

MARK 12:13-44

INTRODUCTION...

- **Mark** – the Gospel to the Gentiles – showing Jesus as the servant of all - **Mark 10:45**
- **MARK 10:1-52 - THE FINAL TRIP TO JERUSALEM...**
 - 6 months passed – the cross is only weeks away – Jesus begins his final trip to Jerusalem
 - Jesus reveals for a 3rd time the events that would occur when they arrived in Jerusalem
- **MARK 11:1-26 - THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY (PALM SUNDAY)...**
 - 4 days before Passover - Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey - the Messiah!
 - The next day - Jesus entered the temple - drove out the moneychangers...
 - The Jewish leaders had made religion into a moneymaking business...
 - The 'House of God' was to be a house of prayer - they made it a den of thieves
 - The religious leaders decided the only solution for Jesus - was to kill Him...
 - The fruitless fig tree - a picture of the nation of Israel...
- **MARK 11:1-27 - 12:12 - THE PROBLEM WITH ISRAEL'S LEADERS...**
 - When Jesus returned to the temple - the religious leaders questioned Him...
 - Jesus humbled them as He challenged them on the motivation of their hearts...
 - Challenging them on the Baptism of John – not true to their word
 - Giving them the parable of the 2 sons – not true with their actions
 - The with the parable of the Landowner – not true with their heart
 - The choice - fall on Jesus and be broken - or the rock will fall on you!
 - In the end the religious leaders knew that Jesus was teaching against them!

PLOTTING AGAINST JESUS...

- **CHALLENGING JESUS...**
 - Having just been thoroughly humbled by Jesus before the people...
 - The Jewish leaders – the Pharisees/Herodians, Sadducees, and Scribes – wanted revenge
 - They were going to try and do it by trapping Jesus in His own words...
 - Getting Jesus to say something that they might be able to accuse Him with...
 - **Luke 20:20** - “*Watching for their opportunity, the leaders sent secret agents pretending to be honest men. They tried to get Jesus to say something that could be reported to the Roman governor so he would arrest Jesus.*”
 - They did it using three (3) different approaches...
- **1ST - THE PHARISEES & HERODIAN'S QUESTION... vs. 13-17**
 - The Pharisees - the super spiritual, religious, pastors/priests of the day
 - Best known for all of their rules and self righteousness
 - They were opposed to the Sadducees - and opposed to Romans rule...
 - The Herodians – those who were loyal to King Herod the Tetrarch (*King of Judea*)
 - The same Herod who had put to death John the Baptist...
 - These were not moral or godly men – they were the politicians of the day
 - They were Roman puppets who enforced the rule of Rome on the Jewish people

- They had no interest in religion or God...
- They would have been strange company for the ultra religious Pharisees
- Except they had one thing in common – they hated Jesus
- o They began with flattering words...
 - “Teacher, we know that you are true... teach the way of God in truth”
 - They were not saying Jesus was THE truth – or taught THE truth...
 - They were saying He was A truth – and taught A truth
 - We live in a world that says there are many ways to heaven – many truths
 - Like Pilate before Jesus - **John 18:37** - the world asks – “What is truth?”
 - Truth is not open to interpretation (*subjective*) - it is not an opinion...
 - Jesus is not a truth – the Bible is not a truth – Jesus and the Word are Truth defined!
 - There is only One Way – One Truth - One Bible - One God - Jesus Christ - **John 14:6**
- o The Pharisees’ / Herodian’s question: Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar...
 - This was a brilliant question – and a devious trap...
 - If Jesus answered “Yes” – then the people would hate him
 - Rome was a conquering nation – Jews hated Rome and hated their taxes!
 - If Jesus answered “No” – the Herodians could turn him over for treason
 - He would be arrested for encouraging Jews not to pay their Roman taxes!
 - It seemed to be the perfect trap to set – a question with no good answer...
 - Jesus’ answer – show me a coin (*denarius – standard silver coin of Rome*)...
 - Whose face and words are on the coin – they answered Caesar (*Rome*)...
 - Then give back (*restore - imperative*) to Caesar what is Caesar’s
 - The idea being the money was already Caesar’s – his face his writing
 - o Should we pay taxes – look at a peso – whose picture...
 - o Give back to the government what is theirs – **Roman 13:1-6**
 - But give to God what is God’s...
 - o We were created in God’s image – we carry’s God’s writing (*the Word*)
 - o We are to give our lives back to the Lord – they are His anyways!
 - o We are not our own – our lives are not ours to live as we choose...
 - o **I Corinthians 6:20** – “You were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
 - o We were purchased with the highest of prices – the life of Jesus
 - o Our lives belong to Jesus’ – we should live in a way that glorifies Him
 - The Herodians marveled – were amazed – by Jesus answer
 - They had tried to trip Him by getting him to argue about politics – and failed...
- **THE SADDUCEE’S QUESTION... vs. 18-27**
 - o The 2nd group to come to Jesus was the Sadducees...
 - The Sadducees were the liberal religious group of the day
 - More concerned with money, wealth, and power – than God or Heaven
 - Kind of half way between a political group and a religious group...
 - Mark gives us the commentary – “...who say there is no resurrection...”
 - The Sadducees only believed in the Law of Moses - Genesis - Deuteronomy
 - There is no mention of the Resurrection in the Law of Moses

- Therefore they rejected the idea of life after death and the resurrection
- A fact that makes their question to Jesus all the more suspect...
- o Their question: Raising up an heir...
 - Quoting from the Law of Moses – **Deuteronomy 25:5-6**
 - The Law states - a brother must marry his brother's widow if there is no heir...
 - Their first born son would then be considered the son of the dead brother
 - The Sadducees pose a seemingly improbable conundrum – likely not a true story
 - A wife's husband died unable to give her children – so she married his brother...
 - Then he died – so she married his brother – and so on through 7 brothers...
 - Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection?
- o You are mistaken (*about 2 things*)...
 - 1st – about marriage in heaven – there is no marriage in heaven
 - This is the only verse in the Bible about being married in heaven
 - Apparently we are not married nor do we get married to others in heaven
 - We will be like the angels – what does that mean?
 - It does not mean we will be angels – just like the angels as far as marriage
 - So apparently angels do not get married – and neither will we in heaven
 - 2nd – about the resurrection – IT IS mentioned in the Law of Moses
 - Have you not read – quoting from **Exodus 3:6** – the Law of Moses...
 - “I am the God (*present tense*) of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”
 - All 3 of these men died long ago – but God refers to them in the present tense!
 - God did not say to Moses - ‘I WAS the God of...’ - ‘He says I AM the God of...’
 - Meaning they are still alive – God is the God of the living not the dead...
 - Proving the idea of the Resurrection from the Law of Moses!
 - Why were the Sadducees mistaken...
 - They did not know the Word of God – or the Power of God
 - The Sadducees didn't believe in their argument – didn't believe in the resurrection
 - The rules/command of the Bible were meant for a culture long ago – not for today...
 - There are many people who still say the same thing today – the Bible is not relevant
 - It was written 2000 years ago – and has nothing to offer to us today
 - But they miss the Word of God – and the Power of God
 - God does not change – and His Word is just as relevant today as then
 - And the power of God is just as able to change and transform lives today!
- o Jesus had not only answered the Sadducees challenge...
 - He had disproven their theology - there was no resurrection
 - They had tried to trip Him up by showing the Bible as irrelevant for today - failed
- **THE SCRIBES QUESTION... vs. 28-34**
 - o The 3rd group to come at Jesus was the Scribes...
 - The Scribes were the copyist of day - there were no copy machines - no printing press
 - In the Bible they were also the learned (*had a PHD*) in the Law of Moses
 - They did not get along with the liberal Sadducees - more conservative - **Acts 23:8**
 - Seeing that Jesus had answered the Sadducees question well - they had their own...
 - o The question: Which is the first commandment of all...

- He asked Jesus which was the greatest of the 613 commandments in the Law
- The thinking was there was no greatest commandment – they were all important
- o All the Law and the prophets...
 - 1st - **Deuteronomy 6:5** - "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength."
 - 2nd - **Leviticus 19:18** - "...You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
 - On these 2 commands hang all of the law and the prophets...
 - Jesus point is if you Love the Lord – and Love your neighbor (*everyone else*)
 - Then you are already going to be doing all the things the Law commands!
- o The man answered Jesus - repeating Jesus' answer - but adding...
 - **I Samuel 15:22** - "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice..."
 - He was getting Jesus point - it is not about keeping all the Law and rules - religion...
 - It was about knowing God - listening to Him - Loving God and Loving others...
 - Jesus answered Him - you are not far from the Kingdom...
 - The Scribes made being Good – righteous - about keeping the Law – the 613
 - Jesus here takes it to the heart – if your heart is right – loving God and others
 - Then you will find you are doing all the things of the Law – without even trying!
 - Are we bound up in the Law this morning – the to do's and not to do's of life
 - Or like the man here - are we starting to get it - getting close to the Kingdom...
 - Are we focused on Loving God and Loving others – fulfilling all the Law!
- o The Scribes had tried to trip Jesus up by making it all about the Religion – they failed
- **JESUS' QUESTION... VS. 35-37**
 - o Why do the Scribes say the Christ (*messiah/savior*) is the son of David - **II Samuel 7:27**
 - If the Messiah is the son of David – then why does David call Him Lord – **Psalms 110:1**
 - Turns out this was quite the dilemma of a question...
 - It would be like saying a Father would call his Son – Lord – does not sound right
 - The answer was the Son of David was God (*God and man*) – Emmanuel
 - All 3 groups believed Jesus was not the Messiah – and that He was not God
 - The answer to Jesus question was God had come down as a man – Jesus!
 - o 3 groups – 3 challenges – 1 Lord
 - The Politicians – Liberals – and the Religious had challenged Jesus...
 - They all wanted to disprove Him – trip Him up – draw the crowds away from Him...
 - But they all were silenced – and Jesus showed that He was God – the Christ!
 - Where are we - Are we 'Political' – caught up in the politics of the day...
 - Are we the 'Liberal' – looking to find a way to show the Bible is not relevant today
 - Are we the 'Religious' – looking to rules and laws rather than to the Lord
 - Or do we see Jesus – God – Emmanuel – the savior of the World
 - Do we realize we have been bought with a price and are not our own
 - Learning about God – reading our Bible and seeing the Power of God
 - Living to Love God and Love others – fulfilling all the Law!
- **BEWARE OF THESE RELIGIOUS LEADERS... VS. 38-44**
 - o Jesus turned and addressed the multitudes who were standing by listening...

- These religious leaders - had ulterior motives for anything they did - the praises of men...
 - Long robes (*religious clothes*) / greetings in the marketplace / best seats in church...
 - **John 12:43** – “For they loved [agape] the praise of men more than the praise of God.”
 - The leaders had so much love for men’s praises – they cared nothing for God’s!
 - If a leader is seeking to please men – he is listening to men and not to God
 - He becomes a leader who is tossed about by the whims of men – no direction
 - He becomes the blind leading the blind – both fall into the ditch! - **Matthew 15:4**
- The religious leaders would take from those who had nothing...
 - A widow who had nothing to give – they would take the roof over her head
 - Saying - God needs your money – you must give your tithes to the Lord...
 - Covering their “requests” with the guise of spirituality – long prayers
 - There are many who would take advantage of believers today – saying things like:
 - If you give us money – God will bless you back 2-fold – or more!
 - God needs your money – if you don’t give God will not bless you!
 - I even heard one story – a faith healer – girl died – give 12,000p or others will die!
 - Shamelessly taking from those who have nothing – out of greed...
 - Misrepresenting God – as if God – who created Heaven & Earth – needs your money
 - For whom God has reserved Greater judgment!
- o It all started with Jesus - ‘cleansing of the temple’ - men taking advantage of others...
 - Jesus sat opposite the treasury - watching as people put their money in...
 - There were many there who were rich - who put in a lot of money
 - But there was a poor widow who only put in 2 mites - about 50 centavos
 - Jesus called the disciples and told them - she gave more than all the rich put together!
 - The rich gave out of their abundance - she out of her poverty - she gave all she had!
 - Most people when they give - give out of their excess - what they have left over...
 - The assumption being if I need it - then I cannot afford to give it away...
 - If a rich man - gave 500p to a hungry family - an act of kindness - but it cost him nothing...
 - But if a poor man who had nothing - gave his last fish to a hungry family - an act of love!
 - Giving to God is not about necessity - God does not need money - **II Corinthians 9:7**
 - And it is not about the quantity - giving a lot means nothing if it costs us nothing...
 - It is about sacrifice - giving from the heart - showing our Love for God!