

Have you ever thrown something away thinking it had no value, only to dig it back out later when you realized you needed it? (guys do this with assembling instructions all the time)

The religious leaders have made up their minds about Jesus, to discard Him, to their own harm.

Let's go through the passage, I'll make some commentary so we may better understand the passage, then I have 6 points of application for us

MARK 11:27 They came again to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came

The events from here until the end of chapter 12 all take place in this same temple visit

It will involve a series of interrogations of Jesus by every group of religious leaders of the day

The most authoritative of all groups was the Jewish ruling council, know as the **Sanhedrin**

It was made up of 71 members from 3 groups:

- The **Chief Priests**: former high priests & priests with permanent duties in the Temple system; usually members of a group called the Sadducees
- The **Scribes**: teachers of 'the Law' (Mosaic) & were trained legal experts; Usually members of a group called the Pharisees
- The **Elders**: typically prominent men who helped settle civil disputes

MARK 11:28 and asked him, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do these things?"

They're referring to Jesus' actions in the previous passage

One of the main issues the religious leaders had with Jesus was that of *authority*.

In their eyes, they are the authority in the Temple, and they haven't given Him any authority to do what He's been doing.

Jesus' authority is still one of the main issues people have- we feel we are our own masters

MARK 11:29 Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; then answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

Why doesn't Jesus answer them directly?

It's not that He doesn't know the answer... it's that He knows their hearts

This is not an honest or sincere question; they aren't looking for an answer, but to trap Him.

Back in v18 Mark told us they were already plotting to kill Jesus , but it's not yet His time

MARK 11:30 Was John's baptism from heaven or of human origin? Answer me."

John's baptism is significant;

Mark 1 speaks of John (not the disciple, the prophet) ushering the way for one greater than Him

This is a reminder to the hearers (and readers) where Jesus derives His authority from

Mark 1:4-11 John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. ⁶John wore a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his

waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, “One who is more powerful than I am is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. ¹⁰ As soon as he came up out of the water, he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased.”

John was sent with the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. No temple sacrifice was required, simply repentance. Again, a blow to the Temple system.

The religious leaders didn’t like John, but the people did, and the leaders feared the people turning against them.

MARK 11:31-33 They discussed it among themselves: “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ ³² But if we say, ‘Of human origin’”—they were afraid of the crowd, because everyone thought that John was truly a prophet. ³³ So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.”

As one former pastor said, “*Give us some men who know!*”

There are many things we don’t know; but there are certain things which we must stand on unapologetically!

They don’t know what comes from God or what comes from man, and they don’t know because they refuse to believe the answer before them. They chose *ignorance* over *repentance*

And Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

Fear of the crowds seems to be a repeated motivating factor with them

We need to know who God is and what God has said, and should fear Him more than people

In the workplace, parenting, ministry, life

Unfortunate chapter break

MARK 12:1 He began to speak to them in parables:

PARABLE- from two Greek words meaning ‘to place’ and ‘beside’

The point is to place two things next to each other, one familiar, the other a mystery.

The mystery is revealed by contrasting and comparing it to what’s familiar

“An earthly story with heavenly meaning”

“A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug out a pit for a winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenant farmers and went away.

This would’ve been a familiar picture for these hearers (Isaiah 5)

The owner of the vineyard is God, the vineyard is the people of Israel

MARK 12:2-5 At harvest time he sent a servant to the farmers to collect some of the fruit of the vineyard from them. ³ But they took him, beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴ Again he sent another servant to them, and they hit him on the head and treated him shamefully. ⁵ Then he sent another, and they killed that one. He also sent many others; some they beat, and others they killed.

In Isaiah 5 the issue was the quality of the fruit, in Mark, it’s the tenants and their posture towards the owner

The servants= God’s prophets and messengers, even up to John who was beheaded

The tenants= them!

Jeremiah 7:25-26 Since the day your ancestors came out of the land of Egypt until today, I have sent all my servants the prophets to you time and time again. ²⁶ However, my people wouldn’t listen to me or pay attention but became obstinate; they did more evil than their ancestors.

2 Chronicles 36:15-16 But the LORD, the God of their ancestors sent word against them by the hand of his messengers, sending them time and time again, for he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. ¹⁶But they kept ridiculing God's messengers, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets, until the LORD's wrath was so stirred up against his people that there was no remedy.

MARK 12:6-8 He still had one to send, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'⁷ But those tenant farmers said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'⁸ So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

The beloved son= Jesus

This takes place on Tuesday. By Friday Jesus will be killed.

David Garland, *"Did these tenants really believe that by killing the son they could become owners of the vineyard? Apparently so. Do humans think that by erasing God from their lives they can take control of their earthly and eternal destinies. Apparently so."*

We are only servants and stewards of our time and life, yet many live as if they will not have to give an account for what's not theirs.

We should learn from these stubborn leaders and heed the warning

MARK 12:9 What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill the farmers and give the vineyard to others.

The parable was already been shocking to all who heard it that day, but this part would've been the cherry on top

Peter writing to the church made up of many nationalities, scattered abroad, uses language to describe them that was previously only used to describe national Israelites

1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

MARK 12:10-11 Haven't you read this Scripture: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. ¹¹This came about from the Lord and is wonderful in our eyes?"

Jesus quotes to them Psalm 118

The same Psalm the crowd shouted a few days earlier as Jesus entered Jerusalem (Hosanna- save us)

It's a Psalm all about how God would give them triumph and free them... but they still think it's from Rome

The image of a cornerstone (the load bearing part of the structure) implies a new temple

1 Peter 2:4-5 As you come to him, a living stone—rejected by people but chosen and honored by God—⁵you yourselves, as living stones, a spiritual house, are being built to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

They have rejected the one who holds up the whole structure God is building, in so doing, they've rejected God

MARK 12:12 They were looking for a way to arrest him but feared the crowd because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. So they left him and went away.

This is one of those tragic moments in scripture- "so they left him and went away"

Takeaways:

1. God is mercifully *patient* to us

The vineyard owner sent His servants over and over, against our natural logic, why? He is long-suffering

Dane Ortlund- "Unlike us, who are often emotional dams ready to break, God can put up with a lot. This is why the Old Testament speaks of God being "provoked to anger" by his people dozens of times...But not once are we told that God is "provoked to love" or "provoked to mercy." His anger requires provocation; his mercy is pent up, ready to gush forth. We tend to think: divine anger is pent up, spring-loaded; divine mercy is slow to build. It's just the opposite. Divine mercy is ready to burst forth at the slightest prick."

Why would God suffer long with you and me? That we might enjoy the blessings of repentance!

Romans 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of his kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.

2. God is gracefully *personal* with us

The vineyard owner sent his beloved son (grk word= unique/only)

When we were at our lowest point, hopeless and helpless, God did not discard us, He sent heaven's treasure, Jesus the beloved Son, that we might become children of God- He is no stranger

1 John 3:1 See what great love the Father has given us that we should be called God's children...

3. God is *sacrificially* loving towards us

The owner has no one greater to send than his son...but would he send him after how poorly they treated his servants??? Yes. He does.

The son in the parable Jesus told is representative of Himself- He knows His fate, yet He keeps on for love's sake

Romans 5:8 But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

When we are tempted to contemplate on all that we have given up to follow Jesus, perhaps we should contemplate on all He gave to make a path for our sinful feet

4. The door of forgiveness swung open wide, but not forever; God's *judgment* is certain and final

The tenants thought the owner of the vineyard was weak or incapable, until his wrath was unleashed

Hebrews 10:31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Everyone WILL know God personally. Some will see Him and find relief, others regret

5. If you reject *Jesus*, you reject any hope heaven has to offer

After the vineyard owner's son, there was no one else to send to plead with the tenants.

Hebrews 10:26-29 For if we deliberately go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire about to consume the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who disregarded the law of Moses died without mercy, based on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much worse punishment do you think one will deserve who has trampled on the Son of God, who has regarded as profane the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

Spurgeon, "Remember, once more, that if you do not hear the well-beloved Son of God, you have refused your last hope. He is God's ultimatum. Nothing remains when Christ is refused. No one else can be sent. Heaven, itself, contains no further messenger. If Christ is rejected, hope is rejected!"

To reject Jesus is the most tragic of rebellions

6. The authority of Jesus should be gladly embraced

We have erroneously concluded that the Lord burdens and restricts us and our lives are lacking
It's the same thought Adam & Eve had in the garden; the first temptation-
that God's authority should be bucked off if we are to truly enjoy life

Psalm 19:7-11 The instruction of the Lord is perfect, renewing one's life;
the testimony of the Lord is trustworthy, making the inexperienced wise.

⁸ The precepts of the Lord are right, making the heart glad;
the command of the Lord is radiant, making the eyes light up.

⁹ The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever;
the ordinances of the Lord are reliable and altogether righteous.

¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold— than an abundance of pure gold;
and sweeter than honey dripping from a honeycomb.

¹¹ In addition, your servant is warned by them, and in keeping them there is an abundant reward.

How do we recognize Jesus' authority, how are we led by it?

- The **conscience**- a gift from God; ex: smoke detector
Disclaimer- your conscience is not God's voice necessarily (*Space for Grace sermon)
- The **church**- (the church= gathered believers under the preaching and care of faithful, qualified pastors) a community of encouragement & correction founded on God's Word
It is those "Christians" who avoid the church who also seem to avoid God's authority in other areas
- The **Scriptures**- God's authoritative, inerrant, sufficient revelation
One pastor said it is a dangerous thing to have faith without scripture.
If you claim to have faith, but don't read your Bible, how do you know what you have faith in?
it's not in the God of scripture but the God of imagination

CALL UP WORSHIP TEAM

The religious leaders walked away that day, they shut the door of grace behind them.

Don't make the same mistake-

submit to the authority of Jesus and you will find that His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Prayer-

What blind spots may be in my walk with Jesus?

BULLPEN-

* <https://thewaymanteca.church/sermons/space-for-grace/>

12:1-9 what does the parable reveal? (Keep in mind this is in a sense an answer to their question of authority)

- Divine grace of long-suffering patience (2-5)
- Divine personal appeal
 - Everything hinges on how they receive the son
- Divine sacrifice as the cost of outreach
- Stubborn and foolish rejection of the son
 - The point of the parable is not that the father was naïve, but the intense wickedness of the tenant farmers
- Divine judgment
 - They have miscalculated their plan, they mistook patience for weakness, but the owner is more powerful than they realize and he will no longer relent
- Divine mercy
 - The owner gives the vineyard to others