



This guide is an invitation to follow Jesus with greater purpose and hope. It will help you to explore the scriptures and challenge you to live out your faith. Each week we'd love for you to think about how you relate: **Up** (with God), **In** (with church) and **Out** (with neighbors).

Weekly Questions:

- How is God getting my attention? For help, think about these areas:
- How are you living up with God?
- How are you living in community with other followers of Jesus?
- How are you living out on mission with your neighbors?
- What are you going to do about it?

Mark: Act III

Read Mark 12

- Jesus implies that the religious leaders are like a fig tree "corrupt from the roots up" because they have rejected the prophets and will reject him, the Son. The parable also serves as a warning that those who reject God's messengers and Son will be killed, and the "vineyard" (the kingdom) will be given to others. Who is Jesus implying are the tenants in this story? Why does this make the religious leaders so upset?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the kind of king that the elders, teachers, and religious leaders reject as the cornerstone of God's activity in the world and establishing of the kingdom of God? In what ways are you tempted to reject Jesus' leadership in favor of security through someone or something else? What are the things or people you are tempted to trust more than Jesus?
- Since money bears Caesar's image, it belongs to Caesar. If money bears Caesar's image, who or what bears God's image? What does it mean for you to give to God what is God's today? Who is Jesus asking you to see as God's, and honor as made in God's image, that you are tempted to cast off?
- In Mark 12:28-34 the teacher of the law said that to love God with your whole being and to love your neighbor as yourself are the most important commandments. The teacher then says that these two commandments are more important than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices. Do your actions, resources, and priorities reflect that loving God and loving people is more important than religious traditions, status, or security? What practical steps can you take this week to prioritize love for God and neighbor over your personal preferences or traditions?
- Considering Mark 12:38-44, what does it look like for you to seek to serve people rather than looking for ways to get the best for yourself? Will you look for the last seat instead of the seat of power this week?