

Mark



Lesson 14-The Vineyard, Taxes, Resurrection, Love, & Bad Leaders Focus: Mark 12:1-44

1. Jesus tells the parable of the vineyard and it's keepers (v.1-12)

- a. God prepared His vineyard of faith. He planted it with Abraham. He protected it (planted a hedge for it). Made a provision for sacrifices (had a wine vat). Built the tower and all.
- b. (v.2-5) God came looking for the **"fruit of the vineyard."** He wanted to see the fruit of righteousness in the lives of His people; Faith and obedience, plus the true fruit of His Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23). *Certain men were placed in charge, but they were unfaithful to the work which they had been given. They despised the owner of the vineyard by despising His servants and messengers who were sent (See Matthew 23:37). Jerusalem had not listened to the prophets of God.*
- c. (v.7-12) **And what would they do unto the Son of the vineyard owner?** They despised Christ's teachings and had him nailed to a cross.
- d. *The builders rejected Christ—the true rock! The "chief cornerstone." The builders **should have known what a truly good stone was.** The "builders" are supposed to be experts in this work. However, these turned away and rejected the most precious stone of all—Jesus Christ! (Verses on Christ the rock—1 Cor. 10:4; Luke 20:18; Ephesians 2:20).*

2. The Pharisees question Jesus over the matter of Taxes (v.13-17)

- a. (v.13,14) The Pharisees wanted to take Jesus in a trap. They brought along with them some of the political leaders and officials of the day—the Herodians (a political party following King Herod). **If they could get Jesus to say something against the government** (and the issue of paying taxes), **then they could get him in trouble with the Roman state. If they could get Jesus to say something against paying tithes to God** (while favoring the Roman state) **then they could accuse Him of denying the Laws** and writings of God through Moses (they could accuse Him with evidence as a false teacher). Jesus did not fall into either one of their foolish traps. **Christ taught the principle of the separation of church and state.** That we should render faithfully what belongs to God and also, as the citizen of some government, we should live and pay taxes as a faithful citizen (Romans 13:1-7). Jesus paid His taxes (Matthew 17:25, 27). And so should we. It's the honest and upright thing to do if we live under some government. The only matter in which a Christian should not submit to government authority is when the government crosses the Law of God. God and His laws are higher than any—they come first! (Acts 5:29).

3. The Sadducees questioned Jesus about the resurrection (v.18-27)

- a. This religious group was in opposition to the teaching of the Pharisees on several points. One of those was on the belief in the resurrection. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection while the Pharisees clearly did (v.18; **Acts 23:8**). Jesus of course believed in and taught very strongly about the resurrection! Even the earliest book in the Bible—Job, talks about it!! (Job 19:25,26).
- b. (v.19-23) The logic of these men is rational concerning the question of marriage. This could work the same for a case where one spouse died, and later the living spouse married a second spouse. In the resurrection, who would be married to who? As far as marriage goes, they have a point. However, their application of this—to discredit the resurrection over this point—has no grounds.
- c. **Jesus explained the error of these men (v.24,25).** Jesus pointed out the flaw in their thinking on this matter. They did not rightly understand the Scripture or God's awesome power which will resurrect the dead. In heaven, Jesus says that people will not need to marry. They will be like the angels of heaven and will enjoy the

freedom of completely fulfilled, happy, and joyful single life! (For all eternity!). Do we have families there though? We'll all be part of the family of God which is filled with true love and genuine consideration for one another. If God was going to make us stay married for all eternity to the one person you chose to marry and live with back in your 20's or 30's then you had better hope you made a real good choice. (Of course only those forming a character like Jesus' will be alive throughout eternity—surely that is in our favor). Some believe that perhaps the husband and wife from this time, who had it good and were both saved will not need to ever depart from their close friendship with each other.

- d. (v.26,27) God is the “God of the living.” God considers the saved who are dead, as if they were yet alive, but just sleeping until the resurrection day (Luke 20:38; John 11:11-14)

4. Christ taught about the greatest of all commandments (v.28-34)

- a. (v.28)-Jesus had answered all things well. **The two greatest commandments are to (1) “Love the Lord your God with ALL...of your... [not just a little bit, or part of our heart, but ALL—Our God should be everything to us—even better and more satisfying than life itself—see Psalm 63:3]” (obeying Him—as is stated by Jesus in John 14:15,21 is true expression of our love). And (2) secondly Love your neighbor as yourself.** All the Ten Commandments hang on these two principles. The first four deal with our love to God. The last six deal with our love and relationship to our fellow men (Romans 13:9). **The Law of God is a transcript of His character.** The Bible says, “God is love” (1 John 4:8). We should always love and put God FIRST! Then, we'll know from Him how to rightly love each other.
- b. (v.33)-God loves obedience rather than mere sacrifice (see also 1 Samuel 15:22).

5. Jesus taught according to the Scriptures (v.35-37) *Christ would quote the Scripture texts and then reason from them in His teaching. This helped God's truth to stick clearly in people's minds and it brought conviction of the truth—people learned from Jesus the reasons for their faith (something which we all should do well today!). The common people heard Him gladly, while many of the religious leaders of Christ's day were rejecting Him and His words.*

6. Christ also warned about the hypocrisy of the scribes (v.38-40) *Some people want to look religious but it is only for show. They are in the church, but they are a stumbling block to others. They do not truly belong to God. They loved the praise of men rather than the praise of God. They were only concerned about what other people thought of them, not what God thought of them.*

7. Jesus commended the widow casting her last two coins into the offering at the Temple (v.41-44) *Jesus said that she had given more than all the others. God measures our gifts by the size of the sacrifice made, not by the amount of the dollars that we put into the plate from time to time. God measures our faithfulness in paying the tithes to Him as well, not merely the size of the amount put into the plate. We are to give in faith to God, though we perhaps have but little. God sees our love for Him and other souls. He sees our small offerings, but great sacrifices, even though others may never see!! This woman's story is quite a contrast to the Scribes behavior which Jesus was just condemning a minute ago. Her faith and practice was more faithful and humble; Something which God would truly admire—NOT something for men to admire.*

Question (s) for the Heart:

Will you pray and choose to love God with ALL of your heart, mind, and soul?_____ And your neighbor as your self?_____