
a *Grace Notes* course

The Gospel of Mark

an expositional Bible study

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Lesson 12

Mark 12:1-44

Grace Notes

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The Gospel of Mark
Lesson 12: Mark 12:1-44

Lesson Instructions

Lesson 12: Mark 12:1-44..... 12-4

Lesson 12 Quiz.....12-20

Instructions for Completing the Lessons

There are sixteen (16) lessons in the MARK course curriculum, one lesson for each chapter.. There will be questions in the Quiz for each lesson on the topics that are named here.

Begin each study session with prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who makes spiritual things discernable to Christians, so it is essential to be in fellowship with the Lord during Bible study.

Instructions

Read the introduction to the study of Mark.

Study the Mark chapter for this lesson, by reading the verses and studying the notes. Be sure to read any other Bible passages that are called out in the notes.

Before taking the Quiz, **Review** all of the notes in the Mark lesson.

Go to the Quiz page and follow the instructions to complete all the questions on the quiz. The quiz is "open book". You may refer to all the notes and to the Bible when you take the test. But you should not get help from another person.

When you have completed the Quiz, be sure to SAVE your file. If your quiz file is lost, and that can happen at Grace Notes as well, you will want to be able to reproduce your work.

To send the Quiz back to Grace Notes, follow the instructions on the Quiz page.

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Chapter 12

Harry Ironsides had some great advice regarding criticism: He said to listen to it. If it is true, then mend your ways. If it is not true, forget it, and go right on serving the Lord.

In our passage the religious leaders are present to criticize the Lord who will go right on serving God, fulfilling His mission. The Lord is going to criticize them, and they are going to react in the negative and build even more sin.

We find ourselves just few days before the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. He has chosen to return to the Temple mount and enter the arena of intense conflict with the religious leaders of the day, who were already angry with Him because of His cleansing of the Temple the previous day.

There are some tremendous apologetical principles in this encounter:

Jesus, with no defense except the truth, went head to head with the greatest religious minds of His day. These Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes were the foremost thinkers of their day - but they had rejected faith and the Father and embraced legalism and their interpretation of the Law as their standard of life.

So when Jesus, with his message of truth, grace, love, and sacrifice came to Jerusalem, their antagonism would reach a new level that would lead to the Cross.

Have things really changed? If Jesus were here today with his message of truth, would the great human thinkers embrace him or attack him.

Yes, they do attack Him, when they attack you for speaking His words. You are his representatives, his ambassadors, and just as he was under attack, you are under attack.

He withstood them by the same means you can withstand the critics today - with truth from God's Word.

And Jesus never expects us to go where he has not gone. He chose to go to the Temple and be verbally attacked by the most learned men of His time - and He won. For US.

Mark 12:1

We are told that he gave them a number of parables, and two are included in this section.

The first uses a figure of a vineyard, a landowner, and tenants. The second uses a figure of a building stone and quotes from Psalm 118.

BOTH are very specific indictments of the antagonism of the religious leaders towards God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

A man planted a vineyard, and put a wall around it, and dug a vat under the wine press, and built a tower, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey.

This was a common occurrence in Israel. Wealthy landowners would buy a tract of land, invest in improving it and then rent it out to tenant farmers who would share in the harvest with the owner.

In addition, the Old Testament referred to Israel as the vineyard of God:

Isaiah 5:1-2 Let me sing now for my well-beloved A song of my beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill. And He dug it all around, removed its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it, And hewed out a wine vat in it; Then He expected it to produce good grapes, But it produced only worthless ones.

There should be no question in the minds of these religious leaders that Jesus is talking about them and the nation Israel.

Now normally a parable was given to instruct the positive ones while not giving the negative one more to reject.

But this is different: This parable is for the rejecters of truth and to be understood by those who are the antagonists.

Hence, this is a warning parable.

Mark 12:2-5

Here is what happened at the time of the harvest:

And at the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive some of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-

Mark Lesson 12

growers. And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and that one they killed; and so with many others, beating some, and killing others.

The ones who are sent are called slaves, DOULOS, rather than SERVANTS which would be DIAKONOS.

The slave is viewed as one who is obedient to his master while the servant is one who serves his master by serving others.

Here the SLAVE refers to the Old Testament prophets who had as a primary and at times only responsibility of being obedient to God, the owner of the vineyard.

We see what happened to those slaves of God, they were beaten, ill-treated, wounded in the head (death blow), even killed.

Later on the writer of Hebrews summarizes what Israel did to these true heroes of the faith in the Old Testament economy:

Hebrews 11:36-38 And others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated, men of whom the world was not worthy, wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

And who did these things to these Old Testament men of God? Not the unbelievers, not the Gentiles, but Israel. And the worse was yet to come -

Mark 12:6

He had one more to send, a beloved son; he sent him last of all to them, saying, They will respect my son.

I want you to see two things with this verse:

1. There was a legitimate expectation that the tenants would respect the son of the owner. In application, God has a legitimate expectation of

his creation, mankind, that man will respect and believe in Christ.

The expectation is based upon the principle of grace. Man did nothing to be created, nothing to obtain life, nothing to obtain eternal life.

A gift is given, as it was with these tenant farmers, and it is expected that they will accept the gift..

This is a legitimate, realistic expectation.

Secondly, He was willing to send His Son because He loved us. No price was too high, no cost too dear, to meet our need for a Savior.

Romans 8:31-32 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

Mark 12:7

But those vine-growers said to one another, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!

According to our system of law this is absurd, but the Jewish legal code indicated that if property worked by a tenant farmer was found without owner and heirs, it would be given to the tenants.

The presence of the son could be assumed to mean the owner was dead and the son was coming to claim the vineyard.

Wrong assumption resulting in wrong application, and sin on the part of the tenants.

Mark 12:8

And they took him, and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

In very few days this is exactly what the religious hierarchy of Israel is going to do to Jesus Christ.

Mark 12:9

That is what they are going to do, and at verse 9 we see what God, the owner of the vineyard, is going to do.

What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine-growers, and will give the vineyard to others.

Mark Lesson 12

This previews the same condemnation upon Israel that Jesus referred to by cursing and withering of the fig tree.

The privileged position Israel had will be lost, the stewardship over God's creation will be taken from them and given to others, to the church in the CHURCH AGE

The OTHERS are you and me: We could put our names in that blank. Christians are now the stewards over the household of God in this age.

Mark 12:10,11

Again, as with the cleansing of the Temple, we see Jesus giving Scripture as a defense of his actions and his words:

Quoting Psalm 118:22-23 He says,

Have you not even read this Scripture: The stone which the builders rejected, This became the chief corner stone; This came about from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes?

This Psalm, written 1000 years before the time of Christ took on new meaning as Jesus quoted it to the religious leaders.

Roman architecture was very uniform, and only the rectangular stones would be used until they needed an arch. Then a keystone was required -

Picture the builders setting aside the stone that were not of uniform size, then needing one special stone to serve as a keystone in an arch, finding again the one that was rejected and had now become the most important stone in the structure.

These verses are actually a promise Some may reject the Lord but others, by faith, will see him as most important.

The rejected stone is Jesus Christ:

1. The Lord was originally referred to as the Rock by Moses in Deuteronomy 32:30-31

Deuteronomy 32:31 Indeed their rock is not like our Rock, Even our enemies themselves judge this.

2. In David's final Psalm he refers to the Lord as the Rock of all Israel:

2 Samuel 23:3 The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me, 'He who rules over men righteously, Who rules in the fear of God.

3. In the Psalms the analogy of the Lord as the Rock takes on very specific meaning:

Psalm 18:2 The Rock is my fortress and my deliverer

Psalm 28:1 The Rock is the Lord who hears prayer

Psalm 31:2 The Rock is the rock of my strength

Psalm 62:2 He is the Rock of my salvation

Psalm 78:35 The Rock is our redeemer

Psalm 92:15 The Rock is righteous in every way

4. The analogy of the Lord as the Rock looks at the fact that rocks don't change. The Rock is our Savior, our Deliverer, our Redeemer, our Strength now and forever.

Mark 12:12

These two parables now put the religious leaders in the position of either responding positively or reacting negatively:

And they were seeking to seize Him; and yet they feared the multitude; for they understood that He spoke the parable against them. And so they left Him, and went away.

Here is something else that hasn't changed, the antagonism, the anger, and the hatred of the truth.

They had killed the slaves who came to the vineyard and now they will kill the Son. They rejected the stones and now they reject and desire to destroy the Rock.

Again we see these very powerful men cower before the people. They knew the parable was spoken against them. They wanted to kill the Lord rather than confess their sin and correct their error, but they feared the people.

Principles:

The parables were warning the religious leaders of discipline.

Mark Lesson 12

Upon hearing the parables they could have repented, but instead they rejected God's word.

They had a choice; they had a chance, but they did exactly what the Lord said they would do. They killed the son, the dearly beloved son.

When the discipline of God is rejected the heart grows harder and sin compounds - listen to the warnings.

In the following verses we are going to see the Lord Jesus talk about balance, a perfect, ideal, divine, balance between our faith and our politics.

Mark 12:13

And they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Him, in order to trap Him in a statement.

The THEY, which is part of the verb APOSTELLW refers to the Chief priests who were part of the Sanhedrin and in control of all the activities in the Temple area.

The Priests sent some Pharisees and Herodians to confront Jesus Christ:

Here we have two groups that normally were totally opposed to each other.

1. The Pharisees: Supposed loyalty to the Law of God and opposed the Roman occupation of Israel.
2. The Herodians supported Herod and the Roman occupation and often took a stand against the Pharisees.

But these two opposing groups now come together to oppose one whom they perceive as a greater enemy, Jesus Christ.

They were going to try to TRAP Him. AGREUW an aorist, active, subjunctive used only here in the NEW TESTAMENT.

The word meant to trap a wild animal for the purpose of putting that animal to death. And that was their plan for Jesus Christ.

So we have the Priests and the Conspirators, the Pharisees and Herodians as the dupes, and the Lord Jesus Christ as the intended victim.

Principles:

1. Despite the clear warning given by Christ in the preceding parables, the Priests along with the Sanhedrin continued their attacks.
2. Their common enemy, Jesus Christ, would bring together two groups who normally hated each other.
3. Their pseudo-unity was solely built upon their common hatred of Jesus Christ. This is a weak union yet this type of union is common even today.
4. In families, schools, businesses, and churches, relationships are often built upon a common dislike of another rather than that which we have in common.
5. That type of weak unity does not build or edify but only tears down and destroys. Once the common enemy is eliminated or defeated, the previous antagonism will still be there.
6. Conspiracies are weak and only effective to bring about evil. This type of unity is completely outside the plan of God.
7. **Application:** Evaluate your relationship on the job, in the school, and in church.

Mark 12:14

And they came and said to Him, Teacher, we know that You are truthful, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?

These guys are smart, real smart. They come to Jesus with all the right words, the smooth flattery, and then slip in a loaded question.

1. First they say that they have known all along, perfect tense of OIDA, that Jesus is a teacher.
2. They add that they think he is truthful, a lie of flattery.
3. Then they continue by saying he deferred to no one. This point of flattering is like saying they know He is His own man and not influenced by any of the religious sects of political groups.
4. You are not partial to any: His teaching does not line up with the heretical sects and parties.

Mark Lesson 12

5. But teach the way of God in truth: More flattery. If they believed that they would not be trying to trap him.

Now the interesting thing is that all these statements would be great if they really believed that. But they do not.

Flattery can take on two forms:

1. Flattery can use the truth and speak the truth, while not believing the truth. The objective is to convince you that the one flattering you is really your friend and ally. Here you are deceived about others.

2. Flattery can also use that which is not true. It can build you up with false confidence which is arrogance. In this type of flattery you end up deceived about self.

3. In both cases the objective is deception - The Pharisees and Herodians were trying to make Jesus believe that they were really nice guys in search of an answer to their question.

Mark 12:15

Is it lawful to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not? Shall we pay, or shall we not pay? But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius to look at.

When Judah became a Roman province in A.D. 6, the Emperor established an annual head tax, or poll tax, on every Jew. The money went directly to the Emperor's treasury, and of all the taxes imposed by Rome, it was the most despised.

Both the Pharisees and the Herodians opposed the tax but for different reasons:

1. The Pharisees opposed it on religious grounds saying the Old Testament forbade the payment of such tax to a foreign power - their interpretation of the Law.

2. The Herodians opposed it because it was impractical, costing time and money to collect and did not benefit the citizens in any way.

On the surface the question is rather remarkable. It would appear that no matter what Jesus answered, he would raise the ire of one of the two groups or Rome itself.

His Apparent Options:

1. Do not pay the tax: But that would be seen as civil disobedience and while it would conform to the two groups asking the question, it would put him in jeopardy with the Roman officials.

2. Pay the tax under protest: But what would the protest be. Religious or political. A religious protest would be inconsistent with the Herodians and a practical protest would be inconsistent with the Pharisees.

3. Pay the tax with no explanation: But that would give both groups a point of argument and further confrontation and debate.

4. Practically, he would be better off to insult the Herodians because the Pharisees were far more powerful especially in Jerusalem.

5. What these antagonists did not know, but we do know, is that Jesus had paid the poll-tax while in Capernaum. Matthew 17:24-27.

So this appears to be a heads I win, tails you lose situation. But God never loses -

Mark 12:16,17

And they brought one. And He said to them, Whose likeness and inscription is this? And they said to Him, Caesar's. And Jesus said to them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.

This simple answer, a common sense answer, baffled the Pharisees and Herodians:

We read that he knew of their hypocrisy:

The Greek word is HUPOKRISIS

1. A Greek drama term for being a bad actor. One person presented to the audience and another behind the mask. Sad on the outside, happy on the inside or vice versa.

If the chant, HUPOKRIT, was given by the crowd the Greek actor would go off the stage and kill himself. They took their drama very seriously.

2. In the Gospels the word is used for the religious crowd that opposed Jesus, but in the epistles it is applied to believers.

Mark Lesson 12

3. Peter was caught up with the Judaizers in Antioch and was called a hypocrite by Paul. Galatians 2:11-14

4. Hypocrisy is a result of scar tissue on the soul and leads to enforced legalism and empty ritual among believers:

I Timothy 4:1-3 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods, which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

5. The solution to hypocrisy is to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ and have this be the real you that you present to others. The means is learning, thinking, and applying the Word of God:

1 Peter 1:25-2:2 But the word of the Lord abides forever. And this is the word which was preached to you. Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.

6. **Principle:** Apart from learning, thinking, and applying the Word of God, hypocrisy will be the function of the pseudo Christian life.

And they were amazed at Him.

The word AMAZED is imperfect tense, meaning that they were surprised for a period of time, but it did not last.

The Greek word for "amazed" means to be surprised, to hear or see something unexpected. With the prefix it is intensified. These religious leaders had no expectation that Jesus would be able to answer their conspiratorial question, but He did.

One application we gain from their reaction is that we might be amazed, surprised, even marvel at Christ and His Word; but that amazement will not automatically carry a person to faith in Christ nor lead the believer to faith in His Word.

Far more important is what is there after the amazement ends? For the Pharisees and the Herodians their amazement ended and anger continued its course.

Their amazement occurred because Christ skillfully answered their question. In his answer we see some principles regarding the believers relationship to the State:

Church and state: the believer's responsibilities and priorities:

1. While Jesus answered and shut down the conspiratorial question of the religious leaders, he also established a principle of balance and priorities.
2. The coin bore the image of Caesar and belonged to Caesar.
3. Money is a detail of life and what money does is a detail of life including paying taxes.
4. Believers are never to be distracted by the details of life. We pay taxes, and we may involve ourselves in the legitimate activities of politics, but never to the point of distraction.

Romans 13:6, For because of this (orientation to civil authority) you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

The word PAY is the same word as RENDER used in Mark 12:17, an aorist, active, imperative.

5. The solution to man's problems is not political, nor is it in more taxes or less taxes or a more sound economy or stronger international posture - the solution to man's problems is biblical and founding in learning, thinking, and applying doctrine.
6. Israel, at the time of Christ, was not a free sovereign nation. They were under the despotic control of Rome, yet believers were not distracted by this. Many grew to maturity in Christ and had fantastic ministries.
7. That which bears the image of the political belongs to the state but in the same manner that which bears the image of God belongs to God.

Mark Lesson 12

8. The word RENDER is an aorist, active, imperative (command) that looks at volitional attitude and action in a point of time.

RENDER is APODIDWMI

We are to render to God that which bears His image. We are to do this in time, points of time right now as we set priorities.

In the future, God will render reward to us:

2 Timothy 4:8 In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Revelation 22:12 Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.

The word itself means to give, give up, or give back what is due. When used of the believer and God it views the believer as being under obligation to give to God what rightfully belongs to Him.

The life he has given us is His life and we give that life to Him.

9. Just as the coin bore the image of Caesar, we bear the image of Christ. All the advantages of our position in Christ add up to the image of Christ on us.

Furthermore we are predestined with equal privilege and equal opportunity to be conformed to the image of Christ in practice and in application.

Romans 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.

10. Christ's answer to the religious crowd shut them down. For us it is a challenge, whose image is on you – to whom do you belong?

It has been said that the only way to settle an argument is on the basis of what is right, not who is right.

In the following verses we are going to see those who argue with the Lord Jesus Christ. We are also going to see the Lord settle the argument based upon what is right, the Word of God.

We now turn to the fourth wave of attack against Jesus Christ during the confrontation at the Temple. Jesus is in the arena of argumentation and is standing against these religious leaders, refuting their arguments with the truth of the Word of God.

Principle: Any defense we may apply, against the problems of people or circumstances, must be founded upon the doctrine that we have in our souls. Anything short of that or beyond that is a meager attempt to solve our problems with Human viewpoint.

Jesus Christ is demonstrating the greatness of the Word of God as he endures attack after attack.

At verse 18 we see the Sadducees get into the argument:

Mark 12:18

And some Sadducees, who say that there is no resurrection came to Him, and began questioning Him, saying:

The Sadducees were the wealthy aristocrats of Israel. This exclusive religious party developed during the intertestamental period. We are clearly told that they were out of step with biblical and traditional teaching regarding the resurrection of the dead. This is the very point they will use to attempt to trap the Lord Jesus Christ.

We see the Pharisees as the religious legalists of their day, adding their pet requirements to the Law, and we see the Herodians as the secular politicians of Israel with loyalty to Rome.

Sadducees:

1. The name itself comes from two sources, an aristocratic priest named Zadok (inter-testament) and the Hebrew word for righteous.
2. They accepted only the first five books of the Old Testament as being inspired. They flatly rejected the Talmud and the Mishnah and any oral tradition.
3. Since the doctrine of the Resurrection is developed in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, they rejected the idea of the resurrection. They believed death to be total extinction, no heaven or hell.

Mark Lesson 12

4. To them, the Old Testament Law required no interpretation. They were very rigid, seeing things in terms of black and white, even when the Scriptures gave some latitude or flexibility.

5. Since they were the wealthy and the powerful, their focus was on secular matters of politics and society rather than on spiritual things.

I see the parallel today to these religious groups in the following way:

Pharisees: The legalist, ready to add to the Word their own law and enforce this upon others. Washing dishes a certain way, praying a certain way, the do's and the don'ts. Just like the legalist today.

The Herodians: The believer who is completely distracted by politics and involvement in social causes. The marchers and the protesters.

The Sadducees: The more conventional Christian who has been successful, is perhaps prosperous, and is very involved in society. The service clubs, the political parties, the right group here and the right group there and - even the right and socially acceptable church.

They view their faith as part of their life, but not their life itself. They accept from the Word what they want or what is agreeable to them and ignore or reject the rest.

These would not be limited to just the liberals today. There are some believers in conservative churches who are playing Christianity as it suits them and their life-style.

Mark 12:19

When believers take a low view of the Word, as did the Sadducees, they will not hesitate to use Scripture or doctrine they do not even believe to gain their purpose:

Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves behind a wife, and leaves no child, his brother should take the wife, and raise up offspring to his brother.

The principle they state as the basis for their question is found in Deuteronomy 25:5

When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not

be married outside the family to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.

This is called the law of the Levirate Marriage. The word Levirate comes from the Latin LEVIR which means a husband's brother or brother-in-law.

Also we can note that they are referring to the non-canonical book TOBIT where a story is told about a woman married to seven husbands all who died without children.

But since the Sadducees did not even accept the prophets as inspired, it is absurd for them to refer to a story in a book most people of their day did not even consider inspired.

In their evil attempt to trap the Lord Jesus Christ they will try anything and use any source.

Mark 12:20-23

From the Law of Moses they now propose an application. This case is hypothetical and it is also hyperbole, very extreme:

There were seven brothers; and the first took a wife, and died, leaving no offspring. And the second one took her, and died, leaving behind no offspring; and the third likewise; and so all seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection, when they rise again, which one's wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife.

What we read next is very interesting. The Lord could have shut them down very quickly by telling them they did not even believe in the resurrection so why bother with this hypothetical situation.

Instead, He is going to use their question to teach doctrine regarding the resurrection as well as doctrine regarding the power of God.

Mark 12:24

Jesus said to them, Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures, or the power of God?

Mark Lesson 12

Jesus' response begins by stating very clearly that they are wrong.

MISTAKEN is the pres, pass, ind of PLANAW which is also translated to be deceived and to go astray.

The present tense rather than an aorist indicates they are continually mistaken. Not only in this but in all spiritual matters.

They keep on being mistaken in all things and there are two reason for this:

1. You do not understand the Scriptures:
2. You do not understand the power of God:

The verb OIDA is used with the negative MJ as a perfect tense. We might say they had a perfect lack of correct understanding.

A FEW Principles:

1. Only by understanding the Scriptures can you understand life.
2. Without the Scriptures you will go through life in a state of confusion and error.
3. Specific Scriptures hold the answers for specific questions.
4. However, problems may fall in an area in which we do not have specific Scripture or the Scripture is vague.
5. That is when we have to understand the POWER of God. In His omnipotent power he is going to work it our perfectly and there are perfect answers from a perfect God.

Illustration: Whenever we come up with an "I don't know" situation, perhaps regarding a tragedy or death, or losing a job, and we have no answers - We rely upon the power of God. He is in control.

Jesus both answers the question and then teaches regarding the resurrection using Scripture accepted by the Sadducees.

Mark 12:25

For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.

Jesus begins with an explanatory conjunction: For you see -

When they rise out of the dead: The verb is aorist, active, subjunctive which views a future event as a reality.

Then two statements introduced by the negative OUTE

They, the one rising from the dead, are neither married nor given in marriage:

1. The first negative tells us that earthly marriages are not carried into heaven
2. The second negative indicates that we will not be getting married in heaven

The further information given regarding the church age in the epistles allows us to more fully understand this:

1. The church, of which we are a part, is the bride of Christ (Revelation 19:7-9).
2. Israel is referred to as the wife of God (Hosea 2:2-7).
3. In eternity our attention, our delight, our love with be set towards the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. Since marriage and the physical union of husband and wife is the greatest grace gift God has given to man to experience and is even greater under the F/HS for the believer and yet this does not exists in heaven:

We are forced to one conclusion -

5. Heaven, and our eternal fellowship with the Lord, will be far greater than anything we can ever experience on earth. That is why Paul so boldly said about death:

Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

6. That is reasoning from the understanding of the power of God. God cannot explain to us that which is better than the best we have. To do so would make the best we have now not the best.

So we look at the best we have and conclude, and stand amazed, and even get a little excited thinking about the fact that heaven is going to better - It does get better than this.

Then he draws a comparison: But are like angels in heaven.

Mark Lesson 12

The word LIKE is the comparative adverb WS which draws a similar but not exact comparison. In this matter, of marriage, we are like angels who also do not marry. But we are not angels, we are higher than the angels in position now and, in experience, in heaven.

Mark 12:26,27

Now Jesus addresses the question that was not asked:

But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning 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 the God of the dead, but of the living; you are greatly mistaken.

Jesus refers to the story of Moses and the burning bush which is found in Exodus, chapter three (Exodus 3:6) which is a portion of Scripture accepted by the Sadducees. Hence, they cannot argue the source.

This event in the life of Moses occurred about 1440 BC. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived from 2000 BC to 1870 BC.

They were a long time dead even when God said this to Moses. The Sadducees would have believed them to be extinct, no longer existing. But God said I am, right now, still, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Furthermore, by citing Exodus 3:6 he also reminded the Sadducees of something very current:

The official Jewish prayers of this time include seventeen benedictions. In these, the prayers ask for blessing, protection, love and mercy on the one praying but also upon Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Now how could God bless, protect, love, and favor someone who no longer exists?

So with that Jesus states the principle:

He is not the God of the dead, but of the living;

Followed by the application: You are greatly mistaken.

And MISTAKEN is the same word we saw in verse 24 and is used again as a present tense, they continue in error, keep on being mistaken in much more than just the doctrine of the resurrection.

Jesus' response shows us five things:

1. He did not sink to their level and counter-attack
2. He was gracious, gave them an answer even when they denied their own premise
3. He answered with doctrine
4. He answered their question and then went on to address their problem.
5. He was aggressive in applying doctrine to every situation and question
6. And He used what they believed, He quoted from the Law of Moses. He met them where they were and gave them an opportunity to get with truth.

But all this grace and truth, they rejected.

And in rejecting the truth of God's word they rejected the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us who have received the Son of God also receive the truth and the power of God -

Love, it has been said, flows downward. The love of parents for their children has always been far more powerful than that of the children for their parents; and who among the sons of men ever loved God with a thousandth part of the love which God has manifested to us?

In our passage, the Lord Jesus Christ will emphasize the importance of God's love, and our love for Him and others.

In this arena of argumentation, Jesus now comes against a Scribe who is asking questions rather than trying to entrap the Lord.

Mark 12:28

And one of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, What commandment is the foremost of all?

The Scribes of the ancient world were the ones who were learned in the Law of God. They were jurists who interpreted the Law and determined

Mark Lesson 12

the valid application of the Law. They were also teachers of the Law. Of all the people present that day, the Scribes knew the Word of God better than anyone - except the Lord Jesus Christ.

This scribe was not a part of any of the groups who had argued with the Lord Jesus Christ.

I see him as one who was silently standing by, listening to all that had transpired. And now seeing the Sadducees walk away, he approaches and seeks an answer to his questions.

Application: Often we will find the ones who are not the targets of our conversation will learn from our conversation.

We have a string of participles that precede the main verb which is asked or questioned Him. These participles show that the scribe was not only listening but observing the activity that had been going on.

When it states that He recognized that He (Jesus) had answered them well, we have an adverb for WELL: KALWS which is a relative adverb as opposed to AGAQOS which is absolute.

It was the superior answers as compared to the inferior questions that struck this scribe as unique.

At this point he is not thinking of Jesus being the Son of God but just that Jesus' answers were the best he had ever heard. That is enough to get him to inquire further of Jesus.

What commandment is the foremost of all?

Foremost is the word PRWTOS from which we get prototype. A first type or first of a kind.

Now here is where we have to understand a little more about what the scribe is asking.

The prevailing argument of the day between the Scribes and the religious hierarchy was in regard to which laws were the most important:

1. The leaders stressed the legal or the Laws that proscribed behavior. The biblical commands to keep the Sabbath, to not eat certain foods, to do this and do that.

As well as the additional laws that were developed during this time. The extra-biblical laws.

2. The scribes stressed the ethical. Not so much the doing but the attitude involved with the doing. They would not abandon the Laws but were very concerned with proper motive, proper attitude.

3. So the question does not ask the Lord to pick one commandment out of the ten found in the Decalogue, but asks what category or type of commandment is most important.

As we will see the Lord Jesus Christ is also more concerned with the motive and the attitude than the mere following of ritual.

He does not abandon the ritual. Even in the CHURCH AGE we have the ritual of the Lord's Supper which we are commanded to do. The right attitude must precede the doing.

Mark 12:29

Jesus answered, The foremost is, Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord;

This statement which quotes Deuteronomy 6:4 is from the Jewish SHEMA, which was quoted every morning and evening by the pious Jews.

They establish a basis for the actual command Jesus is about to state. Since God is our God, since He is One, since he is our Lord - we must love Him fully.

Mark 12:30

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.

William Lane states of this passage: *To love God in the way defined by the great commandment is to seek God for his own sake, to have pleasure in him and to strive impulsively after him. With this Jesus demands a decision and a readiness for God and God alone, in an unconditional manner.*

The word LOVE is AGAPAW and is a future tense.

This type of love always begins as a mental attitude and the future tense looks at that which is an assured outcome of existing conditions.

Mark Lesson 12

Now that is interesting. Our love for God is viewed as progressive, increasing, built upon that which is currently existing.

Principle: We love God right now because of where we have been with him and what he has done in our lives.

If I were to ask you why you love God, your initial thoughts would go back to what you have learned about him, what he has taken you through, and the victories you have experienced. This love looks back and then demands a present decision, to continue to love God with your total being:

1. With all your heart: The conscious part of the soul
2. With all your soul: The whole soul including emotions
3. With all your mind: The intellect
4. With all your strength: The Physical

These cover the entire person. The whole being. And it is the whole being that is to love God. Not mere intellectual assent, not mere emotions, not just in ritual worked out in physical actions - but a love that is total.

Mark 12:31

Now the scribe did not ask for the top two commandments, only the most important one. But Jesus is not about to tell only part of the plan:

The second is this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.

THOU SHALL LOVE is the same verb used in verse 30, a future tense that looks to the past with present action.

To love your neighbor as yourself looks at wanting the best for your neighbor as you would want the best for yourself.

The word NEIGHBOR is used in the Old Testament Law for fellow Jews, and is specifically used here to refer to those who are present that day at the Temple.

We have all the various religious sects represented. Most were at each other's throats constantly. The division and antagonism among

the Jews at this time was rampant. And now they are divided against the Lord Jesus Christ.

This command tells us to treat others as we treat ourselves and includes:

1. Forgive others as we are forgiven
2. Be gracious to other as we are gracious to self
3. Want the best for others as we want the best for ourselves
4. Be objective towards others as we are objective towards ourselves

Our problem is we fail to correctly love and evaluate ourselves, and when we do that we are incapable of loving others.

We need to have unconditional love towards self. Because that is the love that God has for us. We love ourselves as God loves us. Then we love others as God loves them, and as we love ourselves.

Principles:

1. When Jesus introduces these two great mandates he begins with God:
2. He describes God as the Lord who is one: This focuses attention on God as God, in all His essence, only one, full of power, the creator, worthy of all respect and honor.
3. But Jesus also includes the title twice, and this double emphasis looks at the relationship of God to His people. He is the Lord over His people.
4. Over twenty times in the Gospels the word LORD is used in relationship to the servant. If God is our Lord, then we are to be slaves and servants of our Lord.
5. The first commandment, to love God with our total being, mandates love and obedience as slaves to our great Lord. You cannot love and be disobedient, nor can you love and dishonor.

To love the Lord our God with our total being means to volitionally place ourselves under his authority and at his disposal as slaves. It is the goal of maturity in Christ.

Coming to the point where he is everything and we are nothing.

Mark Lesson 12

6. From being a slave of God in loving Him with our total being, we will then be servants to man.

To love others as we love ourselves -

7. Thus, the first mandate looks at our vertical relationship with God. That we are His slaves, obedient to Him, in love with him.

The second mandate is horizontal, and views our relationships with others as we love others as God loves others, loving them as we love ourselves.

8. Both of these commandments are fulfilled first in our mental attitude. Then and only then is there action. This scribe very well understood that -

Mark 12:32,33

The Scribe responds, restates, and applies:

And the scribe said to Him, Right, Teacher, You have truly stated that He is One; and there is no one else 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 himself, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.

This scribe does things that show us that doctrine has been learned:

1. He has listened and learned: He affirms what Jesus has said, gives full agreement to it.
2. He has thought about it: In restating it he uses his own words to restate the same truth. Whereas Jesus said heart, soul, mind, strength, the Scribes uses
 - a. Heart or KARDIA for the emotions
 - b. Understanding, or the conscious part of the soul
 - c. And strength for physical abilities

By restating we see that he has been thinking

3. Then he applies: He applies the principle to the burnt offerings and sacrifices and sees the attitude as being more important than mere actions.

Mark 12:34

And when Jesus saw that he had answered intelligently, He said to him, You are not far from the kingdom of God. And after that, no

one would venture to ask Him any more questions.

Jesus saw or perceived that the scribe responded intelligently.

INTELLIGENTLY is from the word NOUS the mind or the intellect.

In other words, this man was thinking, using his reasoning ability, comparing, learning, thinking. And for that the Lord is going to compliment him.

Jesus Christ, in his humanity, the same humanity that now sits at the right hand of the father, the same humanity to which we are to be conformed to through growth in the Word, saw something in this man that deserved commendation -

You are not far from the kingdom of God.

The Lord commends this man's thinking, the conclusion that he has reached and tells him he is very close to understanding that which all the others, all the religious leaders, are missing.

The attitude of loving God and loving others is far more in line with the kingdom of God than the works, the rituals, the legalisms and Human viewpoint of the religious leaders.

Application: The Lord brought faith down to its most basic terms. Love God and serve him by serving others.

Everything else, all the intricate doctrines that we have available to us, are based upon some very simple truth, love God, love others -

LET US NEVER FORGET THE BASICS

Larry Crabb in his book Inside Out, states that conventional Christianity with all its programs and preaching does not penetrate life with liberating truth, but such a modern style of our faith maintains a conspiracy of pretense, pretending that things are better than they are, or ever can be, until Christ returns. We end up unprepared to live but strengthened in our denial.

There is no pretense with the Lord Jesus Christ -

The two paragraphs found in the next six verses (vv 35-40) are often studied as separate rounds of conversation.

The Lord Jesus Christ shows us a confidence of his personal sense of destiny. In His teaching he tells

Mark Lesson 12

the people that there will be a time when the Messiah will be invited to sit at the very right hand of the throne of God while the Father is making all things subject to Him.

Jesus Christ, in his humanity, knew who He was and knew where He was going. In Him we who are called by His name, Christians, can have that same confidence.

Why is the unbelieving world lost? Certainly because they lack the security of salvation in Christ, but also because they do not know who they are or where they are going.

Mark 12:35

And Jesus answering began to say, as He taught in the temple.

If we look at the end of verse 34 we see that no one dared to ask him any more questions following his conversation with the scribe.

In verse 35 whom does he answer? Not the ones who are asking questions, because no one is, but the ones who need information, whether they know it or not.

ANSWERING is an aorist passive participle which precedes the main verb SAY:

TEACHING is a present participle that tells us the type of communication. Not mere talking but teaching.

The passive voice of ANSWERING sees Jesus as being caused to say something, to teach doctrine.

A principle we see is that the Lord will provide information:

1. When we want it
2. When we do not know what we want but need it
3. And even when we do not want it, the truth is still available.

This is grace, even when we don't know what we need, the Lord provides. He answers the questions we do not even know to ask.

TEACHING is the present tense of DIDASKW which refers to a more formal type of teaching that follows preparation and includes application that

is designed to facilitate a change in attitude or action.

Mark 12:35b,36

How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself said in the Holy Spirit, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand, Until I put Thine enemies beneath Thy feet.

First: Jesus poses a question, How is it that the scribes, the ones who study and interpret the Scriptures, say that Christ is the son of David?

The title CHRIST means the anointed one and refers to the expected MESSIAH.

This title puts emphasis on the deity of the Messiah while the term SON as used in the phrase son of David, looks at his humanity.

Jesus also uses a present tense indicating that even now, as He is there with them, the Christ is, right now, the Son of David. Not future, not past, but right now.

The question that Jesus asks then sets up the restatement of revelation regarding the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ, the anointed one, the promised one, the Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah.

Fully God and at the same time fully man -

Then Jesus quotes Psalm 110:1 which reads (The NT has more references and allusions to this verse than any other):

A Psalm of David: The Lord (YHWH the Father) says to my Lord (ADONAY the Messiah): Sit at My (Father) right hand, Until (or while) I make Thine (the Messiah's) enemies a footstool for Thy feet.

In Mark 12:36 Jesus quotes from the LXX except for a change on the word UNDER THE FEET, in which the LXX uses one word while Jesus used the phrase "under your feet."

The possible reason is that the phrase shows a stronger position of the enemies being brought under control of the Messiah.

If we look at David's words in David's times we can establish three principles:

Mark Lesson 12

1. David spoke of the Lord as existing then, not just in the future. He was able to say: The Lord said to my Lord -
2. David spoke of a time of honor and rest for the Messiah. Honor and rest, sitting at the right hand of the king, implies victory and success in battle. The Lord would be invited, in his humanity, to sit at that place of honor following the victory of the Cross.
3. And the Messiah would be in that position of honor during a time in which the Father would bring all the enemies of the Messiah to be subject to Him.

This looks ahead to the second advent, unknown by David, David did know that Israel would be restored by the Messiah as a true divine Kingdom.

In light of those principles we can also see a number of implications:

1. The Messiah is God existing then and now.
2. The Messiah is the Lord
3. The Messiah will be victorious
4. The Messiah will be in a place of honor
5. The Messiah will reign supreme even over his enemies

But the most important implication comes in the next verse and comes in light of that which was mentioned in verse 35:

The Messiah, the Lord, is the Son of David.

Mark 12:37

David himself calls Him Lord; and so in what sense is He his son? And the great crowd enjoyed listening to Him.

The scribes often spoke of the Messiah as being the Son of David, his descendant. But now Jesus adds that David called the Messiah his Lord.

This created a paradox that can only be answered by a correct understanding of the hypostatic union:

Principles:

1. The Messiah was identified as the son or the descendant of David. This is part of the Davidic Covenant and the promise of 2 Samuel 7:16

And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.

2. Yet David, to whom the promises of the covenant were given calls the Messiah his Lord.
3. How can Messiah be both David's son and David's Lord? Because the Messiah is the God-man, who ever existed as God and took on a human nature.
4. At the incarnation, the virgin birth, eternal God, the Son took on a human nature and became fully man and had always been fully God.
5. He then became the unique person in the universe. There was never anyone like him nor ever will be. This union of undiminished deity and full humanity is called the Hypostatic Union.

Hypostasis is from the Greek meaning "to subject; to stand," and looks at real personal substance of a person, specifically, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the people listening to Jesus had to consider the issue he raised, Son and Lord, humanity and deity, uniqueness. They were listening to the one who was that unique person.

In this, Jesus reveals his identity and while the religious crowd probably understood this, they did not accept it.

In this, Jesus displayed his humility. Humility is knowing where you fit into God's program, how you are to look at yourself and how God looks at you. The bottom line of humility is GRACE, we receive what we did not earn nor deserve. Christ is revealing himself and displaying his humility -

Principle: God will reveal himself to man and man may even understand, but man must accept by faith what God reveals about Himself, His Son, and His plan.

The people, the crowds, listened to him, enjoyed what they heard, but did not accept by faith that which was revealed:

ENJOYED is EIDEWS, an adverb used only three times in the New Testament, here, and in Mark 6:20 where Herod Antipas enjoyed listening to John the Baptist and later killed him. It was used in 2 Corinthians 11:19 where Paul indicts believers for gladly listening to false teachers.

Mark Lesson 12

The word is never used in a sense where there is a positive outcome. It only shows a response that is for the moment, with no lasting effect.

That is what the great crowd was like then. They were entertained by the teaching of truth but with no difference in attitude or action. And that is what the great crowd is like today. Entertained but not intertwined with Jesus. They may smile but only for awhile, they may laugh but they don't last, they agree but soon they avoid, they may applaud but they do not accept.

Jesus Christ was telling them who he was, no pretense, not pretending, not holding back. They had the opportunity to believe, to accept by faith, but they refused.

Mark 12:38,39

Contrast the religious crowd with Christ. Their identity is hidden. They live behind the facade of false motive and empty actions. They have no personal sense of identity or destiny and live life pretending.

In His teaching He was saying: Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes, and like respectful greetings in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and places of honor at banquets,

These verses contrast with the clear statement of identity of the Lord Jesus and the hypocrisy of the religious leaders.

Between the Lord's confidence of identity and his revelation of himself, and the pure motives of the poor widow, we have the pretense of the religious crowd.

I do not want to go into the description of these hypocrites, but I do want to examine one word that is found in verse 40 (KJV)

The word PRETENSE is PROFASIS which means "to speak before." Thus to assume something in order to hid one's true purpose.

1. In Acts 27:30 it is used of sailors trying to jump ship by pretending to lower an anchor when they were actually trying to lower a life boat in order to escape.

2. The Lord warned of those who used long prayers to promote a false front of spirituality (Luke 20:47 and Mark 12:40).

3. John 15:22 spoke of a cloak or pretext for sin, in attempting to rationalize or excuse sins.

4. In I Thessalonians 2:5 Paul exclaims that he never ministered in pretense, never hid behind any false motives.

While Jesus describes the pretence or pretending of the religious leaders of his day, the same manner of life, a pretence or a pretending can describe the conventional Christian.

Larry Crabb in his book Inside Out, states that:

Biblical changes never require us to pretend that we are something we are not. Christ wants us to face reality as it really is, including all its fears, hurts, resentment, and self-protective motives we work hard to keep out of sight, and to emerge as a changed person. Not pretenders, not perfect - but the person God saved us to be.

The pretend Christian life, so common to most believers, is a life that lives on pretence fueled by denial. Denial of reality, denial of helplessness, and denial of hurt and pain.

God never calls us to pretence, to denial, to pretending before him that which we are not.

The one who knew who he was, the one who had a commanding grip on His personal spiritual identity, looked beyond the actions and appearance of the religious crowd to that which was in the soul, and Jesus "exclaimed."

When Jesus Christ looks at us, the Christian today, what does he exclaim? Are we pretenders?

We never have to pretend before God our Father, he can take that which we may be working so hard to cover up, and conform it the image of Christ, who is confident of who he is. He alone can make us the person he saved us to be.

Action without proper attitude is alien to the plan of God. Practice without principle leads to perversion. Works without the Word are wasted in the plan of God -

In the closing verses that describe the Lord at the Temple just a few day before His crucifixion, we

Mark Lesson 12

see Jesus, shifting from the arena of argumentation to the technique of teaching.

We saw that he taught the scribes who He was, boldly and with great confidence revealing His personal sense of spiritual identity and destiny:

He was the God-man, fully God, fully man, the Lord who was also the Son of David.

There would come a time, as part of his destiny, when all His enemies would be put under His feet.

Identity and destiny: There two things He had in his humanity, two things we can have, and two things sorely lacking in the pretense of the religious leaders.

His teaching regarding the scribes in vv 38-40 stands in contrast with his revelation of identity and destiny. The activity of these scribes, who saw themselves as so devout, also stands in contrast with the attitude of the widow mentioned in the closing verse of this chapter.

His teaching regarding the scribes serves as a hinge of contrast between the one who know who He is and where He is going and the one who gave without expectation all that she had to serve her Lord.

BEWARE is the Greek word BLEPW and in the form found here, as a present, active, imperative (a command) it is found 26 times in the New Testament and tells us to be on the look out, to beware, to watch out for 13 potential problems:

1. Matthew 24:4 False Christs who will mislead you
2. Mark 4:24 What you listen to as far as doctrine
3. Mark 8:15 The corruption that comes from religion (Christianity is a relationship)
4. Mark 13:22-23 False signs and wonders
5. Luke 21:8 Those who set a time for Christ's return
6. I Cor 3:10 How you build a ministry upon the foundation of Christ
7. I Cor 8:9 How you use your liberty in Christ, never to be a stumblingblock
8. I Cor 16:10 Not to intimidate another believer or put them in fear

9. Galatians 5:15 Not to devour or consume one another

10. Ephesians 5:15 Not to walk in the Christian life as unwise

11. Colossians 4:17 How you conduct your ministry

12. Hebrews 3:12 That you not go into reversionism

13. 2 John 8 That you not lose out on reward in heaven

14. Philippians 3:2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision (Legalists).

15. Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. (Beware of Human viewpoint and world view).

Now here the charge is given to watch out for or beware of the hypocritical pretense of the Scribes.

The Lord tells us in these verses that they love four things

1. Wear long clothing: This was a long, white, linen robe. Very impractical in the dusty desert environment. The long white robe was worn to make a statement, the scribes did not work as the common people nor did they get dirty, as the common people. It was worn as clothing of distinction.

2. They also enjoyed the salutations received in the marketplace. These would have included the titles: Rabbi, Father, Master. When a scribe walked down the street, the people were to rise and greet them. The only ones exempt were tradesmen busy at their craft.

3. The chief seats at the synagogues: These were seats in the front of the hall that faced the crowds. This put the scribes facing away from the chest containing the Torah.

4. As important feasts were held by prominent citizens of Jerusalem, it was a status symbol to invite a scribe and give him a place of honor over women and even the elders.

Mark Lesson 12

The attitude towards these distinctions is given to us in the word LIKE or LOVE:

It is a present, participle of QELW in the genitive case.

This is what the scribes desired, wished for, wanted to possess as part of their position.

It was not their wish to grow, to serve, to love as God loves, but to be served, to be esteemed, honored, elevated above the common man.

Mark 12:40

When you allow yourself to be driven in your desire to be above others, you soon come to disregard the ones you think you are over, the ones you assume are inferior.

Who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers; these will receive greater condemnation.

The word DEVOUR is the same word used of birds eating the seed that was sown and also the same word used for the Devil who desired to devour Christ (Revelation 12:4). It means to consume, to eat to one's satisfaction, to plunder.

The scribes lived primarily on the gifts given to them by the people. It was considered meritorious to relieve a scribe of any regard or worry over financial matters. People would boast of supporting a scribe.

But if no support were found, the scribes would sponge off the hospitality of people; even the widows who had very little would be marks for the scribes.

For appearance's sake offer long prayers:

We looked at this word before and noted that it was doing things by pretense, living a pretend spiritual life.

Offering long prayers to impress others and not out of any devotion to fellowship with God or leading others in the fellowship of prayer.

Where is their evil and pretense going to get them?

These will receive greater condemnation -

The future, middle, indicative looks to an assured reality that is reflexive to the ones involved in this pretense.

Principles:

1. The scribes desire or wish for prominence among men, lofty positions and titles.
2. The believer is to desire to follow Christ, giving God the honor, and shifting any prominence to the one who is pre-eminent, the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The scribes' real love was self-promotion, and this was a pretense before God.

They fooled themselves into thinking that action before man was more important than attitude before God.

4. This pretense before God led to a pretense before man and a spiritual life which was nothing more than pretending to be and do what others considered spiritual.

5. This pretending eliminated any chance for a solid spiritual identity, true humility, and biblical grace orientation.

6. This pretense led to sin in taking money and property from the innocent and unsuspecting.

NOTICE: They are doing things that appear to be spiritual but are just one step away from sin.

7. Their destiny will be a result of their present attitude, they will receive greater condemnation.

The comparative adjective GREATER (PERISSOS) is a superlative that is used here regarding future condemnation.

In the parable of Luke 12:47-48 the Lord gives the reason for such greater condemnation:

And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, shall receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

The scribes had greater opportunity, greater opportunity to study the Word, to grow in the Lord, to be a slave unto God and His servants to

Mark Lesson 12

man. They rejected this opportunity and lived a life pretending to be something they were not.

The word for CONDEMNATION is KRIMA and other than the three uses in the Revelation in which it refers to eternal judgment the only other use of KRIMA for eternal judgment is specified by the adjective ETERNAL.

All other 24 references are to judgment or condemnation, discipline in time.

So the Lord promises discipline in time against these scribes who live by pretense.

Their discipline will be greater because they had greater opportunity - to whom much is given much is expected.

Now in contrast we have the poor widow:

She is not prominent, does not hold a high station in life, has no lofty titles or possess any place of honor except in the eyes of the only one who really counts: The Lord Jesus Christ.

Mark 12:41

And He sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the multitude were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums.

According to the Mishnah, there were thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles for receiving the offerings located against the wall of the Court of the Women.

The fact that the Lord knew that many who were rich were giving a great deal was because it was customary to announce the size of the gift publicly. Also, the horns were metal and if you threw in a handful of heavy copper, gold or silver coins, the sound would ring out.

Mark 12:42

In contrast to the rich who were giving much and even in contrast to the scribes who devour widow's houses we have a poor widow:

And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent.

The coins were the Hebrew Lepton which were equal to 1/400th of a shekel. Mark adds for the

Roman readers that these were equal to a Quadrans.

This was not circulated in the eastern empire, only in the west.

OUR MONEY: 1/4th of a penny, not much.

Mark 12:43,44

Jesus saw in this woman an example for the disciples to appreciate and to follow. Especially in contrast to the religious crowds they had been dealing with.

And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.

Principles:

1. She gave not to be noticed, but to worship. Commemorating the grace of God
2. The sum is not as important as the attitude
3. She was a widow, with no one dependant upon her so she gave all that she had to live on knowing that God would supply her needs
4. The larger sums given by the rich would be used in the Temple, but God loved the attitude of the poor widow
5. **Principle:** God can always get a few rich people to give, but it takes doctrine, and a grace mental attitude to please God in our giving

APPLICATION:

1. Mental attitude is of supreme importance to God, not the amount
2. We need to develop an attitude of wanting to give
3. When we give, even when we think we cannot afford it, we become more dependant upon God. If you give sacrificially, remember it is you who are making the sacrifice - not your husband, your wife, your children, your loan officer, etc.
4. You may wish to give to the point where you do without, but that is only applied to you. You

Mark Lesson 12

do not have the right to impose a sacrifice on others

5. If your desire is right, God can always get others to give to make up the gap between your desire and your capital.

In this entire portion of Mark 12, we keep on seeing that God wants the right attitude first.

There is no value in pretense in the Christ Centered Life. God wants you to stand before him as what you really are and then - let Him conform you to the image of Christ, making you into the person He saved you to be.

Mark Lesson 12 Quiz

Instructions

The following questions relate to your study of this lesson.

To answer a question, type your response in the space provided after the word "Answer:".

A question may be True/False, multiple choice, fill in the blank, or short answer type.

The last question requires you to write one or two paragraphs in "essay" form. Use the space provided; it will expand to accommodate your response.

You have choices about sending the quiz back to Grace Notes.

- If you received an email file containing the quiz, you can use the REPLY feature of your e-mail application to open the quiz. Enter your answers in the reply message. Then SEND the message to Grace Notes.
- You can enter your answers on these pages, then send the whole file back to Grace Notes as a file attachment. This is handy, but these lessons will average 100K to 200K in size. As an alternative,
- After you answer the questions here, copy and paste the whole list of questions into a new MS Word document; then, send the new file to Grace Notes as an attachment. The new file will, of course, be much smaller than this main file.
- Finally, you can print the Quiz pages on your printer and send your response back to Grace Notes in the regular mail. If you do this, send the mail to:

Grace Notes

% Warren Doud

1705 Aggie Lane

Austin, Texas 78757 USA

Whichever transmission method you use, when Grace Notes receives your completed Quiz, the next lesson will be sent to you, by the same means you received this one. EXCEPT: when you have sent in the FINAL QUIZ, we will send your certificate to you, by regular mail.

Mark Lesson 12

Questions on Mark Lesson 12

1. In what Old Testament scripture is Israel referred to as a vineyard?

Answer:

2. Who is represented in the parable by the slaves who was beaten or killed?

Answer:

3. In what New Testament scripture are we told that God did not spare even His own Son?

Answer:

4. Tenant farmers on a property could inherit the land if there were no other legitimate family heirs. [True/False]

Answer:

5. Who is referred to as the "chief corner stone?"

Answer:

6. Who were the Herodians?

Answer:

7. The common enemy of the Pharisees and the Herodians was _____.

Answer:

8. There are some forms of flattery that have merit. [True/False]

Answer:

9. Why did the Pharisees oppose the poll tax?

Answer:

10. What are the reasons given in Romans 13 for paying taxes?

Answer:

11. Sadducees believed in the afterlife and resurrection from the dead, while the Pharisees did not. [True/False]

Answer:

12. What is necessary for a person to understand life?

Answer:

13. What was Christ's answer to the scribes' question, "What commandment is the foremost of all?"

Answer:

Mark Lesson 12

14. In Mark 12, how was the religious leaders' love of honor and recognition described?

Answer:

15. How did Jesus' know that the rich people were putting in large sums?

Answer:

End of Quiz