

Study Guide

Small Group Questions *February 29 & March 1, 2020*

Mark 12 shows several controversies between Jesus and the religious leaders of his day. They try repeatedly to trip him up, but every time they are the ones who look foolish. Jesus shows himself to be the Good Shepherd of Israel, while exposing them as frauds and charlatans.

1. Has anyone in the group ever gotten into a theological argument with someone in spiritual authority? How did it come about? How did you respond? What came of it?

2. *Read verses 1-12.* The religious leaders perceived that Jesus told this parable about them (verse 12). How so? What does this tell us about God? About false teachers?

3. *Read verses 13-17.* What are the Pharisees trying to do here? How does Jesus avoid the trap? What does this teach us about Christians and civil government?

4. *Read verses 18-27.* In our culture, some find it offensive to be told “You are wrong.” Yet Jesus has no problem with it (verses 24 and 27). What is the proper role of rebuke? How can it be abused?

Study Guide, continued

5. *Read verses 35-37?* What is the role of Scripture in theological debate? Why?

6. *Read verses 38-40.* This is only a fraction of what Jesus said on this occasion (compare Matthew 23). It appears to have been the last public teaching of Jesus. What is the significance of the Lord using it to warn people about false religious leaders?

7. *Read verses 41-44.* What does this passage teach us about giving? Why does Mark include this story here?

In the prayer and accountability time, ask if anyone has suffered spiritual abuse. Let them share the story briefly, then pray for their healing.