody was astonished, they were amazed, they were “slack jawed”.
- ³⁴Jesus had put them to silence, they didn’t have an answer, they couldn’t answer.

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- Thus far in this chapter we see that Jesus is speaking parables that both teach and send a message:

1. The first parable of the vineyard declares the motives of the religious establishment in Israel, that it has been perverted into greed and covetousness which leads not only to murder, but to the rejection of the Messiah.
2. In the examination by the Herodians, Jesus blows them away telling them to give to Caesar what is his – the money, and to give to God what is His – the people themselves.
 - Coins made in Caesar’s image belong to Caesar.
 - Men made in God’s image belong to God!
3. Next the Sadducees take their best shot with a ridiculous question and are rebuked for not knowing the scriptures. They try to pit Jesus against

Moses so Jesus uses Moses to make His point; that ours is the God of the living, not the dead.

- This brings us to v: 28-34 and the examination of Jesus by the Pharisees:

V: 28 Matthew 22:36 – Parallel passage: “Master” - this appears to be a sincere question based on the response of both Jesus and the scribe in our text.

- The Scribes were the experts in the Law – Mishnah “Oral Law”, written down.
- 613 laws. 248 “major”, and 365 “minor” laws.
- This question had been the source of great debate for hundreds of years.

V: 29-30 Jesus answered: quoting the “shema” (to hear) – **Deuteronomy 6:4-5** – a statement of faith recited daily by Orthodox Jews.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 ⁴“Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: ⁵And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”

- Also placed in the “mezuzah” at the entry way to houses.
- This covers the 1st table of the 10 commandments. **Exodus 20:2-11**
 1. “I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before Me.”
 2. “You’re not to make any graven images nor bow down to them.”
 3. “Do not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.”
 4. “Remember the Sabbath day, keep it holy.”
- All of this fall right in line with what Jesus taught us about our priorities: **Matthew 6:33** “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Psalms 27:4 “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire of the Lord.”

- Vertical axis vs: horizontal axis.

Psalms 37:4 “Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”

V: 31 Jesus completes the law with this counsel or comparison:

- “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” This represents the 2nd table of the Law concerning our worldly relationships – those on the horizontal plane.

1 John 4:20-21 ²⁰“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love

God whom he hath not seen? ²¹And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.”

- We are to love our neighbor, as we love ourselves.
- Loving our neighbor isn't dependent on our loving ourselves; it's dependent on my loving God.

“³¹There is no commandment greater than these.”

Jesus said:

Matthew 22:40 “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Matthew 5:17 “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

- All the Law and the Prophets.

John 13:34-35 “³⁴A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

1 Timothy 1:5 “Now the end of the commandment is charity / love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:”

- Love God & love people!

1 Corinthians 13:1-8a [turn to / read](#)

V: 32-33 Something unique happens here: This scribe affirmed what Jesus said! This man acknowledged that what Jesus was saying was true, that it was consistent with God's word – which is always the test of real truth.

- This is a light bulb moment: he gets it.

1 Samuel 15:22 “And Samuel said, hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”

Our expression of love to God is through our obedience:

John 14:21 “He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me...”

V: 34 Jesus see's the beginning of faith in this scribe – “he's not far from the kingdom of God”

- As his faith comes to completion or to a conclusion we see first that it is based on the word of God: which Jesus is speaking and quoting.

Romans 10:17 “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

- Secondly, what is the next step? Discreetly vs: a public declaration.

Romans 10:9-10 “⁹That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

- No one else dared ask Jesus any more questions – of a challenging sort.
- The Pharisees re-group, possibly trying to come up with another question; but Jesus beats them to the punch, asking them a question in V: 35-37

V: 35 Jesus challenges the religious leaders in the Temple, on their home turf.

- Why do the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David?
- The genealogy of the Messiah, well known to the Pharisees.

Matthew 1:1 “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

Romans 1:3-4 “³Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. ⁴And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:”

V: 36 Jesus is ascribing David’s authorship of the Psalms via the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:20-21 “²⁰Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. ²¹For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

- How could David call his son “Lord”?
- The only way a son could be greater than his father was if he was more than simply the son of the father... meaning he was speaking of the Messiah.
- LORD = Jehovah / YHWH = Yahweh.
- YHWH is called the Tetragrammaton, which in Greek means “4 letters” a symbol for the unspeakable name of God.
- “Jehovah” itself was not a Hebrew word, it’s a “latinized” version of Yahweh that simply came into use among scholars and now into common use.

- Lord = “Master” or “Adonai”
- Jesus is quoting David in **Psalm 110:1**.

Psalm 110:1 “The **LORD** said unto my **Lord**, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

- David understood this relationship, and that it was a blessing from God that the Messiah would come into this world through his progeny.

V: 37 It was a total cultural “no-no”. Fathers were always addressed as Lord being superior to their children; this never referred to children or offspring as such.

- How is He / Messiah then his / David’s son?
- Answer: it would have to be “supernatural” or miraculous! Like a virgin birth!

Isaiah 7:14 “Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”

Matthew 1:18 “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: when as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.”

- None of this is a hard sell, these things are readily acknowledged by the Jews.
- In a sense they are receiving what they have longed for, understanding of God’s word – spoken in a way that they can understand.

V: 38-40 The hypocrisy of the scribes and the Pharisees.

- They love being first, not knowing that it will make them last of all.
- The religious leaders take advantage of poor widows instead of helping them as they have been called to do.
- “Devouring”: a characteristic of the enemy:

1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

- For a “pretense”, for a show, for an ulterior motive, they make long prayers.
- Heartless and cruel in their business dealings, then speaking with long drawn out “heartfelt” prayers. Not! ☹

Proverbs 28:9 “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”

V: 40b “... these shall receive greater damnation.”

Galatians 6:7-8 “⁶Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. ⁸For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap live everlasting.”

Revelation 22:12 “And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

V: 41-44 The widow’s mites – what a contrast from the behavior of the scribes! They were ripping off widows, here this widow is giving voluntarily, sacrificially.

- Jesus sat off to the side and observed “how” people gave; not how much but how in the sense of “in what way” – the issue wasn’t how much, but what was their attitude in giving.
- Jesus noted that some gave quite a bit, but that wasn’t what impressed Him.

Jesus cautioned His followers about how they gave:

Matthew 6:1-2 “¹Take heed that ye do not your alms / giving before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. ²Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.”

- This widow’s offering wasn’t out of her abundance, it was out of her poverty, her giving was sacrificial.

David declared:

2 Samuel 24:24 “And the king said unto Araunah, nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.”

- This widow’s giving expressed her faith in the Lord, and her reliance upon the Lord to meet her needs.
- She declared with her actions that God was worthy of all that she had, and that it was in fact truly His.
- The rich who had given of their abundance, or the scribes who prayed for a show did so to a religious system that would soon pass from the scene.
- This woman gave sacrificially to the God of heaven who would appreciate and value her sacrifice for eternity to come.

Matthew 6:21 “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”