

COLLIDE: When Heaven Meets Earth

Beware of Greatness

Matt Vorhees

March 23, 2014

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INTRODUCTION

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SCRIPTURE

Mark 11:27-12:44

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Bottom Line:

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Application:

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Community Group Curriculum
For the week of March 23, 2014
“Rejection of the Kingdom”
Mark 11:27–12:44

BIG PICTURE

This week's study starts right after Jesus' triumphant entry and the cleansing of the temple. As Jesus was entering the temple, the religious leaders approached Him with some questions. The questions were designed to trap Him so that they could discredit Him. Instead of answering their questions, Jesus counters with questions of His own, and then proceeds to provide the answers using parables. Let's dig in!

LET'S DIG IN!

1. Read Mark 11:27-33

As the official guardians of the Law, the members of the Sanhedrin had the right and the responsibility to investigate anyone who claimed to be sent by God. But Jesus knew their hearts were not open to the truth so he countered with His own questions.

- a. When the religious leaders ask Jesus about His authority, He counters with His own questions. Why can't the chief priests answer Jesus' questions?

- b. Are there times when we shouldn't answer questions from others? Explain.

- c. If we take the New Testament seriously, it appears that those who follow Jesus, who are equipped with His Spirit, are themselves given authority, under His direction, to act in His name in the world. How can we do so today?

2. Read Mark 12:1-12

When Jesus spoke in parables He used images familiar to all, like vineyards. If an owner of a farm wanted to maintain ownership, he had to collect goods from the tenants. This would explain why the tenants did not want to pay with produce from the vineyard. The first three years a vineyard produced very little and then the fourth year the produce was to be given to the Lord, making the image even more graphic.

- a. What do the various elements of this parable signify – the tenants, the vineyard, the servants, the son of the vineyard owner, and the vineyard owner? How do Old Testament passages such as Isaiah 5:1-7 shed light on this parable? How does this parable develop what has already been happening in Mark 11:12-25?

3. Read Mark 12:13-17

Two groups of people that were enemies unite in an effort to trap Jesus. The Herodians supported Herod and the Romans who allowed them to rule. The Pharisees thought of them as evil men who had usurped the throne of David. Jesus recognized the trap and refused to engage in a discussion of politics and redirected the discussion.

- a. What question did the Herodians and Pharisees ask and how did Jesus respond? What were the Herodians and Pharisees trying to accomplish? How does Jesus avoid being trapped?

- b. If we can recognize a coin that belongs to Caesar by the fact that it bears his image, how can we recognize what belongs to God?

- c. What aspects of life today are people tempted to believe are separate from religious conviction or don't have much if anything to do with faith?

On Your Own – Examine on your own New Testament teachings concerning the State in Acts 5:39, Romans 13:1-7, 1 Timothy 2:1-4, and 1 Peter 2:13-17.

4. Read Mark 12:18-27

Next Jesus was challenged by the Sadducees. They only accepted the first five books of the Bible as the Law. They did not believe in the existence of the soul, life after death, resurrection, a final judgment, angels or demons. Jesus exposes their ignorance.

- a. According to Jesus (v. 24), the Sadducees did “not know” two things (Scriptures and the power of God). Explain how Jesus responded to each of these two points of ignorance.
- b. How do YOU experience the truth of the Scriptures and the power of God in your everyday life? Discuss!

5. Read Mark 12:28-34

A scribe was the next challenger. Scribes believed that Jesus had to obey 613 precepts (principles/rules) and they loved to discuss which of the commandments was the greatest. So he asked the Lord what He thought. And Jesus answers directly!

- a. Like the chief priests, elders, Pharisees and Sadducees, another teacher of the law comes to Jesus with a pointed question (v. 28). What evidence is there that he is not out to trap Jesus?
- b. Though Jesus is only asked for one commandment, in good rabbinic fashion He responds by adding a second to His reply (Leviticus 19:18). What relationship does this second commandment bear to the first?
- c. The teacher not only endorses Jesus' answer, he takes it a step further. What are some contemporary examples of burnt offerings and sacrifices? What do you think Jesus meant by the statement, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God?”

PRAYER PLEASE

- Pray for our upcoming Easter Service @ the Park. Pray for many to volunteer to serve with a glad heart. Pray for many to come who do not know Him as Lord and Savior and then hear the message of the Good News. Pray for many to accept Him as Lord and Savior and follow in baptism. Pray that He will be glorified!
- Ask God to show you one way to act in His name this week and to give you courage to do so. Ask God to show you ways to love Him “with all your heart, and will your soul, and with all your understanding, and with all your strength” and to “love your neighbor as yourself.”

FINAL THOUGHTS/REFLECTIONS

- Have you ever been guilty of focusing so much on theological debates that you miss out on the relationship we are to have with God or with other believers?
- What role do you think that pride played in the religious leaders who wanted to trap Jesus? How will what you learned impact your life as a believer?