

## RTS Women's Study: The Gospel of Mark

### #27: Mark 12:35-44: God's Glory vs. Our Glory

Intro: The Great DeChurching

#### I. Jesus: He is Worthy of Glory (v.35-37)

##### A. The Scribes misunderstood the OT Predictions about the Messiah

- The scribes taught that the "Christ is the son of David" (v.35)
- They were partly right: the messiah would descend from David. But they were partly wrong: they believed the messiah would be *only* human, just an ordinary man.

##### B. Jesus Corrects the Misunderstanding of His Own Identity

- Jesus cites Psalm 110:1 which is about the coming Messiah.
- But David refers to the coming Messiah as "Lord," implying he can't merely be David's son, but must be *greater* than David.
- In other words, Jesus is making the point that a right understanding of the messiah is that he is *both* Son of David and Son of God.

##### C. Key Take Aways

- Jesus thinks the OT is inspired: "David in the Holy Spirit declared..." (v.36)
- Jesus thinks the OT is about him
- Jesus thinks getting his identity correct really matters!

**\*\*Application:** The scribes' understanding of the messiah aimed too low. He would not be merely the ruler of Israel (son of David), he would be the ruler of the world (Son of God). Jesus is worthy of all glory!

#### II. Pharisees: Seeking Glory for Themselves (v.38-40)

##### A. The Hypocrisy of the Pharisees

- The Pharisees enjoyed the glory that came with religious power
  - Long robes were worn by the Pharisees as signs of their office
  - Greeting in the marketplace—everyone wanted to talk to them!
  - Sat in places of honor and respect
- The Pharisees abused their religious power
  - "devour widows' houses" refers to taking advantage of the vulnerable position of widows by stealing their money or cheating them.
  - Prayers were extra long out of "pretense". They were about putting on a show to make themselves look good.

- B. Abuse of Religious Leadership is one of the most serious sins
- Jesus declares they will receive the “greater condemnation”
  - “It is bad enough to be led away captive by open sin, and to serve divers lusts and pleasures. But it is even worse to pretend to have a religion, while in reality we serve the world.” –J.C. Ryle
  - \*\*Key question: Why is hypocritical sin worse than open sin?

\*\*Application: Beware of doing religious things for your own glory and benefit!

### III. Woman: Giving Up Her Glory for God (v.41-44)

#### A. Widow Woman Exhibits True Humility

- Notable that the widow woman is the key example
  - As both a woman, and a widow, she lacked all the prestige and power of the Pharisees. Yet she is the one God is pleased with!
  - Jesus just described the Pharisees as abusing widows in the earlier passage. How fitting that now this widow is the contrast to the Pharisees’ behavior.
- The woman shows that the value of our sacrifice is measured by what we have
  - Rich people were often praised for their big gifts, while a small gift like this would be overlooked.
  - But this woman really gave the “big” gift because it cost her so much.

#### B. Key Take Aways

- Giving money for the work of God is good and necessary
  - The “offering box” is necessary for the work of the Temple.
  - Jesus doesn’t condemn giving to such work. Tithing was part of the OT law.
- But God cares about the *heart* behind the giving
  - It’s not just math. God cares about your desires and motives.
  - God also values those who give sacrificially because it makes them the *opposite* of the Pharisees; it shows they are not in it for themselves.

\*\*Application: Your financial giving is a barometer of your heart. There are few things that expose who we really are like money.

### Discussion Groups

1. Jesus places a high value on the OT as both inspired and Christ-centered. Why do so many people struggle with the OT today? How does this passage help change the way you think about the OT?
2. Rather than focusing on hypocrisy in general, Jesus often focuses on the hypocrisy of religious leaders. Why do you think he does that? Why is that a bigger problem?
3. Why do you think money is such a clear revealer of our hearts? Talk honestly about whether you ever struggle with sacrificially giving your money toward God’s work in the world. What can be done to change that?