CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Mark Chapter 12 —

The Parable of the Vineyard, The Greatest Commandment, and the Widow's Offering

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Mark Chapter 12 takes place in the temple courts during Jesus' final week.

The religious leaders have just questioned His authority.

Now Jesus answers with a parable.

A vineyard owner sends servants to collect fruit.

The tenants beat and kill them.

Finally he sends his beloved son, and they kill him too.

The leaders knew Jesus was speaking about them.

Then, one group after another comes to test Him.

The Pharisees and Herodians ask about taxes.

The Sadducees ask about the resurrection.

A scribe asks about the greatest commandment.

Each time, Jesus answers with wisdom no one can match.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength."

Then Jesus asks His own question about the Messiah, showing He is David's Lord, not only David's son.

He warns against religious leaders who seek honor and take advantage of widows.

And the chapter ends with a poor widow who gives everything she has.

The chapter moves through seven movements:

- The Parable of the Wicked Tenants (verses 1–12).
- Taxes to Caesar (verses 13–17).
- The Sadducees and the Resurrection (verses 18–27).
- The Greatest Commandment (verses 28–34).
- David's Lord (verses 35–37).
- Warning Against the Scribes (verses 38–40).
- The Widow's Offering (verses 41–44).

The central truth of Mark 12 is:

Jesus is God's beloved Son and David's Lord, whose wisdom silences every challenge, and He calls us to give God what belongs to Him, to trust the God of the living, to love God and neighbor with everything we have, and to give with wholehearted devotion.

I. A MAN PLANTED A VINEYARD

Mark 12:1 — The Owner Goes Away

“Jesus began to teach the people with parables: “A man planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it, dug a pit for the winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey.”

“A man planted a vineyard.”

Jesus' listeners would think of Isaiah 5.

There, God's vineyard was Israel.

“He put a fence around it, dug a pit for the winepress, and built a watchtower.”

The owner did everything needed.

He protected it.

He prepared it to produce.

“Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey.”

The **tenants** were responsible to care for it.

In the parable, the owner is God.

The vineyard is God's people.

The tenants are the religious leaders who were supposed to care for them.

Cross References

Isaiah 5:2

> He dug up the ground, cleared away the stones, and planted the best vines. He built a watchtower in the middle and dug a winepress. He waited for good grapes, but it produced only wild ones.

Matthew 21:33

> Listen to another story. A landowner planted a vineyard, put a wall around it, dug a winepress, and built a tower. Then he rented it to farmers and left on a trip.

Luke 20:9

> Jesus told the people this story: “A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers, and went away for a long time.”

Spiritual Principle

God has given His people everything needed to bear fruit.

Key Truth

Those entrusted with God's people are accountable to God.

II. AT HARVEST TIME

Mark 12:2 — A Servant Sent

“At harvest time he sent a servant to collect his share of the fruit.”

“At harvest time.”

When the fruit should be ready.

“He sent a servant to collect his share of the fruit.”

The owner had a right to the fruit.

The servants represent the prophets God sent to Israel.

God sent them to call His people to bear the fruit of faith and obedience.

Cross References

Matthew 21:34

> When it was time for the grapes to be picked, he sent his servants to the farmers to get his share.

Luke 20:10

> When it was time to harvest the grapes, he sent a servant to the farmers to get some of the grapes.

2 Chronicles 36:15

> The Lord, the God of their ancestors, sent His messengers to them again and again, because He had pity on His people.

Spiritual Principle

God rightly expects fruit from those He has blessed.

Key Truth

God patiently sends messengers to call His people back.

III. SENT AWAY EMPTY-HANDED

Mark 12:3 — Beaten

“But the tenants seized him, beat him, and sent him away empty-handed.”

The tenants refused to give the owner his fruit.

They beat his servant.

They sent him back with nothing.

This is how many of God's prophets were treated.

Cross References

Matthew 21:35

> The farmers grabbed the servants. They beat one, killed another, and stoned a third.

Luke 20:10

> But the farmers beat him and sent him away with nothing.

2 Chronicles 36:16

> But they made fun of God's messengers, hated His words, and laughed at His prophets.

Spiritual Principle

Rejecting God's messengers is rejecting God Himself.

Key Truth

God's servants have often been mistreated by those they came to help.

IV. TREATED SHAMEFULLY

Mark 12:4 — Another Servant

“He sent another servant; they struck him on the head and treated him shamefully.”

The owner was patient.

He sent another servant.

This one was treated even worse.

Struck on the head.

Humiliated.

The tenants grew bolder in their rebellion.

Cross References

Matthew 21:36

> Then he sent more servants than before, and the farmers treated them the same way.

Luke 20:11

> He sent another servant, but they beat him, insulted him, and sent him away with nothing.

Jeremiah 20:2

> Pashhur had Jeremiah the prophet beaten and put in chains at the Upper Gate of Benjamin.

Spiritual Principle

God is patient, even with those who keep rejecting Him.

Key Truth

Each time the tenants rejected a servant, their hearts grew harder.

V. MANY OTHERS

Mark 12:5 — Some Beaten, Some Killed

“He sent still another, and they killed him. He sent many others; some they beat, others they killed.”

“He sent still another, and they killed him.”

The rebellion turned to murder.

“He sent many others.”

God's patience is astonishing.

He kept sending messengers.

“Some they beat, others they killed.”

Throughout history, God's prophets were rejected.

Cross References

Matthew 21:36

> He sent other servants, more than the first time, and they did the same to them.

Luke 20:12

> He sent a third servant, and they hurt him and threw him out.

Matthew 23:37

> O Jerusalem, you murder God's prophets and throw stones at the messengers He sends. So many times I longed to pull your people close, the way a mother hen tucks her chicks under her wings. But you refused.

Spiritual Principle

God's patience and mercy go far beyond what people deserve.

Key Truth

God kept reaching out, even when His messengers were killed.

VI. HIS BELOVED SON

Mark 12:6 — They Will Respect My Son

“Finally, he had one left to send—his beloved son. He sent him last of all, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’”

“Finally, he had one left to send.”

The owner had one more.

“His beloved son.”

These words echo what the Father said at Jesus' baptism and transfiguration.

“This is My beloved Son.”

Jesus was telling them who He was.

“He sent him last of all.”

The Son is God's final word.

“They will respect my son.”

The owner hoped they would honor his son.

Cross References

Matthew 21:37

> Finally he sent his son, thinking, “They will respect my son.”

Luke 20:13

> The owner said, “What will I do? I will send my son, whom I love. Maybe they will respect him.”

Hebrews 1:2

> Now, at the end of the ages, God has spoken to us by His Son. He made the Son the owner of everything, and through Him He created the universe.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is God's beloved Son and His final messenger.

Key Truth

After many servants, God sent His Son.

VII. THIS IS THE HEIR

Mark 12:7 — Let's Kill Him

“But the tenants said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’”

“This is the heir.”

They knew who he was.

“Come, let's kill him.”

These words echo what Joseph's brothers said about him.

“And the inheritance will be ours.”

They wanted to take the vineyard for themselves.

The leaders wanted control of God's people.

They did not want to give God what belonged to Him.

Cross References

Matthew 21:38

> But when the farmers saw the son, they said to each other, “This is the son who will own the vineyard. Let's kill him and take it for ourselves.”

Luke 20:14

> When the farmers saw the son, they said, “This is the heir. Let's kill him so the vineyard will be ours.”

Genesis 37:20

> Come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of these wells. We can say a wild animal ate him.

Spiritual Principle

The desire to control what belongs to God leads to rebellion against Him.

Spiritual Warning

Wanting God's blessings without God Himself is a dangerous path.

VIII. THROWN OUT OF THE VINEYARD

Mark 12:8 — Killed

“So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.”

“So they seized him, killed him.”

The son was murdered.

Jesus was predicting His own death.

“And threw him out of the vineyard.”

They did not even bury him.

Jesus would be crucified outside the city walls of Jerusalem.

Cross References

Matthew 21:39

> So the farmers took the son, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

Luke 20:15

> So they threw the son out of the vineyard and killed him.

Hebrews 13:12

> Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make His people holy with His own blood.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus knew He would be rejected and killed.

Key Truth

The Son was thrown out so that we could be brought in.

IX. WHAT WILL THE OWNER DO?

Mark 12:9 — Give the Vineyard to Others

“What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come, destroy those tenants, and give the vineyard to others.”

“What will the owner of the vineyard do?”

Jesus asked His listeners to decide.

“He will come, destroy those tenants.”

Judgment would come on those who rejected the Son.

“And give the vineyard to others.”

The care of God's people would be given to new leaders.

This is often understood as the apostles and the church, including both Jews and Gentiles.

This parable was aimed at the leaders who rejected Jesus, not at the Jewish people as a whole.

Jesus Himself, the apostles, and the first believers were all Jewish.

And Paul teaches that God has not rejected His people.

Cross References

Matthew 21:41

> They answered, “He will destroy those evil men and rent the vineyard to other farmers who will give him his share at harvest time.”

Luke 20:16

> He will come and kill those farmers and give the vineyard to others.

Romans 11:11

> Did Israel trip and fall for good? Certainly not! Their stumble opened the way for Gentiles to be saved, and that will stir Israel to want it too.

Spiritual Principle

Those who reject God's Son face His judgment.

Key Truth

God's vineyard will bear fruit, even if the tenants change.

X. THE REJECTED STONE

Mark 12:10 — The Cornerstone

“Haven't you read this Scripture: “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;”

“Haven't you read this Scripture?”

Jesus pointed to Psalm 118.

The same psalm the crowds had sung when He entered Jerusalem.

“The stone the builders rejected.”

The builders were the religious leaders.

They rejected Jesus as useless.

“Has become the cornerstone.”

The **cornerstone** was the most important stone in a building.

It held everything together.

The rejected One would become the foundation of God's new temple, His people.

Cross References

Psalm 118:22

> The stone that the builders threw away has become the most important stone of all.

Matthew 21:42

> Jesus said, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone’?”

Acts 4:11

> Jesus is “the stone that you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.”

Spiritual Principle

The One the world rejects, God makes the foundation.

Key Truth

Jesus was rejected by men but chosen by God.

XI. MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES

Mark 12:11 — The Lord Has Done This

“the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes”?”

“The Lord has done this.”

The exaltation of Jesus is God's work.

What people meant for evil, God used for good.

“And it is marvelous in our eyes.”

The resurrection of the rejected Son would amaze the world.

Cross References

Psalm 118:23

> The Lord did this, and it is wonderful to us.

Matthew 21:42

> This was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing to see.

1 Peter 2:7

> This stone is precious to you who believe. But to those who do not believe, “the stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.”

Spiritual Principle

God turns rejection into glory.

Key Truth

The cross that looked like defeat became God's marvelous victory.

XII. THEY KNEW HE MEANT THEM

Mark 12:12 — Afraid of the Crowd

“The religious leaders knew Jesus was speaking this parable against them. They wanted to arrest Him but were afraid of the crowd, so they left Him and went away.”

“The religious leaders knew Jesus was speaking this parable against them.”

They understood exactly.

“They wanted to arrest Him.”

Instead of repenting, they wanted to get rid of Him.

They were proving the parable true.

“But were afraid of the crowd.”

They feared people, not God.

“So they left Him and went away.”

For now.

Cross References

Matthew 21:46

> They wanted to arrest Him, but they were afraid of the people, who thought Jesus was a prophet.

Luke 20:19

> The teachers of the law and the leading priests wanted to arrest Jesus right away because they knew the story was about them. But they were afraid of the people.

John 7:30

> They tried to seize Him, but no one laid a hand on Him, because His time had not yet come.

Spiritual Principle

Understanding the truth is not enough; we must respond to it.

Spiritual Warning

They understood the warning and still went their own way.

XIII. A TRAP

Mark 12:13 — Pharisees and Herodians

“Later they sent some Pharisees and Herodians to trap Him with His words.”

“They sent some Pharisees and Herodians.”

An unusual team.

The Pharisees disliked Roman rule.

The Herodians supported Herod, who ruled with Rome's approval.

They were usually on opposite sides.

But they joined together against Jesus.

“To trap Him with His words.”

Like hunters setting a snare.

Cross References

Matthew 22:16

> They sent some of their followers along with the Herodians.

Luke 20:20

> So they watched Jesus closely and sent spies who pretended to be sincere. They wanted to trap Him with His words.

Mark 3:6

> The Pharisees went out and began planning with the Herodians how to kill Jesus.

Spiritual Principle

Enemies of the truth often unite against it.

Key Truth

Former rivals become partners when they share a common enemy.

XIV. SHOULD WE PAY TAXES?

Mark 12:14 — Flattery and a Question

“They came and said, “Teacher, we know You are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by others and teach the way of God truthfully. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn't we?””

“Teacher, we know You are a man of integrity.”

They began with flattery.

What they said was true, but they did not mean it.

“Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

This was the trap.

If Jesus said “Yes,” the people would be angry.

They hated Roman taxes.

If Jesus said “No,” the Herodians could report Him to Rome as a rebel.

Cross References

Matthew 22:17

> Tell us what You think. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?

Luke 20:22

> Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?

Romans 13:7

> Pay whatever you owe. Pay your taxes to those who collect them, and show respect to those who should be respected.

Spiritual Principle

Flattery is often a tool of those with hidden motives.

Spiritual Warning

Be careful when praise comes before a trap.

XV. WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO TRAP ME?

Mark 12:15 — Bring Me a Denarius

“But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. He asked, “Why are you trying to trap Me? Bring Me a denarius and let Me look at it.””

“But Jesus knew their hypocrisy.”

He saw through their flattery.

“Why are you trying to trap Me?”

Jesus exposed their motives.

“Bring Me a denarius.”

A **denarius** was a Roman silver coin.

It was the coin used to pay the tax.

Interestingly, Jesus asked them to bring one.

They had one with them, even in the temple.

Cross References

Matthew 22:19

> Show Me the coin used to pay the tax. They brought Him a denarius.

Luke 20:24

> Show Me a coin.

Matthew 22:18

> But Jesus knew their evil plans and said, “You hypocrites! Why are you trying to trap Me?”

Spiritual Principle

Jesus sees through every hidden motive.

Key Truth

No trap can catch the One who knows every heart.

XVI. WHOSE IMAGE?

Mark 12:16 — Caesar's

“They brought the coin, and He asked, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?” They replied, “Caesar's.””

“Whose image is this?”

The coin had the face of the emperor.

“And whose inscription?”

It probably described Caesar as the son of a god.

“They replied, ‘Caesar's.’”

The coin belonged to Caesar.

It bore his image.

But Jesus was about to make a deeper point.

People bear the image of God.

Cross References

Matthew 22:20

> Jesus asked, “Whose picture and name are on this coin?”

Luke 20:24

> Whose picture and words are on it?

Genesis 1:27

> God created people in His own image. In God's image He created them.

Spiritual Principle

What bears an image belongs to the one whose image it carries.

Key Truth

The coin bore Caesar's image; we bear God's.

XVII. GIVE TO GOD WHAT IS GOD'S

Mark 12:17 — They Were Amazed

“Then Jesus said to them, “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.” And they were amazed at Him.”

“Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's.”

Paying taxes is right.

Believers have duties to the government.

“And to God what is God's.”

But God's claim is greater.

The coin had Caesar's image, so it belonged to Caesar.

We have God's image, so we belong to God.

Give Caesar your coins.

Give God your whole self.

“And they were amazed at Him.”

His answer escaped the trap and taught a deep truth.

Cross References

Matthew 22:21

> Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God.

Luke 20:25

> Then give Caesar what is Caesar's, and give God what is God's.

Romans 13:1

> Each person should respect those in charge of the government, since all authority exists only because God permits it.

Spiritual Principle

Give earthly authorities their due, but give God your whole life.

Application

Are you giving God what belongs to Him?

XVIII. THE SADDUCEES

Mark 12:18 — Denying the Resurrection

“Then the Sadducees, who deny there is a resurrection, came to Him with a question:”

“Then the Sadducees.”

This is the only time the Sadducees appear in Mark.

They were a group of wealthy, powerful priests.

They controlled the temple.

“Who deny there is a resurrection.”

They accepted only the first five books of the Bible as fully authoritative.

They did not believe in angels, spirits, or life after death.

Cross References

Matthew 22:23

> That same day some Sadducees came to Jesus. They say there is no rising from the dead.

Luke 20:27

> Some Sadducees, who say people will not rise from the dead, came to Jesus.

Acts 23:8

> The Sadducees say there is no resurrection, no angels, and no spirits. But the Pharisees believe in all of them.

Spiritual Principle

Denying the resurrection leaves people without hope beyond this life.

Key Truth

The question of life after death is one of the most important questions of all.

XIX. MOSES WROTE FOR US

Mark 12:19 — The Brother's Duty

“Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow to raise up offspring for his brother.”

They pointed to a law from Deuteronomy 25.

If a man died without children, his brother married the widow.

Their first son would carry on the dead brother's name.

This protected widows and kept families going.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 25:5

> If brothers live together and one dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother must marry her and do his duty to her.

Matthew 22:24

> Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies without children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him.

Luke 20:28

> Moses wrote that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother.

Spiritual Principle

God's law cared for widows and families.

Key Truth

The Sadducees used God's caring law to mock God's promise.

XX. SEVEN BROTHERS

Mark 12:20 — The First Died

“Now there were seven brothers. The first married and died without children.”

The Sadducees made up a story.

Seven brothers.

The first married and died without children.

The story was meant to make belief in the resurrection look foolish.

Cross References

Matthew 22:25

> There were seven brothers among us. The first married and died. Since he had no children, his brother married the widow.

Luke 20:29

> There were seven brothers. The first married and died without children.

Genesis 38:8

> Judah said to Onan, “Marry your brother's widow and have a child for your brother.”

Spiritual Principle

Some questions are asked to mock, not to learn.

Key Truth

A made-up puzzle cannot defeat God's truth.

XXI. THE SECOND AND THE THIRD

Mark 12:21 — The Same Happened

“The second married her but also died without children. The same happened with the third.”

The story continued.

The second brother married her.

He died too.

Then the third.

The Sadducees thought the problem was getting bigger and more impossible.

Cross References

Matthew 22:26

The same thing happened to the second and third brothers.

Luke 20:30

Then the second brother married her.

Genesis 38:9

Onan knew the child would not be his.

Spiritual Principle

Human puzzles do not limit God.

Key Truth

The bigger they made the puzzle, the more they showed they did not know God's power.

XXII. NONE LEFT CHILDREN

Mark 12:22 — The Woman Died Too

“In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too.”

All seven brothers died.

None had children.

Then the woman died.

The story ended in a graveyard.

That was the Sadducees' view of life.

It all ends in death.

Cross References

Matthew 22:27

Finally, the woman died.

Luke 20:32

> Finally, the woman died too.

Ruth 1:5

> Then Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her husband and her two sons.

Spiritual Principle

Without the resurrection, every story ends in the grave.

Key Truth

But God's story does not end in a graveyard.

XXIII. WHOSE WIFE WILL SHE BE?

Mark 12:23 — At the Resurrection

“At the resurrection, whose wife will she be, since all seven were married to her?””

Here was their trick question.

If there is a resurrection, whose wife will she be?

They thought this proved the resurrection was impossible.

They assumed life after death would be just like life now.

Cross References

Matthew 22:28

> At the resurrection, whose wife will she be? All seven were married to her.

Luke 20:33

> So in the resurrection, whose wife will she be?

1 Corinthians 15:12

> If we preach that Christ was raised from the dead, how can some of you say the dead will not be raised?

Spiritual Principle

The life to come is not simply a copy of this life.

Key Truth

The Sadducees imagined heaven too small.

XXIV. YOU DO NOT KNOW

Mark 12:24 — The Scriptures and the Power of God

“Jesus replied, “Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?”

“Are you not in error?”

Jesus said plainly they were wrong.

“Because you do not know the Scriptures.”

They knew the words, but they missed the meaning.

“Or the power of God.”

They did not believe God could raise the dead or create a new kind of life.

Two causes of error.

Not knowing God's word.

Not knowing God's power.

Cross References

Matthew 22:29

> Jesus answered, “You are wrong because you do not know the Scriptures or God's power.”

Luke 24:25

> Jesus said, “You are foolish and slow to believe everything the prophets said.”

John 5:39

> You dig into the Scriptures because you believe they lead to eternal life. But they are pointing to Me the whole time.

Spiritual Principle

Error comes from not knowing God's word or God's power.

Application

Are you growing in your knowledge of God's word and His power?

XXV. LIKE THE ANGELS

Mark 12:25 — Neither Marry Nor Are Given in Marriage

“When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.”

“When the dead rise.”

Jesus affirmed the resurrection.

“They will neither marry nor be given in marriage.”

Life in the resurrection will be different.

Marriage is a gift for this life, including the purpose of having children.

In the resurrection, no one dies, so that purpose is complete.

“They will be like the angels in heaven.”

Not that people become angels.

But like angels, they will not marry or die.

This does not mean love between husbands and wives will be lost.

In God's presence, all relationships will be made complete and perfect.

Cross References

Matthew 22:30

> In the resurrection people do not marry. They are like the angels in heaven.

Luke 20:36

> They cannot die anymore. They are like angels and are children of God because they have been raised from death.

1 Corinthians 15:42

> It is the same with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is planted will decay, but it is raised to a life that cannot be destroyed.

Spiritual Principle

The resurrection life will be far greater than this life.

Key Truth

Heaven will not take away anything good; it will make everything complete.

XXVI. THE GOD OF ABRAHAM

Mark 12:26 — At the Burning Bush

“And about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the burning bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’?”

“Have you not read in the book of Moses?”

Jesus used the books the Sadducees accepted.

“In the account of the burning bush.”

Exodus 3.

“I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

God said **I am**, not **I was**.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died long before.

But God was still their God.

That means they were still alive to Him.

Cross References

Exodus 3:6

> He said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

Matthew 22:32

I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

Luke 20:37

Even Moses showed that the dead are raised when he wrote about the burning bush and called the Lord “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Spiritual Principle

God's faithfulness to His people does not end at death.

Key Truth

God still calls Himself the God of those who died long ago.

XXVII. THE GOD OF THE LIVING

Mark 12:27 — Badly Mistaken

“He is not the God of the dead but of the living. You are badly mistaken!””

“He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

God's relationship with His people is so strong that death cannot break it.

Those who belong to God live to Him.

“You are badly mistaken!”

Jesus ended firmly.

Denying the resurrection is a serious error.

Cross References

Matthew 22:32

He is not the God of the dead but of the living.

Luke 20:38

He is the God of the living, not the dead, because all people are alive to Him.

Romans 14:8

> Our lives are lived for the Lord, and our deaths are for the Lord too. Living or dying, we are His.

Spiritual Principle

Those who belong to God are alive to Him forever.

Key Truth

Death cannot end what God has begun.

XXVIII. WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT?

Mark 12:28 — A Scribe's Question

“One of the scribes came and asked Him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?””

“One of the scribes came.”

This scribe was different.

He had listened to Jesus answer the others.

Mark tells us he noticed Jesus answered well.

“Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

Religious teachers counted 613 commands in the law.

They often debated which was greatest.

This seems to have been an honest question.

Cross References

Matthew 22:36

> Teacher, which command in the law is the most important?

Luke 10:25

> An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. He asked, “Teacher, what must I do to get eternal life?”

Matthew 22:35

One of the Pharisees, an expert in the law, asked Jesus a question to test Him.

Spiritual Principle

Honest questions about God's will deserve honest answers.

Key Truth

Not every religious leader opposed Jesus; some were truly seeking.

XXIX. THE LORD IS ONE

Mark 12:29 — Hear, O Israel

“Jesus replied, “The most important one is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.”

“Hear, O Israel.”

Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:4.

This is called the **Shema**, from the Hebrew word for “hear.”

Faithful Jews prayed it every morning and evening.

“The Lord our God, the Lord is one.”

There is only one true God.

All love and loyalty begin with knowing who God is.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 6:4

Listen, Israel: The Lord is our God. The Lord is the only God.

Matthew 22:37

Jesus answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.”

1 Corinthians 8:6

We know there is one God, the Father, who made all things and for whom we live. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Principle

Our love for God begins with knowing that He alone is God.

Key Truth

There is one God, and He deserves all of us.

XXX. WITH ALL YOUR HEART

Mark 12:30 — Love the Lord Your God

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’”

“Love the Lord your God.”

The greatest command is not a rule to keep.

It is love to give.

“With all your heart.”

Your desires and affections.

“With all your soul.”

Your whole life and being.

“With all your mind.”

Your thoughts and understanding.

“And with all your strength.”

Your energy and abilities.

Notice the word **all**, repeated four times.

God wants everything.

Not part of us.

All of us.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 6:5

> Love the Lord your God with your whole heart, your whole being, and all your strength.

Matthew 22:37

> Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.

Luke 10:27

> He answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And love your neighbor as you love yourself.”

Spiritual Principle

God deserves our whole-hearted love.

Application

Is there any part of your life you are holding back from God?

XXXI. LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

Mark 12:31 — The Second Command

“The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.””

“The second is this.”

Jesus was asked for one.

He gave two.

They belong together.

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

He quoted Leviticus 19.

Care for others the way you naturally care for yourself.

“There is no commandment greater than these.”

All of God's law is summed up in love.

Love for God shows itself in love for people.

Cross References

Leviticus 19:18

> Do not take revenge or hold a grudge against your people. Love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

Matthew 22:39

> The second command is like the first: Love your neighbor as you love yourself.

Romans 13:9

> Commands like “Do not commit adultery” and “Do not steal,” and every other command, all come down to this: “Love others the way you love yourself.”

Spiritual Principle

Love for God and love for neighbor cannot be separated.

Application

Who is the neighbor God is calling you to love this week?

XXXII. WELL SAID, TEACHER

Mark 12:32 — The Scribe Agrees

“The scribe said to Him, “Well said, Teacher. You are right in saying God is one and there is no other but Him.”

“Well said, Teacher.”

The scribe agreed with Jesus.

“You are right in saying God is one and there is no other but Him.”

He repeated the truth back.

Only Mark records this friendly exchange.

In the middle of so much hostility, here was an open heart.

Cross References

Deuteronomy 4:35

> You were shown these things so that you would know the Lord is God. There is no other god besides Him.

Deuteronomy 6:4

> The Lord our God is the one and only Lord.

Isaiah 45:5

> I am the Lord. No one else is God. There is no other God but Me.

Spiritual Principle

An open heart recognizes truth when it hears it.

Key Truth

God has seekers even among those you might not expect.

XXXIII. MORE THAN SACRIFICES

Mark 12:33 — Love Above Ritual

“To love Him with all your heart, understanding, soul, and strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.””

The scribe saw something deep.

Love is more important than religious ritual.

He was standing in the temple, where sacrifices were offered every day.

Yet he understood that God wants hearts more than offerings.

The prophets had taught this long before.

Cross References

Hosea 6:6

> What I want from you is loyal love, not animal offerings. I would rather you know Me than burn sacrifices to Me.

1 Samuel 15:22

> The Lord is not pleased by offerings more than by doing what He says. Obeying Him is better than any sacrifice.

Micah 6:8

> The Lord has already shown you what is good. Be fair, love showing kindness, and live humbly before your God.

Spiritual Principle

God values love and obedience above religious ritual.

Key Truth

God would rather have your heart than your offering.

XXXIV. NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM

Mark 12:34 — No More Questions

“When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, He said, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” From then on, no one dared ask Him any more questions.”

“When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely.”

Jesus noticed his understanding.

“You are not far from the kingdom of God.”

He was close.

He understood the truth.

But being close is not the same as being in.

He still needed to follow Jesus.

“From then on, no one dared ask Him any more questions.”

Every challenge had been answered.

His enemies gave up trying to trap Him with words.

Cross References

Matthew 22:46

> No one could answer Him a word, and from that day on no one dared to ask Him any more questions.

Luke 20:40

> No one dared to ask Him another question.

Acts 26:28

> Agrippa said to Paul, “Do you think you can persuade me to become a Christian so quickly?”

Spiritual Principle

Being near the kingdom is not the same as entering it.

Application

Are you close to the kingdom, or have you entered it by following Jesus?

XXXV. THE SON OF DAVID

Mark 12:35 — Jesus Asks a Question

“While Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, He asked, “Why do the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David?”

Now Jesus asked a question.

“Why do the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David?”

Everyone agreed the Messiah would come from David's family.

That was true.

But Jesus wanted them to see that the Messiah is more than David's son.

Cross References

Matthew 22:42

> What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is He? They answered, “The son of David.”

Luke 20:41

Jesus said to them, “Why do people say the Christ is the son of David?”

Romans 1:3

The good news is about His Son, who came from the family of David as a human.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is more than anyone expected Him to be.

Key Truth

The Messiah is David's son, but also far more.

XXXVI. THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD

Mark 12:36 — David Spoke by the Spirit

“David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, said: ‘The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I put Your enemies under Your feet.’”

“David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit.”

Jesus affirmed that Scripture is inspired by the Spirit.

“The Lord said to my Lord.”

He quoted Psalm 110.

The Lord is God the Father.

My Lord is the Messiah.

David called the Messiah his Lord.

“Sit at my right hand until I put Your enemies under Your feet.”

The Messiah would sit in the place of highest honor beside God.

Psalm 110 is the Old Testament passage most often quoted in the New Testament.

Cross References

Psalm 110:1

> The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right side until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

Matthew 22:44

> The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at My right side until I put Your enemies under Your feet.

Acts 2:34

> David did not go up to heaven, but he said, “The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at My right side.”

Spiritual Principle

The Messiah shares the throne of God.

Key Truth

The Scriptures, spoken by the Spirit, point to Jesus as Lord.

XXXVII. HOW CAN HE BE HIS SON?

Mark 12:37 — The Crowd Listened with Delight

“David himself calls Him ‘Lord.’ How then can He be his son?” The large crowd listened to Him with delight.”

“David himself calls Him ‘Lord.’”

In that culture, a father would not call his son “Lord.”

“How then can He be his son?”

The answer is that the Messiah is both.

He is David's son as a human.

And David's Lord as the Son of God.

Jesus is both fully human and fully God.

“The large crowd listened to Him with delight.”

The ordinary people loved to hear Him.

Cross References

Matthew 22:45

If David calls Him “Lord,” how can He be David's son?

Luke 20:44

David calls Him “Lord.” So how can He be David's son?

Revelation 22:16

I am the Root and the Descendant of David, the bright Morning Star.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is both David's son and David's Lord.

Key Truth

Jesus is the root of David's family and its descendant.

XXXVIII. BEWARE OF THE SCRIBES

Mark 12:38 — Flowing Robes and Greetings

“As He taught, Jesus said, “Beware of the scribes. They like to walk around in flowing robes and receive greetings in the marketplaces,”

“Beware of the scribes.”

Not all scribes were bad.

Jesus had just praised one.

But many were proud.

“They like to walk around in flowing robes.”

Long robes showed importance.

“And receive greetings in the marketplaces.”

They loved being recognized.

They wanted people to notice them.

This warning applies to religious leaders in every age.

Cross References

Matthew 23:6

> They love to have the most important seats at feasts and in the synagogues.

Luke 20:46

> Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in long robes and love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces.

Matthew 6:5

> When you pray, do not act like the fakes who love to pray standing up in the synagogues and on the street corners where everyone can see them.

Spiritual Principle

Seeking honor from people is a sign of a proud heart.

Spiritual Warning

Religious leadership can become a stage for pride.

XXXIX. THE BEST SEATS

Mark 12:39 — Places of Honor

“they love the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets.”

“They love the most important seats in the synagogues.”

The front seats faced the people.

Everyone could see them.

“And the places of honor at banquets.”

The seats closest to the host.

They loved to be seen as important.

Jesus had just taught that the first must be last.

These leaders wanted to be first.

Cross References

Matthew 23:6

> They love the places of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues.

Luke 20:46

> They love the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts.

Luke 14:7

> When Jesus noticed how the guests chose the places of honor at the table, He told them a story.

Spiritual Principle

God's people should seek to serve, not to be honored.

Application

Do you seek the best seat or the place of service?

XL. DEVOURING WIDOWS' HOUSES

Mark 12:40 — Long Prayers for a Show

“They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely.””

“They devour widows' houses.”

This is a terrible charge.

Some took advantage of widows.

Perhaps by managing their property dishonestly.

Or by expecting gifts from those who could not afford them.

“And for a show make lengthy prayers.”

Their long prayers were for show.

They covered their greed with religion.

“These men will be punished most severely.”

Using religion to harm the weak brings the heaviest judgment.

Cross References

Matthew 23:14

> How terrible for you, teachers of the law and Pharisees! You take away widows' houses and make long prayers to show off.

Luke 20:47

> They take the homes of widows and make long prayers to look good. They will be punished even more.

Isaiah 10:2

> They take what belongs to the poor and rob widows and orphans.

Spiritual Principle

God judges most severely those who use religion to exploit the weak.

Spiritual Warning

Long prayers cannot hide a greedy heart from God.

XLI. WATCHING THE OFFERINGS

Mark 12:41 — The Rich Gave Large Amounts

“Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts.”

“Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put.”

In the temple there were offering boxes shaped like trumpets.

“And watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury.”

Jesus watched how people gave.

He still does.

“Many rich people threw in large amounts.”

The rich gave a lot.

Their coins may have made a loud sound in the metal boxes.

Cross References

Luke 21:1

Jesus looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the temple offering box.

2 Kings 12:9

Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and placed it beside the altar.

Deuteronomy 16:17

Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to how the Lord your God has blessed you.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus sees not only what we give but how we give.

Key Truth

God measures giving by the heart, not the amount.

XLII. TWO SMALL COINS

Mark 12:42 — A Poor Widow

“But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny.”

“But a poor widow came.”

Right after Jesus warned about those who devour widows' houses.

“And put in two very small copper coins.”

These were the smallest coins in use.

“Worth only a fraction of a penny.”

Almost nothing by the world's measure.

But she could have kept one coin for herself.

She gave both.

Cross References

Luke 21:2

> He also saw a poor widow putting in two very small copper coins.

2 Kings 4:2

> Elisha asked, “How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?” She said, “I have nothing except a small jar of olive oil.”

1 Kings 17:12

> She answered, “As surely as the Lord your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour and a little oil.”

Spiritual Principle

The smallest gift given with a whole heart is precious to God.

Key Truth

She could have kept one coin, but she gave both.

XLIII. SHE HAS PUT IN MORE

Mark 12:43 — Jesus Calls His Disciples

“Calling His disciples to Him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.”

“Calling His disciples to Him.”

This was an important lesson.

“This poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.”

How could two tiny coins be more?

Because God does not measure gifts by amount.

He measures them by sacrifice and love.

Cross References

Luke 21:3

> He said, “I tell you the truth, this poor widow gave more than all of them.”

2 Corinthians 8:12

> If you are willing to give, God accepts your gift based on what you have, not on what you do not have.

2 Corinthians 9:7

> Each person should give what he has made up his mind to give, not with regret or because he feels forced. God loves people who give gladly.

Spiritual Principle

God values the heart and sacrifice behind a gift more than its size.

Key Truth

In God's accounting, two small coins can outweigh a fortune.

XLIV. ALL SHE HAD TO LIVE ON

Mark 12:44 — Out of Her Poverty

“They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, gave everything—all she had to live on.””

“They all gave out of their wealth.”

The rich gave what they could spare.

It did not change their lives.

“But she, out of her poverty, gave everything.”

She gave what she needed.

“All she had to live on.”

She trusted God completely.

She held nothing back.

She is a picture of loving God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

And in a few days, Jesus would give everything too.

Cross References

Luke 21:4

> All these people gave out of what they had left over. But she gave out of her poverty, all she had to live on.

2 Corinthians 8:2

> They have been tested by great troubles, and they are very poor. But their great joy made them give generously.

1 Kings 17:13

> Elijah said to her, “Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have.”

Spiritual Principle

Wholehearted giving trusts God with everything.

Key Truth

The widow gave everything she had, and soon Jesus would give everything He had.

XLV. SIX GREAT LESSONS FROM MARK 12

1. God's Son Is the Heir

“Finally, he had one left to send—his beloved son.”

Principle:

The parable of the tenants points directly to Jesus, rejected yet exalted.

2. We Owe Ultimate Loyalty to God

“Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.”

Principle:

Earthly duties are real, but God's claim on us is greater.

3. God of the Living

“He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

Principle:

The resurrection is real, for God rules over life, not death.

4. The Greatest Commandments

“Love the Lord your God… Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Principle:

Love God fully and love others selflessly.

5. True Giving

“This poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.”

Principle:

God values sacrifice from the heart, not the amount given.

6. Beware of Hypocrisy

“Beware of the scribes.”

Principle:

Outward religion without love and humility brings judgment.

XLVI. THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD EXPLAINED

Verses 1–12 tell the story of God's dealings with His people.

The Owner

God.

The Vineyard

God's people.

The Tenants

The religious leaders entrusted with caring for God's people.

The Servants

The prophets God sent again and again.

The Beloved Son

Jesus.

The Rejected Stone

Jesus, rejected by men but made the cornerstone by God.

A Word of Caution

This parable was spoken against the leaders who rejected Jesus.

It must never be used to look down on the Jewish people.

Jesus and His first followers were Jewish, and God's love for Israel continues.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God has been patient and generous, sending servant after servant, and finally His own beloved Son.

XLVII. FOUR QUESTIONS, FOUR ANSWERS

Mark 12 records several challenges to Jesus.

1. About Taxes

Question: Should we pay taxes to Caesar?

Answer: Give Caesar his coin, but give God yourself.

2. About the Resurrection

Question: Whose wife will she be?

Answer: You do not know the Scriptures or the power of God; He is the God of the living.

3. About the Greatest Command

Question: Which command is most important?

Answer: Love God with everything, and love your neighbor as yourself.

4. Jesus' Own Question

Question: How can the Messiah be both David's son and David's Lord?

Answer: Because He is both human and divine.

Key Truth

Every challenge to Jesus revealed more of His wisdom and glory.

XLVIII. TWO KINDS OF RELIGION

Verses 38–44 show a sharp contrast.

The Proud Scribes

- Wore flowing robes.
- Loved greetings and the best seats.
- Prayed long prayers for show.
- Took advantage of widows.
- Will be judged severely.

The Poor Widow

- Had almost nothing.
- Went unnoticed by the crowd.
- Gave two small coins.

- Gave all she had to live on.
- Was honored by Jesus.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

God is not impressed by religious show, but He notices every act of humble devotion.

XLIX. WHAT MARK 12 TEACHES ABOUT JESUS

He Is God's Beloved Son

“His beloved son.”

He Is the Rejected Cornerstone

“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.”

He Knows Every Heart

“Jesus knew their hypocrisy.”

He Knows the Scriptures and the Power of God

“You do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.”

He Teaches the Heart of God's Law

“There is no commandment greater than these.”

He Is David's Son and David's Lord

“David himself calls Him ‘Lord.’”

He Notices the Overlooked

“This poor widow has put more.”

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus is the beloved Son and the Lord of David, whose wisdom silences every challenge.

L. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Who do the tenants represent in the parable?

The religious leaders who were supposed to care for God's people but rejected His messengers.

Question 2

Who is the beloved son?

Jesus, the Son of God.

Question 3

What does the rejected stone becoming the cornerstone mean?

Jesus, rejected by people, would become the foundation of God's people.

Question 4

What was the trap in the question about taxes?

If Jesus said yes, the people would be angry; if no, Rome would see Him as a rebel.

Question 5

What did Jesus mean by giving to God what is God's?

We bear God's image, so we belong to Him completely.

Question 6

What did the Sadducees believe?

They denied the resurrection, angels, and spirits.

Question 7

How did Jesus prove the resurrection from the book of Moses?

God said, “I am the God of Abraham,” showing they are still alive to Him.

Question 8

What are the two greatest commandments?

Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.

Question 9

Why did Jesus say the scribe was “not far” from the kingdom?

He understood the truth, but still needed to follow Jesus.

Question 10

How can the Messiah be both David's son and David's Lord?

He is fully human, descended from David, and fully God, Lord over David.

Question 11

Why did Jesus warn against the scribes?

They sought honor, took advantage of widows, and prayed for show.

Question 12

What should Mark 12 change about the way Christians live today?

Mark 12 should cause believers to live:

- Bearing fruit for God.
- Honoring Jesus as God's beloved Son.
- Being responsible citizens while giving God their whole lives.
- Living with hope in the resurrection.
- Loving God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.
- Loving their neighbors as themselves.
- Avoiding religious pride and show.
- Giving to God with wholehearted devotion.

LI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Mark 12 asks several important questions.

Am I Giving God the Fruit He Deserves?

Or keeping the vineyard for myself?

Have I Received the Beloved Son?

Or rejected Him?

Am I Giving God What Is His?

Is my whole life His?

Do I Live with Hope in the Resurrection?

Does it change how I face death?

Do I Love God with All of Me?

Heart, soul, mind, and strength?

Whom Am I Called to Love?

Who is my neighbor today?

Am I Seeking Honor from People?

Or serving humbly?

How Do I Give?

Out of my extra, or with my whole heart?

LII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Two Small Coins”

The temple was full of people giving.

Rich men poured in large amounts.

Their coins made a loud noise in the metal boxes.

People noticed.

Then a poor widow came.

She dropped in two tiny copper coins.

They barely made a sound.

No one noticed.

No one except Jesus.

He called His disciples and said she had given more than all the others.

How?

The others gave what they could spare.

She gave what she could not spare.

She gave everything.

This creates a powerful principle.

God does not measure our gifts by their size.

He measures them by what they cost us and the love behind them.

And a few days later, Jesus would give everything He had for us.

Principle:

God sees and treasures the gifts that come from a wholehearted love.

LIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Mark Chapter 12 is full of wisdom and challenge.

It shows God's patience in sending His Son.

It calls us to give God what belongs to Him.

It assures us that God is the God of the living.

It reveals the greatest commandments.

It shows Jesus as both David's son and David's Lord.

It warns against religious pride.

And it honors the wholehearted gift of a poor widow.

Mark 12 therefore reminds us:

Never reject God's beloved Son.

Never hold back what belongs to God.

Never lose hope in the resurrection.

Never separate love for God from love for neighbor.

Never use religion for show.

The church does not need people who only look religious.

It needs:

Believers who bear fruit.

Hearts that belong wholly to God.

Lives that love their neighbors.

And givers who give with their whole hearts.

The same Jesus still calls:

Tell people that God sent His beloved Son.

Tell people that God is the God of the living.

Tell people that the greatest command is to love.

Tell people that God sees every humble gift.

And as you live:

Give God what is His.

Love Him with everything.

Love your neighbor.

Give your all.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for Your patience in sending servant after servant to Your people.

Thank You for sending Your beloved Son.

Thank You that the stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

Thank You that we bear Your image and belong to You.

Thank You that You are the God of the living, and that death cannot hold Your people.

Thank You for calling us to love You and to love our neighbors.

Thank You that You see every humble gift given with a whole heart.

Forgive us when we have kept for ourselves what belongs to You.

Forgive us when we have loved You with only part of our hearts.

Forgive us when we have failed to love our neighbors.

Forgive us when we have sought honor from people.

Forgive us when we have given only what we could spare.

Help us give You our whole lives.

Fill us with hope in the resurrection.

Teach us to love You with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Teach us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

And make us wholehearted givers like the poor widow.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.”

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Key Verse

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.” — Mark 12:30

Central Truth

Jesus is God's beloved Son and David's Lord, whose wisdom silences every challenge, and He calls us to give God what belongs to Him, to trust the God of the living, to love God and neighbor with everything we have, and to give with wholehearted devotion.

Mark 12 in One Sentence

Jesus tells the parable of the tenants who killed the owner's beloved son, answers challenges about taxes and the resurrection, names love for God and neighbor as the greatest commandments, reveals the Messiah as David's Lord, warns against proud religious leaders, and honors a poor widow who gave all she had.