



07.04.10/ Mark 12:1-12

Opening Discussion

Ask children if they have ever had a baby-sitter. Why is a baby-sitter such an important job? (When your parents choose a baby-sitter, they are trusting that person to take care of their most important things in the world – YOU!) When your parents choose a baby-sitter, they expect that person to take extra special care of you. If someone lets you borrow a toy, they expect you to take extra special care of it, right? Has anyone ever let you borrow a toy or something else of theirs? How did you treat it? What would happen if you lost it, broke it, or refused to give it back? How do you think the person that lent it to you would feel? After answers are shared, tell children that we are going to hear a story that Jesus told about a similar situation.

Read Mark 12:1-12

“And he began to speak to them in parables. ‘A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a pit for the winepress and built a tower, and leased it to tenants and went into another country. When the season came, he sent a servant to the tenants to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Again he sent to them another servant, and they struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and him they killed. And so with many others; some they beat, and some they killed. He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But those tenants said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ And they took him and killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. Have you not read this Scripture; ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes’ And they were seeking to arrest him but feared the people, for they perceived that he had told the parable against them. So they left him and went away.”

Question 1

Remember that parables were short stories that had important spiritual meanings. List all of the characters that were in this parable. *Owner of the vineyard, vineyard, tenants, servants, son.*

Discussion

What do you think each of these characters represents in the story? *The owner represents God. The vineyard can represent God’s people. The tenants stand for the religious leaders who were supposed to be taking care of the people. The servants the owner sent were all the prophets that God had sent to teach the people about him. But just like the tenants didn’t listen to the servants, the religious leaders didn’t listen to the prophets! The son was Jesus! The owner sent his beloved son, hoping that the farmers would listen to him – just like God sent his only Son to show us the way!*

Question 2

Why do you think that Jesus quotes Psalm 118:22 at the end of the parable? *Jesus wanted to show that this Scripture was a prophecy about Him, and that it was being fulfilled before their very eyes. It shows that Jesus really did know God’s plan, and knew the kind of suffering he would have to endure for all of our sins.*

Discussion

When the religious leaders heard Jesus tell this story, they knew right away that Jesus was talking about them, and they didn’t like it! They began to plan out how they could arrest him. When God reveals something about your life that you don’t like, how do you react? Does it cause you to ask forgiveness and become closer to God, or does it cause you to push Him away and ignore what God is telling you? What should your reaction be? *Let everyone share an answer if they feel comfortable.*

Question 3



Just like the religious leaders were supposed to take care of God's people, God expects us to take care of each other! Brainstorm about some ways that you can take care of each other, and be good "baby-sitters" to the things that God has given us responsibility over. *Let everyone share.*

Question 4

When we choose to do things our way and try to selfishly get what we want, we push God away. How do you sometimes try to get what you want and not think about what God wants? *Let everyone share if they feel comfortable.*

Discussion

Jesus help you with this. He did exactly what God the Father wanted Him to do, and when we trust Him to save us, He gives us power to obey God and put Him first instead of putting ourselves first.

Wrap Up

Jesus knows that our hearts want to trust things other than Him, and He loves us anyway and invites to stop trusting ourselves and trying to get the things we want, and instead to start trusting Him. As you close in prayer, ask Him to show you how to stop trusting yourself. Ask for a generous heart to take care of God's people that need help. Pray that you wouldn't be like the religious leaders in Jesus' day, but that you would recognize on a daily basis that Jesus is the Son of God and put your trust in Him. Amen.