

MARK CHAPTER 12— The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers; The Pharisees: Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar? The Sadducees: What About the Resurrection?

The Scribes: Which is the First Commandment of All? Jesus: How Can David Call His Descendant Lord? Beware of the Scribes; The Widow's Two Mites

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers (vs. 1-12)

Mar 12:1 Then He began to speak to them in parables: 'A man planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a place for the wine vat and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country.

Mar 12:2 Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that he might receive some of the fruit of the vineyard from the vinedressers.

Mar 12:3 And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed.

Mar 12:4 Again he sent them another servant, and at him they threw stones, wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully treated.

Mar 12:5 And again he sent another, and him they killed; and many others, beating some and killing some.

Mar 12:6 Therefore still having one son, his beloved, he also sent him to them last, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

Mar 12:7 But those vinedressers said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'

Mar 12:8 So they took him and killed him and cast him out of the vineyard.

Mar 12:9 "Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and give the vineyard to others.

Mar 12:10 Have you not even read this Scripture: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE.

Mar 12:11 THIS WAS THE LORD'S DOING, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES?'"

Mar 12:12 And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away.

The Pharisees: Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes to Caesar? (vs. 13-17)

Mar 12:13 Then they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in His words.

v. 1 The parable concerns an absentee landlord—a common figure in those days.

vs. 2-12 Servants sent to collect rent were either beaten or killed by the servants of the tenant farmer. Finally, certain they would honor him, the owner sent his own son. But the son was killed just as readily as the others. In a similar parable, Isaiah identified the vineyard as Israel (Isaiah 5:7). Thus, it was a loving God who sent prophet after prophet to Israel, only to see each one beaten or killed. And it was a God of incomparable love who sent His own Son to die for the very ones who nailed Him to a Cross. This not only speaks volumes concerning the patience of the Father in sending servant after servant and warning after warning, but also concerning the stupidity of man who thinks that because God must be off in some corner of the cosmos, he need not listen to His servants; he need not reverence His Son; he can do whatever he wants. Mankind mistakes the patience of God for impotence. But when He comes, judgment will fall upon those who have not revered His Son. So clearly did the priests, scribes, and elders get the point of Jesus' parable that they knew He had to be done away with. **Jesus is showing them what they have already determined that He is a threat to them, a danger to them and thus, He had to, in their mind, be destroyed lest they lose their authority and their power and their hold over the people.**

v. 13 Unable to trap Jesus with their question concerning authority, the priests, scribes, and elders made way for the Pharisees and Herodians to question Him concerning His integrity. The Herodians supported Herod, who was a puppet of Rome, and the Pharisees wanted no part of Rome, so these two groups would normally be as close as cats and dogs. But because they realized Jesus was a threat to both of their empires, the Herodians and Pharisees came together in a shared hatred of Him.

Chapter 12 Jesus follows His answer to the question concerning His authority posed to Him by the priests, scribes, and elders with a parable...

As you read each chapter, consider the following:

- What does this chapter say to me?
- How does this apply to my life today?
- Which of these scriptures really speak to me about my relationship with God,
- About my relationship with Jesus Christ.
- What does it tell me about God?
- What does it tell me about Jesus?

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Mar 12:14 When they had come, they said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"
Mar 12:15 Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?" But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it."

Mar 12:16 So they brought it. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" They said to Him, "Caesar's."

Mar 12:17 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at Him.

The Sadducees: What About the Resurrection?
(vs. 18-27)

Mar 12:18 Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying:

Mar 12:19 "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.

Mar 12:20 Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring.

Mar 12:21 And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise.

Mar 12:22 So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also.

Mar 12:23 Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife."

vs. 14-15 “Master,” said the Herodians and Pharisees, “You’re a great teacher, One who can’t be manipulated. Therefore, we have a question to ask You: Should we pay taxes or not?” If Jesus said, “Yes, pay taxes,” the people of Israel—who hated paying taxes to the despised Romans—would have turned against Him. If, however, He said, “Don’t pay taxes,” He would have been arrested for insurrection. Either way, the Herodians and Pharisees thought they had Him. *bring me a denarius that I may see it.* “Health, Wealth, and Prosperity” teachers would call Jesus a dismal failure. Foxes have holes, the birds have nests, but the Son of man had nowhere to lay His head (Luke 9:58). He didn’t even have a penny to use as an illustration.

v. 16 Usually, the first thing a ruler did after conquering new territory would be to mint new coinage containing his image as a continual reminder to the conquered people that he was indeed their leader and that his authority extended as wide as his coins were circulated.

v. 17 *Render to Caesar ...* Although the people in the realm were able to use his coins as currency, the person whose image appeared on the coin actually owned the coin. In this case, it would have been the image and coin of Caesar Tiberius. *...and to God the things that are God's.* If the coin with the image of Caesar belonged to Caesar, Jesus reasoned, the person made in the image of God belongs to God. *they marveled at him.* Just as the priests, scribes, and elders had failed to trap Jesus concerning His authority, the Herodians and Pharisees were also unable to do so concerning His integrity.

vs 18-23 *the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection...* Believing only in the five books of Moses, the Sadducees didn’t believe in miracles, angels, or resurrection because they saw none of those elements in the Pentateuch. They were smaller in number than the Pharisees or Herodians, but, being the wealthier businessmen, they were the elite of the day. *Whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.*

According to Deuteronomy 25, if a man died childless, it was the obligation of his next younger brother to marry his widow and bear a child to be his heir, to carry on his name. In order to examine Jesus’ theology, the Sadducees pose this question concerning a hypothetical woman who had been widowed seven times over.

v. 17 *And Jesus answered and said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at Him.*

Render - *apodidōmi* – **To pay back; to give back; to return;** yield

There is a certain obligation that we do have to government but **then there is a greater obligation that we have to God.**

Giving unto God what belongs to God. What belongs to God? Our very existence, our very lives. And **so we should give to God what is God’s, the glory, the praise, the respect, the reverence, the honor, because He is our Creator and we really are His.**

Application: Which are you most likely to do? To pay to Caesar or to pay/pay back to God?

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Mar 12:24 Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?"
Mar 12:25 For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.
Mar 12:26 But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB' ?
Mar 12:27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken."

The Scribes: Which is the First Commandment of All?

(vs. 28-34)

Mar 12:28 Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"
Mar 12:29 Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE.
Mar 12:30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' This is the first commandment.
Mar 12:31 And the second, like it, is this: 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Mar 12:32 So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He.
Mar 12:33 And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

vs. 24-25 The relationships that we will have in heaven will exceed even those of our marriage relationships here. Heaven is going to be such a glorious place. And just “eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard,” we’ve only gotten just glimpses, little glimpses here and there. But it’s so far beyond anything we’d ever hope for or dreamed or could imagine. And so Jesus said, “*Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know 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.*”

vs. 26-27 Ignoring altogether the absurd hypothetical situation of the widow and speaking to them from the Pentateuch itself, **Jesus reminded the Sadducees that five hundred years after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had passed from the scene**, God identified Himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – the “I AM”!! . And by **using the present tense to do so**, the implication was obvious that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were still alive—verifying the reality of resurrection. **Not I was, nor I will be, but I AM!!**

v. 28 In asking which is the greatest commandment of all, the last question addressed to Jesus dealt with priority.

vs. 29-30 Jesus answered with the Shema, Deuteronomy 6:4, the verse the orthodox Jew quotes many times each day and wears inside the phylactery on his forehead and wrist.

v. 31 The Jews had six hundred thirteen commandments from the Old Testament law. Three hundred sixty-five were negative commandments—one for each day of the year, and two hundred forty-eight positive commandments—one for each of the two hundred forty-eight generations from Adam to their day. In Psalm 15, however, David reduced this number to eleven; and in the sixth chapter of his book, Micah reduced it to three (6:8). Here, Jesus reduces it to two; and in Galatians 5:14, Paul would reduce it to one: love.

vs. 32-33 Realizing that relationship far surpassed religion, the scribes could do nothing but agree with the beauty, simplicity, and logic of Jesus’ answer.

vs. 26-27 Application: Is your God indeed the “I AM”? Is He to you, truly *not the God of the dead, but the God of the living?*

vs. 28-34 – “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” – A statement of eternal importance!

What about the scribe, that caused Jesus to make this statement?

1. **He came to Jesus to learn the truth about Him.** He wanted to learn. He knew enough about Jesus that He wanted to learn from Him. The more we learn about Jesus the more impressed we are. We want to stay in the Gospels and the Book of Revelation. He asked a key question, “*Which is the first commandment of all?*” With all the interpretations that were going on in Israel, it was a question that all would likely ask. Jesus answered with a confession of faith, the “*Shema*”; Then He summarized all the commandments relating to relationship with our fellowman, the last six commandments. ***‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF’***
2. **He believed in the truth.** That Jesus had spoken the truth. Notice the scribe’s positive answer, indicating his boldness, making a public commitment, confirming the truth-indicating he knew the absolute truth! *“Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”*

3. **He understood what the Law was all about** and Jesus’ interpretation of it was true.

4. The only thing left now, **to fully embrace that Jesus is God and everything from Him, including His teaching, is from God.** He also needed to come under the conviction of the Law, that he was a sinner and needed to come to Jesus, believing that Jesus came to pay for all our sin. “...as Moses lifted up the serpent...even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.”

Did this scribe ever make it? The Bible doesn’t tell us. **If he did believe and would believe, he would have entered right then, when he believed, forever!**

Application: How close to the Kingdom of God are you?

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The Widow's Two Mites (vs. 41-44)

Mar 12:41 Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much.

Mar 12:42 Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans.

Mar 12:43 So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury;

Mar 12:44 for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

*vs. 41-44 beheld how the people cast money into the treasury...*It was most likely between the columns on Solomon's porch that thirteen chests called “trumpets” were located in which people placed money to help the poor. Jesus was **not as interested in what people gave** as He was **in how they gave**.

That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: After dealing with the questions of His foes, Jesus finds a friend. The foes of Jesus will always raise questions. And the “foe” within me does so as well whenever I am cynical or critical. How I long for the day when that part of my nature is removed completely. Jesus' friend, however, is presented in complete contrast to the religious bigwigs of the day who chose to criticize and question rather than to give. May God help us to be like this faithful woman, and to show Him our love as we give of our money, energy, time, and heart in His Name.

Vs. 43-44 These words of Jesus really search our hearts, do they not? And yet how wise they are, how true they are as they put their finger on the thing that really counts.

Here is a poor widow who loved the Lord with all her heart, soul, mind and strength, and God saw it!

So really it isn't the amount that you give to the Lord, it's the sacrifice that's involved. That's where real giving comes in when it becomes a sacrifice, when you're giving of your substance to the Lord. More than just giving out of the abundance that you have, true sacrificial giving is that which the Lord recognized as more than all the rest.

Application: How much do you, do I love the Lord? Are you, am I, a truly willing giver?

"I Love You, Lord" Maranatha Music

*I love you, Lord And I lift my voice To worship You
Oh, my soul, rejoice! Take joy my King, In what You hear
May it be a sweet, sweet sound, In Your ear*

*I love you, Lord And I lift my voice To worship You
Oh, my soul, rejoice! Take joy my King In what You hear
May it be a sweet, sweet sound In Your ear*

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