



Mark - Lesson 12E

Chapter 12:35-37

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- Over the past few weeks of our study, we have witnessed Jesus being questioned by several groups of Israel's religious leaders on a Tuesday.
 - This line of questioning was initiated to discredit Jesus' ministry, deny Him of His deity, and ultimately reject the message He came to deliver regarding matters of the Kingdom and eternal life.
 - This method of inspecting the Lamb of God occurred in 4 phases over a period of a day.
 - And as we have witnessed, despite the serious inquiries of the leaders, their questions were constantly obliterated by Jesus.
 - As a brief recap, I want to summarize the 4 attempts and angles that the religious leaders sought to question Jesus in.
 - And in doing so, we can see how all of Jesus' answers were glimpses of His Messiahship as the God-man.
 - The testing and inspection of the lamb began with Jesus' authority being challenged by the Sanhedrin council as a collective. (Attempt 1)
 - It was here where the chief priest, scribes, and elders sought to see by what authority and by whose authority was Jesus accomplishing these great works and teachings.
 - To that end Jesus responds to their question with a question, as a means for them to come to their own conclusions.
 - And that question was: "What was the origin of John the Baptist's ministry? Was it from human origins or from heavenly origin?"
 - This question served as a means of "checking" the leaders because the people affirmed John's ministry as being from God.
 - And therefore, confirming John's message as from God confirmed who John pointed to – which was the Promised One from God (Messiah).
 - From there, Jesus gave the parable of the tenants which outlined the reality that the religious leaders and stewards over Israel became self-deceived and prideful.
 - Rather than the tenants yielding to the owner's request to provide the owner with the fruit of His land, they withheld his portion as if it were theirs.
 - The owner's attempt to retrieve His possessions by way of his servants became a picture of the prophets of the Hebrew scriptures.
 - That where the prophets of old would be used to communicate God's truth, it would constantly be rejected by Israel's leadership.
 - This eventually leading to the prophets being killed because of their proclamation of truth to the leadership.
 - The parable then transitioned to the owner of the vineyard sending His last resort, His one and only son.
 - However, like the prophets, the Son was killed as a result of the unreceptive hearts of the tenants.
 - And in the same way, so were the hearts of the religious leaders in Jesus' day – seeking their own way versus responding to God's revealed truth through the Person of Jesus.

- The leaders eventually realized that they were the very subject matter of that parable and in embarrassment fled.
- The Second attempt came from the Pharisees and the Herodians, the unlikely pair.
 - These two opposing groups came together in unity to disprove and disparage Jesus through means of the tribute tax.
- The question for these two groups becomes a matter of priority.
 - *The Pharisees* are looking to see if He will uphold the Law and reject idolatry from the Roman Government. (Tribute coin)
 - Whereas *the Herodians* are looking to see if Jesus is attempting to be a zealot which could potentially lead to overthrowing the Roman government.
- However, Jesus side-steps both attempts and states that the people are to render to Caesar what is Caesar and give to God what is God's.
 - This response completely silences them because not only does Jesus establish the recognition and submission to human government, but it also renders that God's demands supersedes it all.
 - In that we are made in God's image and likeness, we should be fully submitted to and obedient to God's instruction and ways.
- The third attempt dealt with *the Sadducees* questioning Jesus on matters of the resurrection.
 - Their lack of belief in the resurrection caused them to develop a farce scenario to trump up the Levirate Law to disprove the resurrection.
- Jesus, knowing they deemed only the Pentateuch as authoritative, used Exodus as a means to explain the rational and implicit understanding of the resurrection.
 - This came about with the explanation of Moses at the burning bush.
 - Where Moses is told that Yahweh was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Exodus 3:6)
- It showed that although these men had died, the Abrahamic Covenant was an unconditional, perpetual promise made by God.
 - This meant that although these men have not seen the promise fulfilled, because God can not lie, these men will see it complete.
 - Therefore, by default, it confirms that God would have to raise these men from the dead.
 - Ultimately, Jesus makes known to the Sadducees that God is a truth teller, He is a covenant keeper, and therefore He can't lie.
- And the last attempt dealt with the scribes of the Pharisees regarding testing Jesus' understanding of the Law.
 - Last week we saw that Jesus was confronted with the scribe who had witnessed Jesus' profound response to the Sadducees.
- It's from that point that the scribe asks Jesus a question regarding the Law: "Which command was the "foremost" of all?"
 - Jesus responds by beginning with the Sh'ma (Deuteronomy 6:4) followed by Leviticus 19:18 regarding loving thy neighbor as thyself.

- From there, Jesus summarizes all the Law into two commands: Love God and Love People.
- Surprisingly enough the scribe agrees with Him, but begins by addressing the “elephant” in the room – matters regarding the fact that God is One.
 - We discovered that the scribe was looking to test Jesus on the claims of Him being Messiah, yet attempting to forgive sins was something only God could do.
- The struggle that the scribe wrestled with was the comprehension of what is known as the hypostatic union: Jesus being 100% God and 100% human.
 - So, as we look at Jesus’ retorts to each group that questioned Him, we see that theological truths become unearthed from these discussions regarding the Person of Jesus.
 - However, the religious leaders and members in the crowd do not yet have eyes to see or ears to hear.
- If you notice, each question is dealing with Jesus’ connection as Deity in relation to: Truth, Authority, and Divine Promise and Provision in some shape or form.
 - And with hindsight and the full counsel of God in hand, Jesus is subtly making known His Divine Person as the God-man.
- Friends, what we will see tonight is that truth has a name. That what has been veiled at one point in history has now been fully revealed in a Person.
 - That Person has made known the Truth of God in that being God, wrapped Himself in human flesh.
- How this reality and truth came about in human history becomes the question, and tonight, I intend to, by the illumination of the Spirit, unfold this truth for us from scripture.
 - Our outline is straightforward and is wrapped in tonight’s tag of the text, and that is: “The God-man”.
- As we pick up in the text, Jesus is still in the temple and is before a crowd of people who have just heard the conversation between Jesus and the scribe.
 - We discovered last week that the scribe’s means of testing Jesus was found in his recitation of the Sh’ma.
 - The scribe’s point becomes: “How can you claim to be Messiah and forgive sins if you are only human?”
 - The scribe seems to be confused as to Jesus’ claim of being Messiah while agreeing that God is One.
 - How does one reconcile the plurality yet unity of God?
 - Well, Jesus will outline it perfectly here for the scribe and the crowd in that David himself was rationalizing within himself how this reality existed.
 - So, Jesus asks the group of gathered Pharisees, scribes, and the surrounding audience (according to Matthew’s gospel): Whose “son” do you think the Messiah is?
 - Mark’s account however shows Jesus’ question as a teaching point regarding the experts of the Law and their understanding of who Messiah is.

- With this background in mind, I invite you to open up a copy of the scriptures and meet me in Mark 12:35-37.

Mark 12:35 And Jesus began to say, as He taught in the temple, “How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David?

Mark 12:36 David himself said in the Holy Spirit,

‘The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,
Until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet.”’

Mark 12:37 David himself calls Him ‘Lord’; so in what sense is He his son?” And the large crowd enjoyed listening to Him.

- Jesus now begins to teach the crowd and gathered scribes of the Pharisees on matters of understanding who The Christ (Messiah) is and furthermore who’s lineage He would come from.
 - It’s important to note here that Christ is not Jesus’ last name, but rather it is a title meaning “Messiah” or “the Anointed One”.
 - And what we must notice within Mark’s gospel is that Mark doesn’t provide the dialogue between Jesus and the crowd because this is Jesus’ teaching addressing an important matter.
 - Jesus poses a question to the gathered crowd by asking: “How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the “son” of David?”
 - The word “son” here can be translated to mean male “descendant” of a particular person and in this case that person is King David.
 - We see this promise of God made to David through the prophet Nathan in 2 Samuel 7:12-13. Check out the text.

2 Sam. 7:12 When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom.

2 Sam. 7:13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

- ◦ We also see the prophet Jeremiah mention Messiah as a descendant of David in Jeremiah 23:5. Check out the text:

Jeremiah 23:5 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord,
“When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch;
And He will reign as king and act wisely
And do justice and righteousness in the land.

- Within Rabbinic Theology, it was always taught that Messiah would be a descendant of David.
 - So far, Jesus and the scribes agree on this matter.

- However, one particular Messianic concept that was missing from the scribes' teaching about Messiah was understanding Messiah as the "God-man".
 - To understand this missing concept, we need to go to the Old Testament to see what the people of Israel were anticipating regarding Messiah's arrival.
- Traditional Judaism has always talked about the Messiah as a man, anointed by God, from the line of David with unusual power from God which would show off qualities of a prophet, priest, and king in Israel.
 - And the claims that were being made about Jesus from the people is that they viewed Him as Messiah.
 - But even more, the mere fact that He was doing things that only God could do, baffled them.
- This is the angle by which the scribe attempted to undermine Jesus' understanding of the text within Judaism; There was no concept of the Trinity.
 - The emphasis that both Jesus and the scribe made was that there is only One God.
 - However, with the understanding that the scribe had of Messiah versus what Jesus was demonstrating in His work, clearly spoke to Him being more than a mere human.
 - So, with the claims of Jesus as being Messiah and the religious leaders only recognizing Jesus as a "good teacher" at best, the religious leaders were seeking to find a way to accuse Jesus of blasphemy.
- One New Testament critic, Rabbi Daniel Asor said this regarding Jesus' claim of not only being Messiah but also being God:

"The Bible rejects pagan idolatry that revolves around human-like gods, men as gods."

- Furthermore, the Rabbinical teachings of the day were not able to synthesize or compute God condescending (coming down) as a man.
 - However, this reality of God's ability to condescend was not a foreign thing.
- Let's do a quick survey through the scriptures to see how God was able to dwell with His creation. We will begin in Genesis 3.
 - In Genesis 3:8-10, we see that the LORD GOD (Yahweh) is shown to be "walking" in the garden after man had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- The mere fact that Adam and Eve went to hide from His presence meant that there was some form or figure by which the Lord God put on in order to walk among His creation.
 - Secondly, the text lets us know that Adam and Eve heard the "sound of Him walking through the garden".
 - This sound is not mystical, metaphorical, or ethereal but literal.
- We see another instance of God's condescension to man in Gen.18:1-3, 22. Check out the text.

Gen.18:1 Now the Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day.

Gen.18:2 When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth,

Gen.18:3 and said, “My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by.

- ○ Check out verse 22.

Gen.18:22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing before the Lord.

- In Genesis 18, we see that Abraham comes face to face with three men and upon their arrival, he bows before them and said, “My Lord”.
 - If you fast forward to verse 22, we see that the men depart from Abraham and go to Sodom, yet verse 22b states Abraham was still standing before the “LORD” (Yahweh).
 - I’ll give us one more example that speaks to God condescending to be with His creation and that is in Exodus 3:2-5 regarding the burning bush.
 - The text mentions that “the angel of the LORD” appeared to Moses in flames of fire within a bush.
 - Now what is interesting to note is that the bush was not burned or consumed, but rather it contained the very presence of God.
 - The fact that God could occupy a bush by fire, but yet not consume the bush as a means of sustaining the fire, lets us understand a few things:
 - 1. God can indeed condescend and take the form of His creation however He so chooses, to accomplish His plans and purposes.
 - 2. Therefore, if God can take on human form and communicate with man as He did before, and there are many other instances in the Hebrew Scriptures, then how much more could God take on human flesh as the God-man.
 - So, with this in mind, Jesus speaking with this group of Pharisees aids in explaining this reality of tri-unity within the Godhead by explaining what David said, in the Holy Spirit.
 - Check out what verse 36 says.

Mark 12:36 David himself said in the Holy Spirit,
 ‘The Lord said to my Lord,
 “Sit at My right hand,
 Until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet.”’

- Jesus tells the crowd what David said and saw by citing a powerful Messianic psalm – Psalm 110:1, which is written in Hebrew.

- This is what the text says:

Psalm 110:1 The Lord says to my Lord:

“Sit at My right hand

Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

- Many people knew this psalm was written by David and the subject of this psalm centered on Messiah as a coming descendant of David.
 - However, if you notice, David calls his future descendant (son) Lord, and in Jewish thinking this was quite confusing to understand.
 - If we were to read this in Hebrew, it literally reads, “The LORD (Yahweh) says to my Lord (Adonai) which means Messiah.
 - David records that the Father instructs Messiah to do something.
 - He is to “sit at my right hand”.
 - Remember, the phrase “sit at my right hand” deals with Power and Authority.
 - In this case, David hears that Yahweh instructs his descendant to sit at the greatest position of authority and honor above all else and that is at the right hand of God.
 - Well, wait a minute: How in the world could David’s descendant (son) be in a greater position of Power than David, himself.
 - For in Jewish society, the father was always greater than the son or other male descendants.
 - So, to say that a descendant of David would be superior to David himself was a huge stretch, in human understanding.
 - This was the matter that Jesus was addressing for those in the crowd.
 - In human comprehension, this statement from David made no sense and therefore was the reason why the crowd in Matthew’s gospel was not able to answer the question.
 - Without the illumination of the Spirit, one would only understand that Jesus, being the Son of David, could not be superior to David, Himself.
 - However, this is where Jesus’ teaching and revelation of Himself begins to be fully flushed out.
 - Jesus was not merely of human descent from the line of David as was assumed by the religious leaders, but much more, He was God incarnate.
 - The text makes it plain that within the Person of Jesus Christ dwelled the fullness of Deity and humanity in One.
 - And it was this revelation that was given to David that was recorded in Psalm 110.
 - One question that comes to mind is, “How is it that David knew this reality of the God-man, but the religious leaders and scribes missed this very point of God dwelling among us as a human being?”
 - Well, we see that evidence at the start of verse 36.

- David said and recorded these words, in the Holy Spirit.
- It is the Spirit of God that reveals truth and without the illumination of the Spirit for us to understand the scriptures, we too would miss this reality of the incarnation of Christ.
 - Not only did the Holy Spirit reveal this truth of Messiah as the God-man, but Jesus Himself points out the fulness of the Godhead to the crowd (The Trinity).
- In one verse, Jesus points out the plurality of the Single Godhead.
 - We see the Spirit reveals Truth,
 - The Father (Yahweh) that speaks and accomplishes what He puts forth,
 - and then we see the Son (Adonai Messiah) who obediently accomplishes the will of the Father to the Glory of God.
- The Deity of the Son and having always co-existed and being co-eternal with the Father is not a New Testament phenomenon.
 - The Old Testament expressed these matters implicitly whereas the New Testament speaks to these matters a bit more, explicitly.
- This is why scripture completely debunks those in the Jehovah's Witness and Mormon religions.
 - Jesus was never a created being, He has always been and always will be.
 - Check out the following Nicene Creed (Western Church):

“I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; Begotten of His Father before all worlds [God of God], Light of Light, Very God of Very God; Begotten, not made; Being of one substance [essence] with the Father; by whom all things were made . . . And [I believe] in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceedeth from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified;

- ○ Paul makes this reality of the Son's eternality explicitly clear in Colossians 1:15-20:

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Colossians 1:18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

Colossians 1:19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

Colossians 1:20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having

made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

- ◦ Friends, the question we must think through is: Where did Paul's theology come from?
 - Paul searched the Hebrew scriptures, and the Spirit provided the illumination for him to see just how Jesus was the very image of the invisible God.
- So, it's because of these learned men's lack of understanding of the scriptures and their unbelief, that they failed to see Jesus as Messiah, the God-man standing before them.
 - Finally, in verse 37 of Jesus' exegesis of Psalm 110, He brings the reality of the hypostatic union (being fully God and fully man) into full display.
 - Check out verse 37.

Mark 12:37 David himself calls Him 'Lord'; so in what sense is He his son?" And the large crowd enjoyed listening to Him.

- So it's here that Jesus presses the question of the scribe's understanding of what David was shown in the Spirit regarding his descendant.
 - Yet, we find that the very experts of the Law who are to lead the people to God are failing to do so because of their unbelief.
 - For to understand the word of God means that there must be a willingness and submission to the word itself.
 - Yet here it is that the scribes, after having seen how Jesus handled the questioning in the temple and succeeded in answering every religious group before Him, that they have yet to respond to the truth of who Jesus is.
 - So, Jesus concludes with this final jaw-dropping question that would puzzle the masses.
 - The question was so profound that it caused great intrigue.
 - The question was: "If David calls his son Lord, in what sense is He his son?"
 - Herein lies the conundrum that all humanity faces in recognizing Jesus as being God.
 - The world wants to deem Him as a good teacher or a great speaker of truth, but yet they cringe at the thought of Jesus being God.
 - The reality is, Jesus is not a created being, nor is He lower than the angels. Jesus is God, the Second person of the Trinity.
 - Jesus makes it clear in verse 37 that because God is God, Messiah could be both a descendant of David and David's LORD.
 - The reality is when confronted with Truth, you will either respond and submit to it or you will continue to reject it.
 - Truth does not change. It is made known through divine illumination and once that happens you are faced with the reality to either respond to it or not.

- Furthermore, Mark mentions in verse 37b that, like the many times before, the response of the crowd, due to Jesus' teaching, is well received, yet there is still no full comprehension as to who Jesus truly is.
 - It will be in the next few days that will lead the people to either see the truth that Jesus is proclaiming regarding His purpose and mission, or it will cause them to reject Him altogether.
- Next week, we will witness that as Jesus goes back to teaching in the temple, that it will speak greatly to the reality that despite the unbelief of the people, there will be a coming day in the future that they cannot reject – judgement.
 - And what a day that will be where the unbeliever will have to stand before a Holy God, Truth itself, and be held accountable for all they have ever done.
 - But most importantly having rejected the very opportunity to receive salvation, by way of God's provision.
- Friends, we saw tonight that truth has been made plainly known throughout the teaching of the scriptures.
 - Truth is only from God and God revealed His truth to man through the scriptures, but most evidently through His Son, the second Person of the Trinity.
 - Truth wrapped itself in flesh so that we could experience it firsthand and to know the very means of escape from the wrath to come.
 - Truth is made available to you today.
- The question on the table is will you believe it or not?
 - For it is through and by the Person of Jesus Christ that salvation is attained.
 - And all you have to do is believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ and you can be saved.
- Let's Pray.

Citation:

- www.foi.org/2020/05/01/what-is-the-jewish-view-of-the-messiah