Mark 12:1-17

“*The Cornerstone”*

**Scripture:** Mark 12:1-27

**Memory Verse:** *“The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.”*

Mark 12:10a

**Lesson Focus:** We build our life on Jesus.

**Activities and Craft:** Coloring Page, Work Sheet:

Craft for 1st and 2nd graders: “In God I Trust” Necklace.

 Have the kids draw a silhouette of themselves on the front of their coin. Show them the

coins again and help them understand what a silhouette is. Have them finish decorating their coin. Help them put it on a piece of yarn.

**Introduction:** Who’s picture:

 Show the kids various coins and ask them whose picture is on the coin:

 **Quarter**: George Washington (1st President) and a United States emblem or one of the

 50 states on the back.

 **Dime**: Franklin D Roosevelt (32nd President) and a torch on the back

 **Nickle**: Thomas Jefferson (3rd President) and Monticello on the other (Jefferson’s

 colonial plantation.)

 **Penny:** Abraham Lincoln (16th President) and Lincoln Memorial on the other

 Every coin has the phrase “In God we Trust” and the words “E PLURIBUS UNUM” which

 means “From many one.”

**Bible Study:**

 **Mark 12:1-11:** Jesus tells a story:

 √ What is a parable? (a story telling a truth) This is one of Jesus’ “Judgment Parables”

 He is going to teach a truth that will condemn the religious rulers that have

 rejected Him as the Son of God.

 √ What does the man plant? (a vineyard) What is a vineyard? (a place to grow grapes

 for wine.)

 √ What did the man build in the vineyard? (a hedge around for protection; dug a place

 for the wine vat (to store the wine); built a tower to help protect.)

Everyone who was listening to Jesus understood what He was saying. The nation of Israel was known as a “God’s Vineyard.” As a matter of fact the place where Jesus is now standing and talking is in the temple in Jerusalem and there is a richly carved grapevine, seventy cubits high, sculpted around the door which led from the porch of the Holy Place. The nation of Israel was God’s vineyard. God Himself called them out through Abraham to be a chosen people and a blessing to all nations. He planted them in Canaan (the Promised Land, Psalm 44:2.)

 √ Who took care of the vineyard for the man? (He leased the vineyard to tenants

 to watch the vineyard for him.) This was a common practice in Israel where the owner would rent out his vineyard and in return would get 1/3 to ½ of the grapes produced. The vinedressers or the tenants represent the spiritual leadership of Israel; the priests, Sadducees and Pharisees.

 √ What happened at vintage time? What is vintage time? (Vintage time is when the

 grapes are harvested and ready to be used.)

1. The man sent a servant to get some of the grapes from the harvest.
2. The vinedressers took that man and beat him and threw him out of the vineyard.
3. The man sent another servant and the vinedressers threw rocks at him and hit him in the head and then sent him away.
4. He sent more servants and every time the vinedressers either killed them or hurt them badly.
5. Finally he sent his son (he thought that they would respect his son.)
6. The vinedressers killed the son.

The religious leaders that are listening to Jesus know exactly what Jesus is talking about. God’s vineyard is the nation of Israel. God left them in charge to follow Him and represent Him to the world. God sent prophets that would speak for Him and they nation of Israel treated them shamefully – just like the vinedressers in this story.

 Elijah God’s prophet – was driven into the wilderness

 Isaiah God’s prophet – was sown in two according to tradition

 Zechariah was stoned to death

 John the Baptist was beheaded

 Hebrews 11:37-38

Finally they killed the son of the vineyard – and that son in the story is Jesus Christ. God sent His own Son to get the attention of the Jewish leaders and they would reject Him just like they did the prophets of old. In three days, they would take Jesus by force and take Him before the rulers to condemn Him to death. God gave the nation of Israel chance after chance to hear Him – and they rejected Him and even His own son.

All of this was done because Jesus is telling us in the story that the religious leaders wanted the fruit for themselves. They did not want to share it with anyone else – let alone God.

√ Jesus asked what will the owner of the vineyard do?

√ What was Jesus’ answer? (The owner will come and destroy the vinedressers and

 give the vineyard to others.)

Jesus then quotes an Old Testament passage that supports the truth of His story.

From Psalm 118:22-23, *“The stone which the builders rejected has become the*

*chief cornerstone. This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.”*

This is understood to be a “Messianic Psalm.” That means that this verse is Psalms refers to the coming Messiah. Jesus is the Messiah – and Jesus is the “stone” that the builders rejected.

You have to remember that Jesus is standing in the temple that Solomon built, where every stone was accepted or rejected by how perfect it was.

Jesus is building a new church, one that is built on His life and sacrifice for us. He is the “cornerstone” that the “church” is built on. Anyone who believes in Jesus as the Savior of the world is built into His Church. But anyone who does not believe will be cut off from God forever. Jesus delivers this story and tells us about the kindness of God, the love of God, the severity of God and the hope of God. The “religious leaders” understood what Jesus was saying and responded in denial. They knew that Jesus was speaking against them. They began to look for a way to have Jesus arrested and put to death. But, they were afraid of the crowd that was there so they left Him and went away.

**Illustration:** “The Cornerstone” Take some blocks from the resource room. Write the name of Jesus on one block. Tell them that the only way to heaven is to believe in Jesus. He is the ONLY way to God. He paid the price for our sins. God sent Jesus to earth “His only begotten Son” even though He knew that He would be rejected and killed by the Jewish religious rulers. Ask the kids to raise their hands if they have accepted Jesus as their Savior. Take some of the kid’s names and write them on some blocks. Tell them that when we accept Jesus as our Savior we are added to His Church. The Church is built on Jesus Christ. The Church is not a building but it is us (who believe) and God builds His church on Jesus. Jesus is the “chief cornerstone” and we are His building. Jesus is building a beautiful thing through our lives. The Temple that Solomon built was beautiful and grand and filled with Gold and precious stones. The temple that God is building through His Son and our lives is eternal and the most beautiful testament to God’s love for us.

 ***WE BUILD OUR LIVES ON JESUS!***

 **Mark 12:13-17;** “A Challenge”

The religious leaders could not get it through their heads that Jesus was God. They never gave up trying to catch Jesus saying something wrong.

So they throw out a challenge to Jesus. They join forces with a group of people called the “Herodians” who were a group of people that were faithful to Rome. So they ask a question that each group thought that Jesus could not answer.

They start with flattery:

1. You are true
2. That you don’t favor anyone
3. You teach God’s truth

**Reminder:** Be very careful when people come to you and start out with flattery. Many times people say kind things so that they can then try to get you to do or say something that you should not do or say. The religious leaders thought that they could trick Jesus into saying something wrong.

**Their Question:** *“Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”*

√ What does it say in Mark 12:15, that Jesus knew? (Their hypocrisy.)

√ What is hypocrisy? (To be fake in what you believe)

Jesus knows that they are trying to trick Him and He asks them to bring Him a Roman coin. A denarius was a small silver coin. On one side was the head of Caesar and the inscription “Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus, Augustus.” On the other side was the inscription Pontifex Maximvs which means “chief priest.” It was the amount paid into the Roman treasury by all adult men and women just for the privilege of existing. It could only be paid with this coin.

√ What question does Jesus ask them? (Who’s picture is on the coin?)

√ What is their answer? (Caesar)

√ What does Jesus tell them to do?

1. Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s
2. Render to God the things that are God’s.

This is one of the most quoted verses in the Bible. It is quoted in political circles and was used to shape the western world and it’s political thinking. Jesus is confirming that we need to obey the government of the land…and He is confirming that there are things that only belong to God. In Romans 13, the apostle Paul talks more plainly on the fact that we are to submit to the government.

We obey the laws of the land unless they ask us to not obey God and His laws.

The coin had the image of Caesar but we bear the image of God because that is how He made us. *“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”* Genesis 1:27 Our lives belong to God and we need to be totally committed to God and things of God.

Have you given your life to God?

***WE BUILD OUR LIVES ON JESUS!***

**“Render to God the things that are God’s.”**

**Mark 12:17 b**

**In God I Trust**