

Refuge City Church — August 9, 2020
“The Gospel of Mark” (Mark 12:13-27)

Introduction

- **LAST WEEK:** Jesus told the ‘Parable of the Tenants’ or ‘Evil Vinedressers’
 - Israel and it’s leaders rejected all of God’s messengers and prophets; mocking, beating, and killing them.
 - They even rejected the ‘Property Owners’ beloved son and killed him as well.
 - The Pharisees perceived Jesus had spoken about them, and now continue to conspire against Him by trying to entrap Him with **3 Questions.**

Scripture Reading (Mark 12:13-27)

13 And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk.

14 And they came and said to him, “Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone’s opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?” **15** But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, “Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.”

16 And they brought one. And he said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” They said to him, “Caesar’s.” **17** Jesus said to them, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they marveled at him.

Verse 13

13 And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk.

- Again, political opponents, united in the common purpose to entrap Jesus.
 - **REMINDER:** Herodians were Jews who supported Roman occupation and rule.
 - According to **Luke 20:20**, “So they watched him and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere, that they might catch him in something he said, so as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor.”

Verses 14-17

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- In matters of religion, faith, and scripture, there was no debate as to the wisdom of Jesus. So the Pharisees try to use politics to turn public opinion away from Him.
 - Faith and Politics... let’s give this a try...

- So they come at Jesus with flattering words to butter him up. Maybe provide undue influence to get Him to trip on His words.
 - **Proverbs 29:5**, “A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.”
- Political entrapment would allow for the Roman government to get involved.
- **QUESTION 1 of 3**
 - Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should Jews pay taxes to Rome or not?
 - What is this tax?
 - Poll tax = yearly tax paid to the Roman government for its occupation; a tax for allegiance and recognizing the authority of Rome.
 - If Jesus says ‘Yes’ = He supports Rome and loses His following by the Jewish people.
 - If Jesus says ‘No’ = He incites rebellion/opposition to Rome.
 - Jesus’ Reply
 - In short: pay your taxes. **[a response regarding authority, rather than taxes]**
 - Jesus had just answered the Pharisees regarding His spiritual authority. Now He address political authority.
 - **Romans 13:1, 5-7**, “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.” ... “Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.”
 - **1 Peter 2:17**, “Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.”
 - Our ‘dual citizenship’ as Christians obligates us to show higher honor and tribute to the one who we belong, and who placed those in authority over us.
 - **Vs. 17**: “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”
 - What belongs to God?? All of us!
 - **Genesis 2:7**, “then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.”
 - **Ecclesiastes 12:7**, “and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”
 - **Ephesians 1:13**, “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,” **[sealed = guardianship and protection]**

- **2 Corinthians 1:21-22**, “And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee **[down payment]**.”
- “Christianity does not advocate disloyalty to the State. Duty to God does not eliminate duty to government. Nevertheless duty to government does not eliminate one’s higher duty to God either.” (Thomas Constable)
 - **Acts 5:29**, “We must obey God rather than men.”

Verse 18-23

18 And Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection. And they asked him a question, saying, **19** “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. **20** There were seven brothers; the first took a wife, and when he died left no offspring. **21** And the second took her, and died, leaving no offspring. And the third likewise. **22** And the seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman also died. **23** In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as wife.”

- QUESTION 2 of 3

- So the Sadducees approach Jesus to ask a question regarding ‘resurrection from the dead’.
 - They don’t believe in resurrection, as they claimed it can not be found in the scriptures.
 - **Acts 23:8**, “For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.”
- Using the Mosaic law and marriage, they ask who the wife will belong to in the resurrection as she was married 7 times.
 - Because they don’t believe in the resurrection, they construct an afterlife narrative that concludes the eternal must be like the present.

Verses 24-27

24 Jesus said to them, “Is this not the reason you are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God? **25** For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. **26** And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?’ **27** He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong.”

- Jesus very clearly uses what they rely on to disprove their question and whole belief system.
 - Referring to Moses, Jesus points them to the ‘burning bush’ conversation God had with Moses **[Exodus 3:6]**
 - **“I Am...”** He is the God of the living, and at the time God spoke these words to Moses, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had long been dead.

- **Isaiah 26:19**, “Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead.”
- **Daniel 12:2**, “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”
- **Psalms 16:9-11**, “Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

Conclusion

- **I Corinthians 15:50-57**, “I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - When we enter eternity, we enter in to a new life altogether.
 - “Like angels” = eternal and not given in marriage. Marriage is an earthly institution.
 - Jesus stated we will be “like him”. We are made in the image of God, not angels.
 - **John 17:20-21**, “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”
 - **Hebrews 1:3-4**, “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.”
- The Power of God
 - **QUOTE:** “Had the crucifixion of Jesus ended his disciples’ experiences of Him, it is hard to see how the Christian Church could have come into existence. That Church was founded on faith in the Messiahship of Jesus. A crucified Messiah was no Messiah at all. He was one rejected by Judaism and accursed by God. It was

the Resurrection of Jesus...which proclaimed Him to be the Son of God with power. (H.D.A. Major)

- **Romans 1:4**, “and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,”
- If Jesus was not raised from the dead by the power of the living God, our faith, the Church, the whole of Christianity over the past 2,000+ years is useless.
- However, what a tremendous testimony to the power and living testimony of God in us!
- **1 Corinthians 15:13-17**, “But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.”