

Mark 11:27-12:12 (NIV)

²⁷ They arrived again in Jerusalem, and while Jesus was walking in the temple courts, the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders came to him. ²⁸ “By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you authority to do this?”

²⁹ Jesus replied, “I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things.³⁰ John’s baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin? Tell me!”

³¹ They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ ³² But if we say, ‘Of human origin’ ...” (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.)

³³ So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.”

Jesus said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

12 Jesus then began to speak to them in parables: “A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. ² At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. ³ But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴ Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated

him shamefully. ⁵ He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed.

⁶ “He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’

⁷ “But the tenants said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ ⁸ So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

⁹ “What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. ¹⁰ Haven’t you read this passage of Scripture:

“The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; ¹¹ the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

¹² Then the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders looked for a way to arrest him because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away.

I. Accusation

II. Affirmation

I. Accusation against Jesus

1. Jesus is 2 days away from the Cross
 - a. The true Passover lamb returns to the temple
2. This day, He owns the temple
 - a. He's teaching, preaching and healing
 - b. People are captivated by Him
3. He's preaching the kingdom of God
 - a. No one ever spoke like He did
4. 3 groups are furious that Jesus did not get approval from their religious system
 - a. chief priests, scribes, elders
 - b. Breaking this protocol eventually brought Him to the Cross
5. **For now, they'll challenge His authority**
6. "By whose authority are you doing this?"
 - a. They don't realize they're speaking to the Lord over all creation
 - b. **Matt 28:18** All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me...
7. They're questioning Him because He
 - a. Allowed the crowd to hail Him as Messiah

- b.** Cleared the temple
 - i. He ruined their reputation and profits

8. By what authority?

- a.** If He said, I am the Son of God,
 - i. a riot would break out and stoning
- b.** If He said, I gave myself authority,
 - i. many would lose their faith

9. They were not asking to find truth

- a.** They had no desire to learn anything from Him
- b.** They wanted to trap Him to say either
 - i. God gave me this authority - Blasphemy (disrespecting God)
 - ii. I gave myself this authority - making Him a lunatic

10. Jesus is aware of their tricks and turns the table on them

- a.** He brings them back to the beginning
 - i. Let's go back to the forerunner - John
- b.** John's baptism; heaven or earthly?

11. To answer correctly, they would find the truth

- a.** John baptized people as a symbol of their repentance and returning to God
- b.** John announced Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world

12. **Understanding what John said, would answer their question**

- a. To discredit John would be to jeopardize their standing
 - i. People thought John was a prophet
- b. To acknowledge John is to acknowledge Jesus
 - i. That means they are now walking in disobedience

13. By taking them back in history, Jesus gives them a chance to reason and think

- a. **If you want to understand what is happening today**
 - i. You need to look at yesterday and days prior
 - 1. What happened yesterday formed today
 - a. What we're doing today will form tomorrow
- b. It's important to revisit history from time to time
- c. Not to live there, but to understand
 - i. **Rev 2:5** (To Ephesus) **Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent**
- d. They refuse to look back and acknowledge the truth
 - i. "We don't know"

14. **This can teach us a couple of things**

a. Jesus doesn't mind questions

- i. All questions are acceptable
- ii. It needs to be a real question searching for truth
- iii. **if I'm not really searching for truth, I won't find it**

b. We don't have to answer every critic

- i. Sometimes people will ask you questions about your faith to trip you up
- ii. Others will ask you questions because they really want to know
 - 1. Spend time with those who really want the truth

15. The Master is able to take a bad situation like this and turn it around

a. He affirms His love in truth

II. Affirmation of God's Love

- 1. Jesus gives them a parable (short story)
- 2. Let's go back a bit further so I can illustrate what's really going on here
- 3. A man planted a vineyard
 - a. Key players**
 - i. The Man - God
 - ii. Vineyard - Israel
 - iii. Farmers - Jewish religious leaders
 - iv. Servants - prophets
 - v. The Only Son - Jesus
- 4. Israel is known as a vineyard (Isaiah 5)
- 5. Let me tell you about my heart for my people

- a. God Planted the vineyard
 - b. He Set a hedge around it
 - c. He Dug a winepress
 - d. He Built a tower
 - e. He Leased it to vinedressers
 - i. The 5 things He does points again to grace
 - 1. Woven in the scriptures is the concept of Grace
 - 2. It's our job to search out what belongs to us
6. God provided every element necessary for success
- a. He planted the Jewish nation in Abraham
 - b. He protected Abraham's seed through Joseph in Egypt
(**Hedge**)
 - c. He equipped Israel with the tools (laws to bring fruit)
(**winepress**)
 - d. He built the tabernacle (**Tower**) as a place of refuge and prayer (**strength / shelter**)
 - e. He entrusted the Jews to bear fruits of righteousness and faith (**Lease**)
7. They were given God's planting, protection, provision, & purpose
8. **God intended to use Israel as an example to the other nations;**
- a. To Bear Fruit of Faith, hope and love
 - b. During Solomon's day, his fame reached the whole earth
 - c. Other nations came to inquire God's love, mercy, faithfulness and redemption
9. As Israel was a picture for the church

10. **The church is now a picture for the world**

- a. In our faith, we've been given God's planting, protection, provision, & purpose

11. Israel did not recognize the goodness of God

12. **Isaiah 1** "I have nourished and brought up children, And they have rebelled against Me; 3 The ox knows its owner And the donkey its master's crib; But Israel does not know, My people do not consider

13. Israel beat some and killed some and disobeyed God

- a. Isaiah was sawed in half with a wooden saw
- b. **Jeremiah** was thrown into a pit and tradition says he was eventually stoned
- c. **Ezekiel** was rejected
- d. **Amos** had to run for his life
- e. **Zechariah** was rejected and stoned
- f. **Micah** was smashed in the face
 - i. This is how they treated God's prophets

14. **The Father sends the Son**

- a. When they heard the term Son, they should have understood the value
- b. Notice an army is not deployed
- c. If this was our business, we would hire a small army to eliminate those guys

15. **Israel was near to God's heart**

a. The same way, the church today is near to God's heart

16. **This affirms the Father's love and not wrath**

a. Jews thought God was one of rules and wrath

17. Although, they were rejecting Him at that very moment, He speaks Truth and Grace to them

18. **Why?**

a. **2 Pet 3:9** The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

19. They plundered the blessings of God and rejected His Lordship

a. You cannot really love someone and only use them

20. God sent message after message Saying return to me

21. He's drawing a picture saying, **look, here is the history and here is the future**

a. **Pay attention**

22. The stone you are rejection is - The Cornerstone

a. It's the most important part.

23. **Courson:** This reference to Psalm 118, speaks of the temple. When the temple was under construction, stones were quarried miles away and transported to the temple mount. Forty feet wide and twenty feet high, these stones were massive. Yet they fit together so perfectly that no mortar was needed.

Tradition had it that one stone arrived on the scene but, because no one could figure out where it was supposed to go, the builders rolled it off a cliff into the Kidron Valley. Not until the foundation was complete did the builders discover they were one stone short. Sure enough, the stone they had rejected was none other than the cornerstone

They didn't know where or how to categorize Jesus

Here, Jesus pulls from that tradition as well as from Psalm 118, and says, "Haven't you read? The One who was rejected, the One who was cast away is indeed the chief cornerstone, the foundation stone."

24. They rejected the chief cornerstone

a. They had no room for the truth

b. They killed the only Son

25. Yet since that was the worst that humanity could do, God uses it as the flagship of salvation

a. My worst actions cannot escape the love of God

b. That why it's marvelous how God is able to use the horrific treatment of Jesus and turn the curse into a blessing

i. What more could have been done for my vineyard?

1. What more could be done for you?

a. Jesus did everything necessary for us to know Him, live with Him

