

## Giving Everything You Have (Mk 12:35-44)

Sunday Morning – August 11, 2019

[Sleater-Kinney Road Baptist Church, Olympia, WA](#)

### INTRODUCTION:

### TEXT:

Who is Jesus?

And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, “How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? (Mk 12:35).

- Jesus asks a very simple question
  - o The Messiah is the Son of David
  - o Nathan told that to David (2 Sam 7; 1 Chr 17)
  - o The scribes taught it
  - o Everyone believed it (cp. Jn 7:40-43)
- But, Jesus asks, **is that *all* the Messiah is? Is there more to the Christ than *just* being a guy descended from David?**
  - o Jesus always teaches about His identity!
- This is important – so understand this:
  - o (1) You can be part of God’s family and disagree about the **rapture**
  - o (2) You can be part of God’s family and disagree about the chronology of the **end-times events**
  - o (3) You can be part of God’s family and disagree about **whether infants can be baptized, or how the church should be structured and run**
  - o (4) You can be part of God’s family and disagree about **whether God still has a plan for Israel**
  - o (5) You can be part of God’s family and disagree about the finer, “behind the scenes” points about **salvation**
  - o (6) There are millions of Christians around the world right now, and hundreds of millions who have lived and died, who would disagree with us on *every single one* of these points – they’re wrong, but we love them anyway!
    - **But, you can’t be part of God’s family if you don’t know who Jesus is!**

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- The OT tells us, and the Gospels confirm, that people expected Jesus to be a prophet, a priest and a king:
  - (1) Prophet = revealer = but what *kind* of prophet?
    - Just a guy, or something more?
  - (2) Priest = reconciler = but what *kind* of priest?
    - Just a guy, or something more?
  - (3) King = ruler = but what *kind* of king?
    - Just a guy, or something more?
- That's what Jesus is asking; that's what Jesus wants to teach them (and us!):
  - (1) How can the scribes say that the Christ is David's Son?
  - (2) Is that all there is to Him?
  - (3) Is He just a guy – or is there something more?

David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared,

“The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies under your feet,” (Mk 12:36).

- Where does Jesus go to teach them about who He is?
  - He goes to the Scriptures!
- Resources are good:
  - Books are good
  - Sermons are good
  - YouTube is ... probably a very bad idea!
  - But, you need to go to the Bible to answer your questions about God, the Gospel, and the Christian life!
- Jesus quotes something David wrote in Psalm 110 – where did David get this from?
  - The Holy Spirit!
  - God gave us 66 books to read, study and learn from – they're your only infallible authority!

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- Other resources are good, but only one thing is totally truthful and infallible – the Holy Scriptures
- If you want to know who Jesus is – look at what the Bible says about Him; *before*, *during* and *after* the incarnation
- **So, why does Jesus quote Psalm 110? What's it say?**
  - **(1) The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool,” (Ps 110:1).**
    - Lord #1 = Yahweh (i.e. Jehovah)
    - Lord #2 = mystery man (David's lord)
    - Yahweh (i.e. Jehovah) tells David's Lord to sit next to Him in heaven
    - Lord #2 will sit there, in a place of honor, until Yahweh destroys all His enemies
  - **(2) The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies (Ps 110:2)!**
    - Yahweh tells Lord #2 to rule over all His enemies; subdue them, conquer them, destroy them, crush them – get 'em!
    - Lord #2 is Yahweh's King
  - **(3) Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours (Ps 110:3).**
    - Yahweh keeps talking to the King, describing a holy war with a holy army - ready to fight!
  - **(4) The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, “You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek,” (Ps 110:4).**
    - Yahweh swears an oath – this Lord and King is a priest like Melchisedec (cp. Heb 7-10)
    - A priest reconciles people to God
    - So, the King/Priest and Yahweh march out together, to take on all evildoers
  - **(5) The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth (Ps 110:5-6).**

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- Together, they'll destroy kings, execute judgement, fill the world with corpses, and scatter ungodly leaders across the world like seeds from grey, dead dandelions
- (6) **He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head (Ps 110:7).**
  - The King is in hot pursuit; he pauses just long enough to lap up some water, then lifts his head and takes off running in pursuit, like a cheetah with a battleax!
- **What's Jesus' point?** He gets to it now:

David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son?" And the great throng heard him gladly (Mk 12:36-37).

- Jesus asks, **"who is this second Lord!?"**
  - He's got to be *more* than just David's descendant, right?
  - David calls him "lord," which is a title of worship!
  - He sits next to God, in the place of equal honor and status
  - He's God's King
  - He's God's priest; not even descended from Aaron
  - They'll fight and destroy all enemies together one day
- **What does Jesus want?**
  - He wants people to stop and think:
    - *"the Messiah is more than just a man – He's God, too!"*
    - *"He's gotta to be more than a guy descended from David!"*
  - Jesus wants us to stop and think the same thing
- Christians who are heirs and offspring of the Reformed Protestant tradition, like Regular Baptists, have a "Big God" view of worship; they have a "Big God" view of Father, Son and Holy Spirit
  - (1) **complete** humility about yourself
  - (2) **complete** submission to His Lordship
  - (3) **complete** service to His will
- Mark shows us two contrasting heart attitudes about worship, and he wants us to learn from them this morning:

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### Way to Worship #1

And in his teaching he said, “Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation,” (Mk 12:38-40).

- This is the same day
- I picture Jesus standing or sitting with the crowd, just after He's finished teaching, doing some “people watching”
- What is it about the scribes, these teachers of the OT law, that Jesus warns us against?
  - (1) what does it have to do with you, today?
  - (2) what about their worship is troubling?
  - (3) what about their heart attitude is totally divorced from a “Big God” framework or reality?
- Here it is:
  - (1) **status** (“long robes ... greetings”)
    - Scribes wore distinctive clothing; long, flowing white robes; there's inherently nothing with that
    - But, they liked the status they had
    - They wanted to be recognized
    - They wanted to be greeted, “hello, rabbi!”
    - People stood to honor them as they walked by, and revered them as the teachers and interpreters of the Scriptures
    - Christian identity grounded in the Savior = “I'm a slave of Christ!”
    - Scribal identity grounded in themselves = “Look at who I am!”
      - “I'm a teacher!”
      - “I'm an interpreter of God's word!”
      - “You need me!”
      - “I'm very important”
      - “I'm very special!”
  - (2) **privilege** (“best seats”)
    - These seats were at the front, facing the congregation

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- **Why did they like the seats?** – because they could be seen!
- They liked the perks their invented status gave them
- They wanted to be **seen**, they wanted to be **honored**, they wanted to be **flattered**
- **(3) vanity** (“*places of honor*”)
  - They wanted the honored seats at feasts, for the same reasons
  - They liked it, they expected it, they wanted it, they probably became angry if they didn’t get them
- **(4) greed** (“*widow’s houses*”)
  - Scribes relied heavily on donations from members of the synagogue and community – they often had no other jobs
  - Some would latch onto gullible widows like leeches, and suck them dry – take everything they had!
- **(5) hypocrisy** (“*pretense*”)
  - They prayed long prayers so people would marvel about how spiritual they were
  - It wasn’t real; it was all a show to make people honor them more
- Jesus says “beware” of this example; beware of people like them, beware of worshipping God like they do
- **What’s their problem? If you had to distill the wrongness of their heart attitude down so you can do something with it today, how would you do it?**
  - They’re self-absorbed
  - Religion is just a convenient way for them to glorify themselves
  - It’s a tool; like a hammer or a tape measure – it helps them get what they want
  - They want to glorify themselves, and they want to lead people to glorify them, too
  - They think they’re special, so other people ought to think so too, right?
  - **If you think this has nothing to do with you, then you’re wrong!**
- If you claim to be a Christian, there are at least two ways to fall into this trap – and they both stem from never knowing or forgetting who God really is:
  - **(1) the casual Christian**
    - This is unintentional narcissism;
      - you’re self-absorbed, but you’re not doing it on purpose
      - most of the time, you’ve sort of drifted into it

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- You don't *intend* to drag Father, Son and Spirit off the throne in your heart and mind – *you actually kind of like them!*
  - you **like** singing the songs,
  - you **like** the preaching as long as it stays generically moralistic,
  - and you **like** the people in the congregation
- Your faith is like a nice app, or like your new set of wireless Bluetooth headphones – *nice to have, convenient, helpful, but not really essential!*
  - If your app goes away, you'll find a new one
    - Netflix = Prime
    - Pandora = Spotify
  - If your Bluetooth headphones break, or don't pair quickly enough anymore, or it stops holding a charge, you'll toss them away and buy new ones
- Your relationship with God is pleasant, nice, and comfortably distant - he's like a friend at work:
  - you'll do lunch together,
  - laugh, joke and spend lots of time together,
  - but there's always a distance, always a wall, always a separation from your home life
  - and if one of you gets another job, you'll say goodbye with no problems and stay FaceBook friends,
  - and eventually unfollow him in five years
- God is your acquaintance, not your Lord and King
  - Your real preoccupation is with **yourself**; with **your** dreams, **your** ambitions, **your** plans, **your** life
  - The God and King of Psalm 110 is nowhere to be found;
- Jesus is more like Mr. Rogers with his red cardigan:
  - He's the friendly guy who lives down the street
  - He'll give you some advice if you ask Him
  - He'll never put demands on your life
  - He'll never put demands on your time
  - He'll sit and wait patiently for you to notice Him, and He's just fine with that

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- He's a bit like a fat tabby cat sunning Himself on a windowsill – drowsy, sweet, ready to purr if you pet Him, but not really demanding anything from you
- He's just there if you need Him, and if not – that's fine, too!
  - God is the sprinkles on your cupcake; pretty to look at, tastes good in moderation, but pretty forgettable
- **(2) the deliberate hypocrite; the deliberate narcissist**
  - This describes *most* (not all) the scribes and Pharisees
  - A good number (not all) of them are charlatans who are interested in money, power and control
  - Religion is a vehicle that gets them what they want
  - In Matthew, Jesus' tirade against the scribes and Pharisees (Mt 23) immediately follows this event
- The great sin here, in both instances, is to be self-absorbed – to think the life God gave you is about yourself
  - **(1)** if God is enthroned in the heavens,
  - **(2)** and if Jesus has been installed right next to Him, since the resurrection, as the King of all creation (cp Ps 2; Acts 13:32-33),
  - **(3)** and if Jesus is gathering and forming His family from all corners of the world; from people of every color, culture, education, and background
  - **(4)** and if the triune God (Father, Son and Spirit) is going to destroy all enemies one day, smashing them to bits like a rod of iron to pieces of pottery (cp. Ps 2:9)
  - **(5)** and if God, in His mercy, reached out to you one day and gave you new life through the Gospel
    - **then why would you ever think God is ok with you being self-absorbed; intentionally or unintentionally?**
- The Christian life isn't an exercise in narcissism or self-love; it's a life of joyful submission to the Lord of all creation
  - **(1)** the Christian has only one Master, and He does not share power
  - **(2)** in the Christian life, **there is only one person you need to be self-absorbed with – the Lord Jesus Christ!**

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### Way to Worship #2

And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on,” (Mk 12:41-44).

- This is in the Court of the Women; the inner courtyard of the temple mount
  - o Rich people = not a problem, no condemnation
  - o Widow = gives almost nothing
- **Why does Jesus praise the widow so much?**
  - o Because of her heart
  - o She gave everything she had
  - o She actually gave almost nothing; what she gave might not buy a meal from the dollar menu at McDonalds today – maybe a McChicken or a large fry
  - o She didn’t have anything else to give, but she wanted to tithe to the Lord anyway
- This isn’t about tithing *per se*; it’s about the attitude this woman brings to worship
  - o The rich people gave out of their abundance;
    - it didn’t cost them very much,
    - it didn’t mean very much,
    - and it was a comfortable, easy-going sort of relationship
  - o This woman had an attitude of absolute **surrender**, of total **submission**, of **trust**, of **love**
- This is the polar opposite of narcissism, of self-love, of self-absorption, of a distant, acquaintance-like relationship with God
  - o It’s **deep**, it’s **meaningful**, it’s **impactful**, and it **bears fruit** you can see
  - o She put in everything she had – all she had to live on

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### CONCLUSION

- If you're a Christian, you need a "Big God" framework for your life:
  - o (1) complete humility about yourself
  - o (2) complete submission to His Lordship
  - o (3) complete service to His will
- What does this passage have for you?
  - o (1) be absorbed with Jesus, not with yourself
    - You and I are nothing; that's what David marveled at (Ps 8):
      - God's individual specific grace in election; why did He take notice of you; why did He decide to care for you?
      - Our subsequent obligations to His mercy, grace, love and kindness
    - He's the King – not you
    - He's your Master – not you
    - He's not just David's descendant – He's the eternal God; the Ruler, Revealer and Reconciler
    - If he saved your life by giving you spiritual life, then He's not an acquaintance from work, and He's not like your nice Bluetooth headphones – He's the absolute center and driving force of your heart, mind and life
    - The demons know who Jesus is and give Him respect – do you?
  - o (2) love and serve God with everything you have
    - Do what you can with what you have (e.g. the widow)
    - Do it for the right reasons
    - Do it because you love Him
    - Do it because you love your covenant brothers and sisters in the faith, too

### PASTORAL PRAYER

- Dear Lord:

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- (1) We ask you to fill your children's hearts and minds with a true and better appreciation of who you are
    - We ask you to not allow our image of you to slip into something *petty*, something *familiar*, something *ordinary*
    - We ask you to move our spirits to see your Son as not just the Son of David, **but the Son of God, too**
    - Help us to always remember that your Son was slain,<sup>1</sup>
      - and by His blood He ransomed people for you,
      - from every tribe and language and people and nation,
      - and He's made us a kingdom of priests for you,
      - and we shall reign on the new earth to come under your Son's rule
    - Help us to always see your Son as the Lord at your right hand,
      - making all enemies His footstool
      - and lead us to worship Him in that light,
      - stir up our hearts to our covenant obligations
      - based on our unending gratitude for your mercy and grace towards us
  - (2) We also ask you to sweep away the narcissism, the self-love and the self-absorption that so easily creeps into our hearts and minds
    - Lead us to always serve you with pure motives, not in a casual, familiar and rote way – but in an *honest way*
    - Help us to hear you,
      - to walk in your ways,
      - to love you,
      - to serve you with all our heart and with all our soul,
      - and to keep your commandments and statutes for our good<sup>2</sup> – because we love you
- We ask this in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 5:9-10.

<sup>2</sup> Deuteronomy 10:12-13.