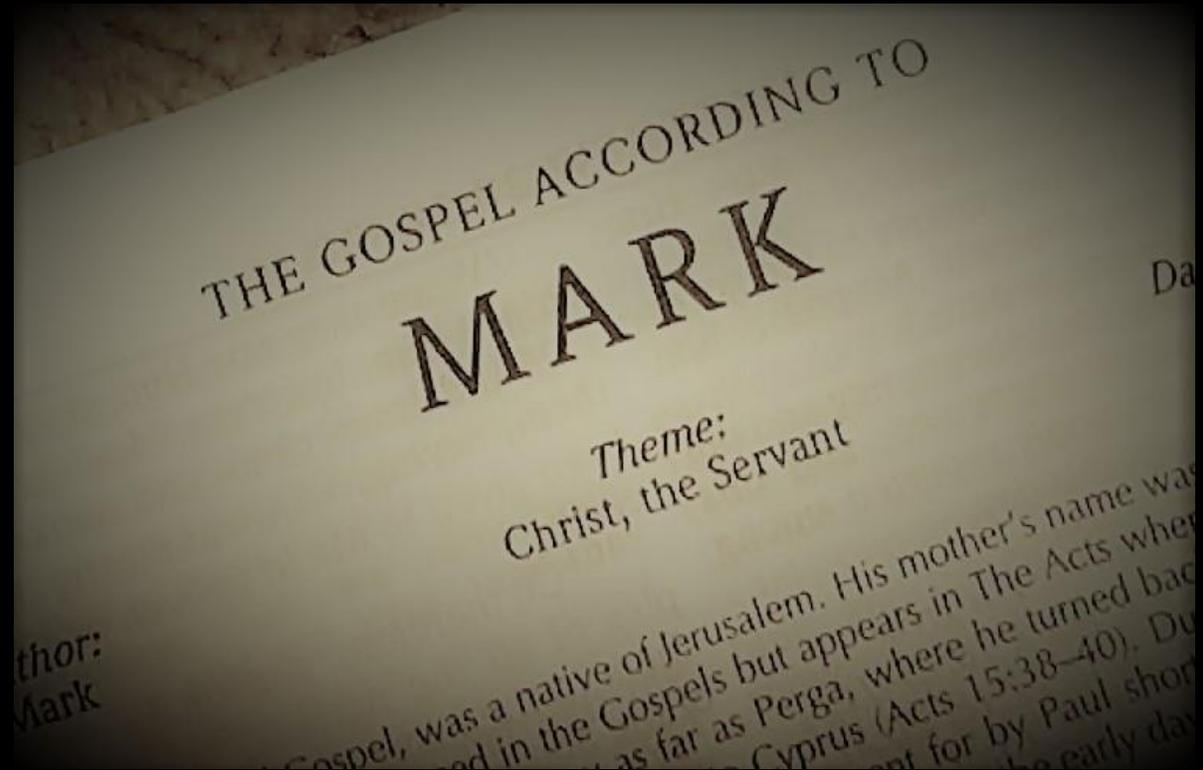


# Verse by Verse

## Mark 12



# Mark 12 Introduction

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- Jesus is in Jerusalem.
- It is the final week running up to his crucifixion.
- Christ will indirectly admit his divine identity, though the leaders will not accept it.
- He will criticize spiritual showiness while encouraging us to practice complete love and commitment to God.

# Mark 12 Key Verses

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- **Mark 11:28-31** (ESV)

<sup>28</sup> ... “Which commandment is the most important of all?” <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ <sup>31</sup> The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

# Mark 12 Outline

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1. The Parable of the Tenants 12:1-12
2. Paying Taxes to Caesar 12:13-17
3. The Resurrection 12:18-27
4. The Great Commandment 12:28-34
5. Whose Son Is the Christ? 12:35-37
6. Spiritual VIPs 12:38-40
7. The Widow's Little Coins 12:41-44

# 1. The Parable of the Tenants 12:1-12

- Before we read this parable, let's read the words to another poetic story out of **Isaiah 5:1-7**.

# 1. The Parable of the Tenants 12:1-12

- Now back to the **Gospel of Mark**.
- As in **Isaiah**, the vineyard represents the **nation of Israel**.

# 1. The Parable of the Tenants 12:1-12

- The **owner** of the vineyard is **God**.
- The **tenants** in this case are the spiritual leaders of the nation of Israel at this time.
- The **servants** God sends are the prophets who were so often treated poorly and abused by the nation's leaders.
- (Think John the Baptist for a recent example.)
- Finally, the **son** is **Jesus**. Read again **12:6-9**.

# 1. The Parable of the Tenants 12:1-12

- 12:10-11 Jesus quotes to them **Psalm 118:22-23**, a psalm that was recognized for messianic implications
- It is the same psalm that the people quoted when they were shouting “**Hosanna!**” at Jesus a few days before.
- Jesus is explaining how he is sent by God to them and yet they are rejecting him just as they rejected God’s prophets.

## 2. Paying Taxes to Caesar 12:13-17

## 2. Paying Taxes to Caesar 12:13-17

- The **Pharisees** hated the Romans and most people sided with them – not enjoying taxes from this foreign power.
- The **Herodians** supported the Herod family, who in turn were supported by Rome.
- **12:13** **to trap him** The word used here is the same one used for “*to catch or take by hunting or fishing.*” <sup>1</sup>

## 2. Paying Taxes to Caesar 12:13-17

- 12:14 They start by giving Jesus a bunch of compliments.
- To “Pay” taxes = the word is simply “pay” or “give.”
- Jesus makes an interesting change.
- 12:17 Render = “give back” meaning the money sort of belongs to Caesar anyway.
- It is only right to give Caesar what is his.

## 2. Paying Taxes to Caesar 12:13-17

- 12:17 God deserves far more than Caesar does anyway, so let's not forget him.
- For example, when he created the first humans, it says,
- Genesis 1:27 (ESV)

So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

## 2. Paying Taxes to Caesar 12:13-17

- God's image reminds us that we ultimately belong to God.
- Think further of what Paul says in **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**,  
<sup>19</sup> Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, <sup>20</sup> for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.
- This is an even bigger obligation than paying taxes to Caesar, or Uncle Sam.

### 3. The Resurrection 12:18-27

### 3. The Resurrection 12:18-27

- This is the only place **Mark** mentions the **Sadducees**.
- But there was a lot of overlap between the Sadducees, the Herodians, and the high priests.
- **Luke 23:8** gives us a little explanation for this story.

For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.

### 3. The Resurrection 12:18-27

- The practice of a brother marrying a deceased brother's wife is described in **Deuteronomy 25:5-10**.
- This is known as *levirate marriage*. The word *levir* means “brother-in-law” in Latin.
- A Wikipedia article documents the practice today among the **Kirghiz, the Kurds** and in **a number of African countries**.
- (But you have to check the footnotes to get the details.) <sup>2</sup>

### 3. The Resurrection 12:18-27

- It shows up after **Deuteronomy** in the Bible too, for example, in the story of **Ruth and Boaz**.
- The nearly destitute widow Ruth gets to propose to wealthy Boaz who is a near relative of her late husband.

### 3. The Resurrection 12:18-27

- Back to the **Sadducees**. They are trying to discredit Jesus by showing that the resurrection is absurd.
- Jesus really blasts these guys.
- **12:24** They may be spiritual big shots, but it turns out they don't know their Bibles.
- That is a bad thing for leaders of God's people.

### 3. The Resurrection 12:18-27

- Then there is this whole verse, Mark 12:25 (ESV)

For when they rise from the dead – So there will be a resurrection you stupid Sadducees.

They neither marry nor are given in marriage – So your whole question is kind of dumb.

But are like angels in heaven – And I know you don't believe in angels, but that's another place where you are just wrong!

## 3. The Resurrection 12:18-27

- Lessons for us are:

1. Jesus would really like for us to know our Bibles well.
2. There will be a resurrection of the dead.
3. Don't confuse this. When we are resurrected, *we are not going to become angels*.
4. *We will be like angels* in that there will be no need or even possibility to reproduce.
5. So the Mormon idea of some people spiritually reproducing in an exalted afterlife is unscriptural as well.

## 4. The Great Commandment 12:28-34

## 4. The Great Commandment 12:28-34

- This question is not really a trap or a challenge.
- It seems more like an honest question from a sincere seeker.
- Christ's answer is obviously very important.
- He gives us some of the most basic, fundamental things we need to keep in mind regarding our faith.
- We have also discussed this a couple of times within the last year, so we won't spend additional time on it today.

## 4. The Great Commandment 12:28-34

- You can go online and see, for example, this,
- <https://davidkosobucki.com/2018/11/25/a-shared-standard-the-law-of-love-leviticus-19-deuteronomy-64-9/>
- And this,
- <https://davidkosobucki.com/2019/07/14/matthew-22-verse-by-verse/>

## 5. Whose Son Is the Christ? 12:35-37

## 5. Whose Son Is the Christ? 12:35-37

- Now Jesus takes a turn asking the question.
- From time to time people called Jesus the “Son of David,” which no doubt these leaders didn’t appreciate.
- Examples are the Syrophoenician or Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:22) and blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:48).

## 5. Whose Son Is the Christ? 12:35-37

- When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, **Mark 11:9-10** records the people crying out,

<sup>9</sup> And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! <sup>10</sup> Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!”

## 5. Whose Son Is the Christ? 12:35-37

- Jesus takes them to **Psalm 110** – the most quoted part of the Old Testament in the New.
- They knew this psalm was messianic.
- Jesus points out that their understanding of the Messiah as Son of David, while accurate, was still not enough.

## 5. Whose Son Is the Christ? 12:35-37

- They would have been happy with a human king to restore Israel's greatness.
- They failed to see the divine component and the need for a Savior to die for their sins.
- Jesus fulfilled Scriptural requirements they did not foresee – and will someday fulfill all the rest.

## 5. Whose Son Is the Christ? 12:35-37

- 12:37 And the great throng heard him gladly.
- You get the impression that, just maybe, the regular folks enjoyed seeing Jesus put the big shots in their place.
- The next section probably explains why.

## 6. Spiritual VIPs 12:38-40

## 6. Spiritual VIPs 12:38-40

- Jesus isn't looking to make any friends among the spiritual big shots in Jerusalem.
- He sees them as way too showy, pretentious, self-absorbed and worse yet, they steal from widows!
- These scribes are the essence of religious hypocrisy.

## 6. Spiritual VIPs 12:38-40

- 12:40 They will receive greater condemnation.
- If there really is a hottest place in hell, it is reserved for people like these, the spiritual VIPs.
- Now, speaking of widows.

## 7. The Widow's Little Coins 12:41-44

## 7. The Widow's Little Coins    12:41-44

- The “two small copper coins” are two *leptas*.
- Each of them was worth  $1/128$  of a denarius, a normal day's wage for a common worker.
- Two of them add up to  $1/64$  of a daily salary.
- Let's say you work an 8-hour day – though in that setting they usually worked longer – 10 or 12 hours was normal.
- This is how much you would make in  $7 \frac{1}{2}$  minutes.

## 7. The Widow's Little Coins 12:41-44

- So it's not a "a penny" as in the ESV, but it isn't very much.
- And it was certainly far less than these rich people were giving at the time.
- The point is God doesn't look only at how much we give, but at how much we hold back.

## 7. The Widow's Little Coins 12:41-44

- Mark 12:44 (ESV)

For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.

That is sacrificial giving.

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# Mark 12    Key Points

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- Jesus puts himself forward (indirectly) as being the Christ.
- He points out that we need to pay taxes, but that we owe God more than we owe Caesar.
- Jesus emphasizes total commitment to God, love for him and love for others.
- He hates spiritual showiness, the self-important scribes who saw themselves as spiritual VIPs.
- He commends the widow's sacrificial giving.

# Mark 12    A Prayer

# Mark 12    A Prayer

- Heavenly Father,
- We learn from Jesus in this chapter that our lives need to be totally committed to you. Help us to love you with all of our heart, all of our soul, all of our mind and all of our strength.
- Help us to love our neighbor as ourselves – to put the needs of others, even our enemies, on the same level as our own.
- Help us to be good citizens, faithful taxpayers, loyal participants in the life of our earthly community.

# Mark 12    A Prayer

- But help us also to remember that we owe you so much more – that in fact we personally belong to you.
- Help us never to desire a reputation for being more godly or more spiritual than we really are.
- Jesus was an example of humility and we will do well if we continuously follow him in that – knowing that he is truly God and the author of our salvation.
- In Christ's name we pray,
- Amen.

# Mark 12    References

1. See <https://greeklexicon.org/lexicon/strongs/64/>
2. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levirate\\_marriage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levirate_marriage)