

A NEW WAY OF LIFE

August 31, 2014

Mark 12

Jesus lived His life differently. Through His parables, teachings and actions He continuously invites us into His way of living life.

- Peter asks how many times do we forgive someone—7 times? Jesus shows them His way of living is to forgive someone in abundance—70 times 7.
- He didn't give in to the press of the crowd—pressure, performance, striving is their way of living; instead He did what He saw His Father doing.

He presents His way of living as a new normal, making it completely possible for each of us to live the same way.

- 2 Corinthians 5:17 – *“Now we look inside, and what we see is that anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone; a new life burgeons! Look at it!”* (MSG)
- *New* – never existed before; everything is new; a conversion of the *whole man as he is*—thoughts, habits, feelings, desires, into the image of Christ.
- *New life comes forth*—meaning what emerges is a change of our condition
- If we truly got this, we would be unstoppable!

John 10:10 – *“The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows).”* (AMP)

- Having life in abundance is not us living the way we want to live, but living the way He lives.

How do we do this?

Believing

Read vs. 35-37 - The religious leaders just tried to trick Jesus with questions.

Expectancy vs. Expectation Review

- The Israelites longed for the coming of the Messiah.
- The Israelites had an expectation of how the Messiah would come and what He would be like.
- He would be a great king like David and would reign on an earthly throne, overthrowing and killing their Roman oppressors.
- He would raise Israel back into prominence among the nations.

- The religious leaders knew the Messiah would be a descendant of David, but didn't understand that He would be God in the flesh—they believed only part of the truth and therefore weren't able to embrace Jesus and this new life.

The first step in living His way of life is believing He is who He says He is.

- Jesus goes right to the heart of their lack of belief in Him.
- It was impossible for the religious leaders to live His way of life because they didn't believe He was who He said He was—the Messiah.

The central issue of living Jesus' model of life is what we believe about Him.

- We must believe who He says He is through His Word and in the ways that He reveals Himself to us.
- “You don't believe I am who I say I am IN you and THROUGH you.”
- The Bible says He is our Father. If I don't believe in Him as my Father, I will never know how to be a son.
- If I don't believe that He is the sacrifice that took away the guilt and shame of my sin I won't be able to live free.
- We can't be led by our souls (how we feel), by our past experiences or through other's perspectives—we need to live according to what He says.
- Believing in Jesus' completed work on the cross opens the door to be saved.
- Believing Jesus was his Healer made it possible for a blind man to receive sight.
- Believing what God said was key for Mary to conceive the Savior into her womb.

What happens when we fully believe in Jesus?

- John 11:25 – He who believes in Jesus will live even if he dies.
- John 14:12 – He who believes in Jesus...will do greater works than He did.
- John 6:35 – He who believes in Jesus will never be thirsty.
- John 7:38 – He who believes in Jesus—rivers of living water will flow from them.
- 1 John 5:5) – Who is it that overcomes the world...the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Jesus' Life was Marked by Generosity

(Read vs. 38-40)

RELIGIOUS LEADERS were more concerned about what they would benefit from their role (prestige, respect, praise of man) than what they could do through it.

- They wore white robes representing religious purity.
- Robes were meant for religious duties but they wore them in public to draw attention.

JESUS lived serving people—healing, teaching, meeting practical needs (feeding multitudes), defending those who couldn't defend themselves (adulterous woman).

- He had baskets full of extra food because He was generous.
- He didn't **meet** their need—He **overwhelmed** their need.

- Jesus was not trying to impress the crowd, but to usher in a kingdom.
- His was a life of giving—giving away what the Father had given him.
- That’s what love does—it generously gives itself away.
- There is so much treasure in you and it was meant to be given away!

RELIGIOUS LEADERS were motivated by selfish gain.

JESUS was motivated by compassion—what He can give away of Himself.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS prayed lengthy prayers to make people think they were holy.

JESUS pulled away to a quiet place to give His heart to the Father He loved.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS announced their power and authority—using it to manipulate and oppress.

JESUS didn’t announce His power and authority, He demonstrated it—using it to set people free and meet their needs. He usually told them not to tell.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS devoured widows’ houses.

JESUS honored a widow’s generosity by making it a precedent for others to follow.

A WIDOW’S GENEROSITY

(Read vs. 41-44)

The **RICH PERSON**’s way of giving is based on the sum.

JESUS’ way of giving is based on the heart, not the sum.

- There was no social security or public aid to take care of widows—she was most likely without financial support.
- She gave two coins that were the smallest Jewish coin in circulation in Palestine.
- The coins were said to be so light that they could blow away like a feather.
- As a poor person, she was only required to give one coin, but she gave both—all she had.
- Mark 12:43-44 (MSG) *“The truth is that this poor widow gave more to the collection than all the others put together. All the others gave what they’ll never miss; she gave extravagantly what she couldn’t afford—she gave her all.”*
- Jesus pointed out this truth because generous sacrificial living was an important lifestyle in the kingdom He was ushering in.
- Our society looks for convenience, quick solutions, getting the most while investing the least.
- SLIDE – “The chicken was involved. The pig was committed.”
- Jesus said, “No greater love...lay down His life for His friend.” (John 15:13)
- Jesus also said, “Freely you have received, so freely give.”
- Jesus looked for ways to give ALL that He had received.

Jesus is not only referring to money, but a way of living life generously.

- David got it!
- The Lord sent a plague on Israel—prophet Gad told David to build an altar.
- Araunah wanted to give David the land and supplies.
- David didn't want to offer something to the Lord that didn't require a sacrifice.
- He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly...He who sows generously will reap generously.

What does living generously look like for you?

- Living outside of ourselves—the widow got this!
- Your widow's mite may be praying sacrificially for years—He sees and knows
- Setting aside money each month to use to bless someone else
- Giving your time to help support someone in need
- Using your calling and gifts, given by the Father, to bless and minister to others
- In some seasons, your generosity might be to help someone else fulfill their calling or dream.
- Feeding the hungry, protecting widows, taking care of orphans are foundations of the earth—they are not convenient.
- Families in our church that put houses up for collateral, emptied college funds and sold insurance policies to help us in time of need.

This is the kind of life that Jesus came to introduce to us, but it requires laying down old ways of living.

- 2 Corinthians 5:17 – “The old life is gone...”
- We can't be in the middle like the religious leaders—believing in part of Jesus
- New life is what He offers to us