



The Insanity of Killing God

Community Study Guide: **Mark 12:1-17** –Week of March 24th, 2024

1. Suicidal Enmity Toward the Father

Jesus had recently entered into the city of Jerusalem with great attention, glory, and honor. This was in stark contrast to His more incognito public presence that marked most of His ministry. This increase in public attention brought the gaze and enmity of religious leaders to Jesus more than ever. After rebutting the teachers of the law and their opposition to His authority, Jesus then tells them a parable about a man who owned a vineyard and the tenants he rented it to. In this story, the owner departs and entrusts the care of the land to his tenants. The tenants are to use what the owner had built and provided to produce fruit; fruit that belonged to the owner. However, when the harvest season came, the tenants made it clear their enmity toward the owner. They denied his claim to the fruit and refused to offer up that which was rightfully due. The analogy shows how the teachers of the law (and ourselves) show our hatred for the Father. We are given a life that we do not own, that we did not create, and yet we claim it for ourselves. We deny what rightfully belongs to the Father, and this outcome left unchanged, will end in our death.

2. Suicidal Enmity Toward the Messengers

In the parable, we see that the owner over and over again entreats with the tenants. He attempts to resolve the enmity. However, the tenants who do not want the owner, do not want his messengers. Therefore, they beat and killed those who were sent to help them reconcile with the owner. These messengers reflect the prophets that God had sent to His people over and over again. For us, the lesson is this: We should be quick to heed the call for repentance given to us from the Word of God. We should not consider ourselves superior to those who came before, but should recognize that we too are in need of correction.

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

The natural state of man is open rebellion against the ultimate authority, God. We attempt to claim that which we have no right to, ourselves. We are to repent of this notion, and humbly accept the authority of God over our lives.

Heart

Our desires often drive our decision making. We are prone to wandering from what is good and true, perverting reality to match what we want. We must have humble hearts, ready and desiring to be corrected in righteousness. Enmity toward God and His word must be far from us.

Hands

Ask the Lord to reveal grievous ways within you. Ask the Lord to show you what is good and true through His Word. Listen to the rebuke from God's Word given to you by others. Seek to be humble before God, knowing He is the Lord.

When the Lord rebukes us, we should humbly repent.

3. Suicidal Enmity Toward the Son

In the greatest investment toward resolving the ongoing issue, the owner finally sends his son. The hope is that these rebellious tenants, who have not responded rightly to the other servants, would respect the authority of a son. Even with this last attempt, the tenants remain hardened. They see the son not as one whom they should give respect and honor to, but as an opportunity to steal even more from the owner. Instead of pursuing the reasonable course of making peace with the owner through the son, they chose the worse option. They decided to act in a way that was suicidal. They act in a fashion that removes any further option for the owner, other than to kill the tenants and replace them.

We are fortunate, because even though the Son of God was slain, His death paid the debts that we owed. We, like the tenants, are worthy of death for our sins. However, God has sent His Son to be a propitiation for us. Now is the day of salvation, for those who would repent of their sins, and put faith in Jesus. The day is coming in which the window for salvation will come to a close. On that day, the King will establish Himself, and all will give Him the respect due to His authority.

Read Mark 12:1-17

1. In the parable, there are many different characters. Who does each represent? Who is the owner, the tenants, the messenger, and the son?
2. As Christians, how do we see ourselves in this parable? In what ways have we played the part of the tenants?
3. In the parable, the owner shows significant patience with the tenants. Do you normally think of God as patient? How does that understanding change your view of God? How has He demonstrated patience in your life?
4. The parable shows us God is generous, patient, just, and gracious. Where do we see each of these qualities displayed in the text? (Verse 1, 2-6, 7-9, 10)
5. How does this parable ultimately answer the question posed in Mark 11:28?
6. **Read 13-17.** In this passage, the Pharisees once more try to trap Jesus. What were the cultural norms and issues that made this line of questioning controversial? What was the trap they hoped to lay for Jesus?
7. What did Jesus mean by His response to the question? What can we learn/how does His response inform us about how we respond to cultural issues and authority in our own life?
8. What are the similarities between Jesus's response to the Pharisees, and the parable He just told?
9. In what areas do we keep from God what is God's? How has the Lord changed and humbled your heart over these different areas of rebellion?