

Tuesday: Day of Argument

JESUS' FINAL WEEK - 4

Surely you have read this scripture? "The stone which the builders rejected as worthless turned out to be the most important of all. This was done by the Lord; what a wonderful sight it is!"
— MARK 12:10-11,
GOOD NEWS

Don't you realize how patient he is being with you? Or don't you care? Can't you see that he has been waiting all this time without punishing you, to give you time to turn from your sin? His kindness is meant to lead you to repentance.
—ROMANS 2:4,
LIVING BIBLE

Tuesday was an incredibly busy day. One third of the material that records the final week in Jesus' life is devoted to this particular day. More of Jesus' life and teaching is recorded on this day, than any other single day. People who usually argue among themselves unite to confront Jesus, attempting to defeat Jesus in public so that His popular support among the crowds would vanish.

The parable which Jesus tells about the owner of the vineyard provides a vivid reminder of man's proclivity to reject God's invitation not once or twice, but time and time again. It also points to God's surprising tolerance and unexpected patience. Servant after servant. Messenger after messenger. Jesus verbally paints the picture of a determined God. Yet, Jesus makes it quite clear—refusal to believe will result in the kingdom of God will be taken away and given to people who do the things God wants in His kingdom (Matthew 21:43).

WELCOME

As a child, what kind of worker were you? How much did your parents have to yell and scream to get you to work?

WORSHIP

Read Psalm 118:24. The day being affirmed by the psalmist is the Lord's day of salvation (cf. 2 Cor. 6:2; Acts 4:11-12). Read the surrounding passage in Psalm 118:19-29. Spend the remainder of your time praising God for the salvation that comes through Jesus Christ. "This is the Day," "He Has Made Me Glad," (103), "Great Is the Lord" (187), "You're the One" (294), "Highest Place: (155).

WORD

Read Mark 11:27-33

1. With what issue is Jesus confronted? Why? What dilemma does this question pose for Jesus? Why doesn't he answer them directly?
2. How did Jesus' counter-question force the issue (cf. Luke 7:26-30, where Jesus raises the same issue)? In essence, Jesus says "You've asked me about authority. Let's see how good you are at recognizing authority." How does their response to Jesus' question explain why their religion was unproductive (vss 29-32)?

Read Mark 12:1-12

3. Would you describe the landowner in this parable as a patient man? Why or why not? What does this remind you about the nature of man? God?
4. What is the main point Jesus is trying to convey through this story? How does this parable relate to the question of authority raised earlier?
5. When it comes right down to it, whose will do you care about more—God's or your own? What is His authority changing in your life right now? How will your submissive obedience make you a more productive person?

WORKS

Go home and read Jesus' parable of the two sons in Matthew 21:28-32. Do you recognize God's authority in your life? Keep in mind that the question is best answered, not by what you *say*, but what you *do*. Is there any area of your life that you are insensitive to God's direction?