

**23S12 Mark 12:1-17 (Part 27) Tenants Parable, Caesar's Tax**

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are continuing our study of the gospel according to Mark with Mark 12:1-17 (Part 27) Tenants Parable, Caesar's Tax.

Before we start, we need to understand a little about this amazing book in the bible. Most historians believe Mark was the first written account of Jesus' life, ministry, death and resurrection. The identity of Mark is not known for sure, but most believe this is John Mark. John Mark is spoken of by Luke in Acts as the cousin of Barnabas, John Mark is mentioned in many other books on the New Testament. Many believe he spent time traveling with Peter, so it is thought that much of Mark's gospel is actually from the perspective of Peter. We also believe that John Mark knew Jesus. There are accounts that Jesus stayed at Mark's mother's home, there are also some unique story details in Mark that are not in either Matthew's or Luke's accounts. We will try to highlight some of these as we go through the stories in Mark.

I'm reading from the New American Standard version (NAS) today.

Let's read Mark 12:1-17 (NAS) ***1**And He began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it, and dug a vat under the wine press and built a tower, and leased it to vine-growers and went on a journey. **2**And at the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive his share of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-growers. **3**And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. **4**And again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. **5**And he sent another, and that one they killed; and so with many others, beating some and killing others. **6**He had one more man to send, a beloved son; he sent him to them last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.' **7**But those vine-growers said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!' **8**And they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. **9**What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and put the vine-growers to death, and give the vineyard to others. **10**Have you not even read this Scripture: 'A STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE; **11**THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'?" **12**And they were seeking to seize Him, and yet they feared the people, for they understood that He told the parable against them. And so, they left Him and went away. **13**Then they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Him in order to trap Him in a statement. **14**They came and said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and do not care what anyone thinks; for You are not partial to anyone, but You teach the way of God in truth. Is it permissible to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not? **15**Are we to pay, or not pay?" But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius to look at." **16**And they brought one. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" And they said to Him, "Caesar's." **17**And Jesus said to them, "Pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were utterly amazed at Him.*

Let's pray. **Dear heavenly father, guide our discussion today such that your message is clear to each of us. As we read your words from Mark, help us see what Mark wants his readers to understand and why. I pray that you help me stay out of the way so your hope and peace can be shared with us. I pray this in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.**

Now, let's take a closer look at these verses, Mark 12:1-2 (NAS) ***<sup>1</sup>And He began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it, and dug a vat under the wine press and built a tower, and leased it to vine-growers and went on a journey. <sup>2</sup>And at the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, in order to receive his share of the produce of the vineyard from the vine-growers.***

Another parable from Jesus, and they are listening. Can you see the symbolism. God planted this amazing place we call earth. He gave it to humans to run. So, he has sent people to those in charge. They are called prophets.

Next, Mark 12:3-5 (NAS) ***<sup>3</sup>And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. <sup>4</sup>And again he sent them another slave, and they wounded him in the head, and treated him shamefully. <sup>5</sup>And he sent another, and that one they killed; and so with many others, beating some and killing others.***

Jesus is outlining how wickedly Hebrews have treated God's messengers. They have beat them, mistreated them and killed most of them.

Next, Mark 12:6-8 (NAS) ***<sup>6</sup>He had one more man to send, a beloved son; he sent him to them last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.' <sup>7</sup>But those vine-growers said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours!' <sup>8</sup>And they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.***

And at the right time, God sent His son Jesus. And Jesus is again predicting that the Jewish leaders will have him killed, in order to maintain their power.

Next Mark 12:9 (NAS) ***<sup>9</sup>What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and put the vine-growers to death, and give the vineyard to others.***

This is of course a rhetorical question. What will the owner do? The owner, God, is going to punish the wicked. God will punish the unjust. God will punish the sinner.

Next Mark 12:10-11 (NAS) ***<sup>10</sup>Have you not even read this Scripture: 'A STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE; <sup>11</sup>THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES'?"***

Jesus is quoting from Psalm 118. Everyone would know this Psalm because it is one of Hallel Psalm sang after the Passover feast every year. Jesus is clearly telling them He is the cornerstone. Jesus is rejected by the foundation stone of any relationship with God.

Next Mark 12:12-13 (NAS) *<sup>12</sup>And they were seeking to seize Him, and yet they feared the people, for they understood that He told the parable against them. And so they left Him and went away. <sup>13</sup>Then they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Him in order to trap Him in a statement.*

Okay, Jesus parable about the vineyard made them made, again. They are desperate to trap Him. So they send Pharisees and Herodians to test Jesus.

Next Mark 12:14-15a (NAS) *<sup>14</sup>They came and said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and do not care what anyone thinks; for You are not partial to anyone, but You teach the way of God in truth. Is it permissible to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not? <sup>15</sup>Are we to pay, or not pay?"*

This is a great trap. If Jesus says, no it's not lawful to pay taxes to a foreign government, then He has committed a crime against Caesar. But if Jesus says, pay the tax, the Jews will hate him. It's a no win question.

Next Mark 12:15b-17 (NAS) *But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, "Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius to look at." <sup>16</sup>And they brought one. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" And they said to Him, "Caesar's." <sup>17</sup>And Jesus said to them, "Pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were utterly amazed at Him.*

Jesus is amazing. Tells them right to their face. I know what you are doing. Then flips the whole concept upside down. Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. The money has Caesar on it. But everything belongs to God. What an amazing answer. And they are stumped.

Let's review.

- 1) Tenants. Make no mistake. We are the tenants in God's world. We act deceitfully. We plot and plunder the beautiful creation of God. We are responsible for our actions.
- 2) Punishment. Be certain. God will punish everyone who is not right with God. And the only way people can be right with God is through faith in Jesus as our Lord.
- 3) Trick Question. We all try to rig the system in our favor at some time in life. If I do this, then God has to do that. If I just look the other way, I'm not the one sinning. God knows. Why do we think we can trick God. God sees everything. God knows everything. Just surrender to control to God and do what is right in the sight of God.

**Let's Pray. Heavenly Father thank you for Bible. Help us to read and meditate on your words so we can hear the message you have for us. Help us to remember who you are Lord. You are our king, king of kings. You are our Lord, Lord over everyone. We can trust you, Lord. Help us to ask you for wisdom when we don't understand. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen**

Let me leave you with this today. Jesus was the smartest person to ever live. He was God obviously. But Jesus is still God. He still sees everything. Don't imagine that you can think or even imagine something without God knowing. God is very clear, He is coming back and He will punish those who have done things against God.

What does this mean for you? Don't ever think you can get away with something. God already knows even before we do it. My friend confess what you have done, take the punishment here and now. Don't wait for God to punish you later. Get right with God by doing the things God wants you to do. Repent for the things you have done that God does not want you to do. Repent means stop doing it and turn away from it. Get away from situation and people that tempt you to do bad things. God knows best.

Thank you for joining me for our study of the gospel of Mark. Please email me comments or feedback. And if you liked the message, please share the link with your friends. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.