

STUDY GUIDE

NEW VISION
THE MIDDLE
PARABLE OF
THE TENANTS
MARK 12:1-11
10/29/2017



NEW VISION

MAIN POINT

Christ has given us a commission to share His gospel with others. We can carry out that commission even when others oppose and mistreat us.

INTRODUCE

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What stories have you heard of Christians being mistreated because of the gospel?

When you hear of harsh treatment of Christians, what's your initial response?

CNN reported that violence and persecution of Christians is at an all-time high (<http://www.cnn.com/2016/01/17/world/christian-persecution-2015>). Yet in spite of the treatment, believers throughout the world continue to stand boldly for Christ.

Persecution of those who follow Christ and share His gospel is nothing new. We will look at one of Jesus' parables where He pointed to the way God's messengers had been treated. It is a parable of judgment and mercy, grace and wrath. As we study this parable, let's consider what God is calling us to do.

READ AND REBUILD THE STORY READ MARK 12:1-11

HAVE A VOLUNTEER TELL THE STORY (MARK 12:1-11) DO AS BEST YOU CAN, DO NOT STOP AND TEACH, TRY NOT TO MAKE POINTS (COMMENTARY), JUST TELL THE STORY.

REBUILD THE STORY AS A GROUP: CHRONOLOGICALLY REBUILD THE STORY FROM MEMORY. ASK QUESTIONS IF NECESSARY. LIKE – "WHAT HAPPENED FIRST?", "WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?", "DID WE LEAVE OUT ANYTHING?" FINALLY, HAVE PARTICIPANTS LOOK AT THEIR BIBLES AND SEE IF ANYTHING WAS ADDED OR LEFT OUT OF THE STORY AS THEY GO THROUGH IT ONE MORE TIME

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ MARK 12:1-5.

Whom do the farmer and servants represent?

This parable that Jesus told points to the song in Isaiah 5:1-7. The man who planted the vineyard represents God the Father, while the vineyard represents Israel. The tenants represent the religious leaders of Israel, while the servants are the faithful prophets. Tenant farmers and absentee landlords stand for Israel's leaders.

The owner continued to send servants, in spite of the way they were treated. What does that say to you about the character of God?

How has God delivered His message to people today?

In what ways is it possible for God's message or messengers to be mistreated today?

What role do we have in delivering that message?

When have you ever been mistreated because of your faith in Christ?

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ MARK 12:6-8.

Who does the son represent? Why did the tenants treat the owner's son the way they did?

What do verses 6-8 say to you about the character of God?

Verse 6 conveys the faithful love of God for His people. The Father sent His Son as an act of grace.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ MARK 12:9-11.

What is the significance in Jesus saying that He would fulfill Psalm 118:22-23?

What do verses 9-11 say to you about the character of God?

Take a look at Romans 11:22. How are both aspects of God's character, kindness and severity, illustrated in this parable?

How would you explain to someone the meaning of this parable?

APPLY

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

General Questions to ask after each story. These questions may lead to follow up questions that you ask as you dig deeper into the groups/individuals response to the initial questions.

Where do you see yourself in this story?

What do we learn about Jesus/God in this story?

What do we learn about man in this story?

What is Jesus teaching you personally through this story?

What application/adjustment do you need to make in your life due to the truth discovered in this story?

Extra Questions:

Just as God gave His prophets a message, He has given us a Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) to take to others. In light of what we see in this parable, how should we approach our commission from God?

What roles do boldness, patience, and mercy play in carrying out the Great Commission?

What will you do this week to be a faithful servant in proclaiming the gospel of Christ?

PRAY

Reflect on the words of Jesus in the Great Commission, found in Matthew 28:19-20. Ask the Lord to help you utilize your resources well, that you might boldly proclaim His Son's name and advance the kingdom of heaven. Ask Him to comfort you when you face persecution here on earth, as you remember that your full reward is lasting and eternal!

COMMENTARY

MARK 12:1-11

12:1 The phrase a man planted a vineyard points to the song of Isa 5:1-7 in which Israel is symbolized by a vineyard. Tenant farmers and absentee landlords stand for Israel's leaders.

12:2-5 Harvest time for a vineyard might be as late as the fifth year after the vines were planted (Lv 19:23-25). The mistreated slaves stand for the prophets.

12:6 The beloved son in this parable is Jesus.

12:7 Come, let's kill him were the words spoken by Joseph's brothers (Gen 37:20).

12:8 Matthew (Mt 21:39) and Luke (Lk 20:15) reported that the son was cast out before being killed. Mark's order (seized him, killed him, and threw him out) indicates they did not give the son a proper burial.

12:9 The man who planted the vineyard (v. 1) and sent his servants and son is identified as the owner. The word is literally "lord" (Gk kyrios), which is also a title for God. Give the vineyard to others alludes to the upcoming gospel mission to the Gentiles.

12:10-11 Jesus concluded by quoting Ps 118:22-23, the first verse of which is also quoted elsewhere (Lk 20:17; Ac 4:11; Rm 9:33; 1Pe 2:6-8). Only Mark and Matthew (Mt 21:42) included Ps 118:23, which adds a strong providential element. Cornerstone (lit "head of the corner") may refer to a foundation cornerstone, the capstone on a column, or the keystone in an arch.