

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Who Is Jesus?
Mark 12:35-44



SYNOPSIS

Mark 12:35-44 explores Jesus's identity during Passover Week. It examines Jesus's teachings within the temple, particularly his challenge to traditional views of the Messiah. This passage emphasizes Jesus as both the Son of God and a figure who confronts hypocrisy. It highlights his defense and protection of the "poor in spirit," using the example of the widow's offering. This passage aims to help us reflect on our personal relationship with Jesus,

QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important to understand Jesus as more than just the son of David?

2. What does it mean that Jesus "exposes and defeats His enemies," and who are these enemies?

3. How can Jesus help us overcome our personal struggles and "enemies?"

4. What does it mean to be "poor in spirit," and how does Jesus defend and protect those who are?

5. How does the story of the poor widow illustrate the concept of giving out of spiritual poverty?

6. What are some practical ways to give out of our spiritual poverty today?

7. According to this text, what are some incorrect views of who Jesus is?

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ANSWER KEY

1. Understanding Jesus solely as the son of David limits our perspective to seeing Him as a political or earthly savior who would simply improve our current circumstances. Recognizing Jesus as the Son of God reveals a deeper understanding of His mission: to free mankind from eternal death and offer a personal relationship with God the Father, providing abundant life beyond earthly improvements.
2. This refers to Jesus' active role in confronting and overcoming spiritual opposition. It is more than just meekness and mildness. These enemies are not necessarily our neighbors or people we disagree with, but rather spiritual forces or internal struggles like depression, shame, regret, worry, gossip, porn, and broken relationships. Jesus fights against these forces that seek to harm us spiritually and emotionally.
3. By acknowledging and calling out our personal struggles, just as Jesus exposed the hypocrisy of the teachers of the Law. Jesus stands ready to make these enemies His footstool. By recognizing our need for His help and intervention, we allow Him to fight on our behalf and gain victory over the challenges we face.
4. Being "poor in spirit" means recognizing our own spiritual neediness and dependence on God. It's acknowledging our lack of inherent goodness and relying completely on God's grace. Jesus defends and protects those who are poor in spirit by offering them the kingdom of heaven and blessing their humble reliance on Him.
5. The poor widow's offering demonstrates that giving is not solely a financial decision, but a spiritual one. She gave all she had, out of her poverty, signifying a complete trust in God. This act shows that even when we feel we have little to offer, God can bless and protect what we give out of faith.
6. Besides financial giving, which should be a spiritual decision rather than a financial one, we can give out of our spiritual poverty by serving in ministry (giving our time), and giving our hearts and lives to Jesus by recognizing our dependence on God.
7. The text points out that some groups hold differing views. Modern Jewish teaching says that Jesus was a man who practiced magic and led Israel astray. The Mormons say that Jesus is the spirit brother of Lucifer (or Satan). The Jehovah's Witnesses say Jesus was the created being of Michael, a mighty angelic warrior who oversees the army of God. The Unitarian Church says that Jesus was just a man like us.