

Responding To Authority **Mark 12:1-12**

I. How would you respond if you found out that what you believed about a particular subject was wrong?

1. Your response would depend upon the source of the information and the importance of what was being discussed.
2. If what you believed had serious implications for your family and friends; or affected your life, you would respond differently than if it was a trivial matter.
3. The difference between your job and which pro football team is the best.

II. But, what if the discussion pertained to your religious beliefs and you found out that you were in error; how would you respond?

III. In this case, how you respond will also depend upon the seriousness of the error.

1. Baptism
2. Where Cain got his wife.

IV. In the end though how you respond to religious error is really determined by your view of the authority of Gods word.

V. The example we had last week of the Sanhedrist who challenged Jesus' authority clearly demonstrates this. The Sanhedrist did not believe in Jesus' authority and as we have seen throughout the Gospel of Mark, when confronted with error they did not responded in the same way as those who did believe in His authority.

VI. As Jesus continues His discussion with the Sanhedrist, He now shares with them a parable which explains why they respond the way they do when confronted with error. The problem is their attitude towards Gods authority; and in this parable Jesus also reveals the outcome of such an attitude.

VII. He concludes, **Those who reject the authority of God will be rejected by God.**

Trans: Lets consider this parable.

The Parable of the Wicked Vine-Growers

A. To begin, the word Parable literally means, "A throwing alongside." It's purpose was to provide a spiritual message based upon true to life events.

B. The parable of the Wicked Vine-Growers in **Mark 12:1-12**, can be divided into four parts and each part has it's own spiritual message.

C. What I am going to do is consider each part individually and show the spiritual application of each part as we go along. At the conclusion I will tie all these parts together.

1. Part One - **Mark 12:1**

A. The Parable begins with a man planting a vineyard.

B. In planting this vineyard, the owner makes sure it has everything needed to be productive for him.

1. He puts a wall around it
2. He provides a wine press and digs a vat under it
3. He built a tower

4. He supplies workers by renting it out.

C. In considering this part into the entire parable the spiritual application is clear.

1. The owner of the vineyard is God
2. The wall would be Gods law which protects those within the vineyard.
3. The tower is God's watchful eye over His vineyard.
4. The wine press and vat show the product of this vineyard.
5. The renters are the Jews. They were called to carry out the work of God.

2. Part Two - **Mark 12:2**

A. Having done all that was necessary to make sure his vineyard was productive the owner leaves, v.1

B. But there comes a time when he is ready to receive the harvest from his vineyard.

C. The owner sends one of his slaves to receive some of the produce.

D. Again we have a spiritual message

1. God does not plant a vineyard and provide all that is necessary for its success and not expect it to produce.
2. God also expects to receive some of the produce from the harvest.
3. In other words the hedge and protection should have produced lives that had been cleansed and made sweet like grapes through a press. The vats should now hold purified grape juice.

3. Part three - **Mark 12:3-8**

A. In the third part of the parable we find that what the owner expected to receive was not what he got.

B. What he found were renters who possessed a rebellious spirit as displayed in their actions.

C. The slaves he sent to receive the harvest were not received with gratitude Some were beaten and others killed.

D. Eventually he sends his son expecting them to accept him, but he too is killed. They believe by doing so they will take complete possession of the vineyard.

E. The spiritual message here is a key part to this entire parable.

1. God provides abundantly for His people.
 - a. They didn't have to plant the vineyard it was ready for them.
 - b. God only expected from His people what was his. He only came for part of the harvest.
 - c. He even sent his prophets (slaves) to his people to help them.
 - d. God is also patient with His people.

2. But we see that when a people rebel against God's authority their evil deeds will escalate.
 - a. They began by beating the first servant
 - b. The second servant they wounded his head
 - c. The third they killed

3. This rebellious spirit also leads to irrational reasoning
 - a. They suppose that by killing the son they will get to keep the vineyard.
 - b. Here Jesus is making reference to His impending death at the hands of these rebellious people because of what they were unwilling to give up.

4. Part 4 - **Mark 12:9-12**

A. The fourth and final part of this parable deals with the outcome of a rebellious spirit

B. Although the renters think they will get to keep the vineyard if they kill the owner's son, they are mistaken.

C. Jesus tells them the owner will come and destroy the vine-growers and give the vineyard to someone else.

D. He will do this because they have rejected his authority as the owner of the vineyard.

E. In this last part we discover the main spiritual point of this parable.

1. God will not allow rebellion against His authority to go unpunished.

2. **Those who reject the authority of God will be rejected by God.**

3. But God will still receive a harvest from His vineyard and so He gives it to someone else.

- a. This could have reference to the Gentiles

- b. But more likely it refers to all who will submit to God's authority,

Rom. 11: 11-18

Eph. 2:13-16

Illust: Isa. 5:1-7

Appl: So what is the application for us today? It's the same as it was when Jesus spoke this parable.

I began by asking what your response would be if you discovered that what you believed in regards to God's word was in error.

As we see from this parable those who do not respect the authority of God will disregard His word. They will act in irrational ways and eventually be rejected by God Himself.

We need to be the kind of people who understand that the church (vineyard) belongs to God and we must submit to His authority if we are to be pleasing to Him.