

**“Jesus Under Pressure”**  
**August 10, 2017**

**Mark 12:1-17**

**CORE:** As time drew closer to Jesus’ death on the Cross—the pressure increased. Opposition from both religious and political leaders intensified. How Jesus responded under pressure is nothing short of amazing!

**1. HIS MISSION**

**[Following His previous clash with religious leaders, Jesus continued teaching in the Temple Court of the Gentiles—*accessible to ALL*]**

**a. He taught a parable**

- Illustrated stories that use *something familiar* to explain *something new!*
- Compels listeners to *discover truth for themselves.*
- Gives people the opportunity to *apply it and obey it on their own.*
- Yet, the punch line of this story is *not too subtle!*

**b. The Vineyard**

- Israel (Isaiah 5:1-7)—God’s judgment for Israel’s unfaithfulness
- Compared to a “vineyard”—reveals God’s desire for His people to be fruitful, multiply and bring blessing to the nations!

**c. The Wall**

- Speaks of His Law. His boundaries. His desire for His people to prosper in a protected place.
- His Law came to His people as “good news”—not merely rules & regulations.
- It spoke of His love and value for them (*i.e., other nations cheapened life—while God called His people to value it. “Eye for an eye”*)
- Joshua summarized His Law: “Be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to obey his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul.” (Joshua 22:5)
- Not simply “do’s” and “don’ts” ...
- Rather, **HOW GOD DESIGNED US TO LIVE LIFE WITH HIM.**

d. The Tenant Farmers

- Common practice—owners hired tenants to tend their vineyards in their absence; a trusted position; a steward.
- The religious leaders were these “tenant farmers”

e. The Landowner’s Servants

- The prophets—sent to communicate His heart, His thoughts and His desires for their best. His judgment RE: where they had gone astray. His invitation to renew their covenant & walk in His ways!
- Some had to run for their lives (*Elijah, Elisha*). Others were imprisoned (*Hanani, Micaiah, Jeremiah*). Many others were killed (*including Zechariah, Uriah, John the Baptist*).
- Happened repeatedly, over hundreds of years—a sign of God’s patience & mercy (*NOTE: False notion of the “angry” OT God*)
- He sent prophets simultaneously to diverse people groups (*i.e., Amos, Jonah, Isaiah*)
- Built monuments to them after they were gone. Hypocrisy—honored their memory, yet rejected their message!

f. The “much-loved Son”

- The son had every right to receive the full inheritance of His Father
- “Killed him, and threw Him out of the vineyard” (total dishonor) (*NOTE: Jesus crucified outside of the walls of Jerusalem*)
- The “owner” is referred to as “kurios”—“MASTER. LORD.”
- “Give the vineyard to others”—the Gentile nations.
- Psalm 118—a commonly recited messianic psalm
- John 5:39-40 (AMP) “You search *and* investigate *and* pore over the Scriptures diligently, because you suppose *and* trust that you have eternal life through them. And these [very Scriptures] testify about Me! And still you are not willing [but refuse] to come to Me, so that you might have life.”
- “Cornerstone”—most important stone in a building; the standard by which all other stones are measured
- “This was the LORDs doing”!!! Only Mark includes this phrase. Isaiah 53:10- “The Father’s good PLEASURE”? Jesus—“for the JOY set before Him” (Hebrews 12:2)? How could we ever accuse Him of angry indifference? (SEE 1 John 3:1; “This is *the embodiment of true* love: not that we have loved God *first*, but that He loved us and sent His *unique Son on a special mission* to become an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” 1 John 4:10)

This parable angered the religious leaders even more. They tried to “trap Him in His words” even more! Pharisees (*who hated the Romans*) and Herodians (*who wanted unity at any price*), once bitter rivals, now unite against their common enemy—Jesus!

## 2. HIS DRAW ON US ALL

- If He answered one way—Pharisees would have accused Him of *opposing God!*
- If He answered another way—Herodians would have accused Him of *rebellion!*
- Two-fold question:
  - “Is it right to pay?” (*Ethical question*)
  - “Should we pay?” (*Practical question*)
  - NOTE: Their word “pay” included “*a coerced obligation to give; one that was done so reluctantly*”
  - Jesus’ word “give”—to “*contribute what is rightfully owed*”

## CONCLUSION

“Give to God what is God’s”—all of who you are!

He didn’t allow their scheme to “trap Him in His words” to keep Him from His mission—to draw us to Himself (John 12:32).