



“Religious but Rejecting Jesus”

November 16, 2025

Mark 11:27 - 12:12

Introduction:

Where does true, lasting authority come from?

Challenging Jesus' Authority (Mark 11:27-33):

And they came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him, and they said to him, “By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?” Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man? Answer me.” And they discussed it with one another, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ But shall we say, ‘From man?’—they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet. So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And Jesus said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

- Jesus has just turned the tables in the temple, and now returns to the temple the following day.
- Jesus' question exposes the Pharisees as being more concerned about holding onto their authority, power and influence rather than genuine protecting and leading the people.

Jesus Responds (Mark 12:1-2):

“And he began to speak to them in parables. “A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a pit for the winepress and built a tower, and leased it to tenants and went into another country.”

- This parable mirrors the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7.
- Who is the man? What does the vineyard represent? Who are the tenants?
- What is the primary difference in this parable as compared to Isaiah 5:1-5?



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What More Could Have Been Done? (Mark 12:2-9):

When the season came, he sent a servant to the tenants to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Again he sent to them another servant, and they struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and him they killed. And so with many others: some they beat, and some they killed. He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' And they took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.

- Who do the servants that the owner sent represent? What about the son?
- What can we see and savor about God's (the owner) character? Does this change or challenge your view of God?
- Read again Isaiah 5:4. How does it help you answer the above question?

The Rejected but Exalted Cornerstone (Mark 12:10-12):

Have you not read this Scripture: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" And they were seeking to arrest him but feared the people, for they perceived that he had told the parable against them. So they left him and went away.

- What is *marvelous* about what God has done?
- Despite the reality that they perceived (correctly) that this parable was spoken against them they continued in the hardheartedness.

The Parable of the Tenants:

This parable gives us a picture of **God's love as patient, and not easily relenting. Meditate on the pursuing love of God.** (See 2 Peter 3:8-10)

Yet, we also see a demand for fruitfulness! Specifically, in this parable we see a responsibility of the leaders to cultivate fruit in the people. (John 15:8)

Jesus is rejected by men but exalted by God. Jesus is rejected and turned over to be crucified yet forgives those who have betrayed him. (Philippians 2:5-11)

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