

# THE SURPRISING JESUS

Studies in the Book of Mark

## ~Week Sixteen~

“You’ve Got Questions,  
He’s Got Answers”

Mark 12:13-44



Life Groups

**A reminder...** This weekly Bible study is connected to the Sunday sermons at UPC. It includes a “Look Back” section to help you reflect on Sunday’s sermon, and a “Look Up” section to take you through the NEXT passage in the book of Mark. If you miss a sermon, you can always listen to it online at [www.upc-orlando.com](http://www.upc-orlando.com).

### LOOK BACK – Mark 12:1-12

It is Tuesday of Passion Week. Jesus’ arrest, trial, and crucifixion are two days away. Jesus spends Tuesday teaching His disciples, rebuking the Jewish religious authorities, and warning the people not to fall in with the Pharisees. In the Parable of the Tenants (Mark 12:1-12), Jesus takes direct aim at the religious leaders who reject the One sent to bring salvation.

a) Why do you think Jesus told stories to get his points across?

---

---

b) When it comes to interpreting parables, generally we should not try to figure out what every detail in the story represents. However, in this parable about a vineyard owner and his tenants (12:1-12), the symbolism is rather obvious. Who is represented by the vineyard? The tenants? The vineyard owner? The servants? The owner’s son?

---

---

---

c) What character traits of the vineyard owner are revealed in this parable?

---

---

---

d) In verses 10-11, Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22-23. This is the same psalm the crowd used two days before to praise Jesus as he rode into the city of Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-10; see Psalm 118:25-26). Why do you suppose Jesus now uses that same psalm to speak of “the stone the builders rejected”?

---

---

---

e) What is one practical application you gained from this passage of Scripture or from Sunday's sermon?

---

---

---

**LOOK UP – Mark 12:13-44**

Through a series of questions and answers, Jesus refutes the errors of the religious leaders and points people to the simple but authoritative gospel message.

**Mark 12:13-17 – To Whom Do I Owe Money?**

a) By what tactic do the Pharisees and supporters of Herod hope to trap Jesus (vss. 13-16)?

---

---

---

b) What answer do you suppose they were expecting (and hoping for) from Jesus?

---

---

c) Do you find Jesus' answer in verse 17 surprising? If so, why?

---

---

---

**Mark 12:18-27 – To Whom Are We Married in Heaven?**

a) What did the Sadducees believe about the future (vs. 18)? (Feel free to consult a Bible dictionary or study Bible.)

---

---

b) Why do you suppose the Sadducees asked Jesus such a complex question (vss. 19-23)?

---

---

---

c) What is the point Jesus is making in verse 26?

---

---

---

---

**Mark 12:28-34– What Is the Greatest Commandment?**

a) What sets this teacher of the law (vs. 28) apart from the rest?

---

---

b) What one word summarizes the two great commandments (vss. 29-31)?

---

c) From what you have learned about the religious leaders of Jesus' day, how do you suppose his summary of the Old Testament law would compare and contrast with theirs?

---

---

---

**Mark 12:35-40 – Is the Messiah Really David's Son?**

a) By asking this question of the religious leaders, Jesus is not denying the Davidic ancestry of the Messiah. Rather, Jesus is saying that the Messiah is more than just a descendant of David. He is David's *Lord*, not just his "son." Why would this be an important truth for the religious leaders to see?

---

---

---

b) In verse 36, Jesus quotes Psalm 110:1. Who is the speaker in this psalm? Who is "The Lord"? Who is "my Lord"?

---

---

**Mark 12:41-44 – How Does God Measure My Gift?**

a) What is the standard by which God assesses our generosity?

---

---

b) What do you suppose motivated the poor widow to contribute everything she had?

---

---

---

**LOOK IN – Reflect**

a) What are the implications of Mark 12:17 for modern believers?

---

---

---

b) Re-read verses 38-40. How do you suspect Jesus would complete this sentence, were he speaking to Christians in America today: "Watch out for \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---