

## The Cornerstone of Our Faith (Mark 12:1-12) Café Church - 23-Apr-17

There are Bibles on the table in front of you  
And a sermon outline  
And some questions  
Let me pray first...

### The Cornerstone of our Faith

#### Intro

Explain the concept of a cornerstone?

[Powerpoint 1-Cornerstone]



The **cornerstone** (or foundation stone) concept is derived from the first stone set in the construction of a masonry foundation, important since all other stones will be set in reference to this stone, thus determining the position of the entire structure.

#### Context/Parables?

Last time we looked at Mark's Gospel before Easter

[Powerpoint 2-Context]

We looked at the authority of Jesus and we saw how the chief priests and teachers of the law tried to question Jesus authority

They question where he got the authority to do and say the things He does?

Now here in Mark 12 - which you can turn to in your Bibles

Jesus tells a parable

A parable?

[Powerpoint 3a-Parable]

[Open for answers]

[Powerpoint 3b-Parable]

An earthly story with a heavenly meaning

Usually Jesus uses parable stories about things the people can relate to: Like agriculture, food (salt, bread and water), business and trade and family

Today: He'd probably use stuff we can relate to like: sport, computers, and entertainment?

But here the parable Jesus tells is about agriculture and it explains where He gets His authority from...

Before we look at the parable though

Why parables?

[Powerpoint 4a-Why?]

[Open for answers]

[Powerpoint 4b-Answers]

- The story is easily remembered
- People can identify with the context or the people in the story
- Makes the people think and question themselves - how does this apply to me?
- To those who have a genuine hunger for God's Word - they will see how the parable relates to them and what its meaning is
- Basically the parables are for willing hungry ears and hungry hearts - not for those who don't want to listen
- A parable is an instrument of mercy (on those who are genuinely lost and seeking and know their lost) and judgment (on those who think they already know it all)

## **The Parable of the Vineyard**

[Powerpoint 5-Parable of the Vineyard]

There is a man who digs a vineyard

Puts a wall around it - and digs space for a winepress

And it's a good vineyard

And he rents it out to some farmers

And the man takes off to another place

The farmers are tenants and they are supposed to look after the vineyard  
The man (owner) sends servants to collect some fruit from his vineyard  
But the wicked farmer tenants beat the servants and sent them away empty handed  
Every servant, the owner sent, got beaten up - some even killed  
Finally the owner sent his son - thinking that the farmers will respect his son  
But no - they decided to kill the owner's son and heir  
So the parable ends with a question  
What will the owner of the vineyard do?  
The answer - he will kill the wicked farmers and give the vineyard to others who will  
be more deserving of it - and look after it  
And Jesus finishes his story  
With a quote from Psalm 118:22-23  
"The stone the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone;  
11 the Lord has done this,  
and it is marvelous in our eyes?"

### The meaning of the parable

[Powerpoint 6-Meaning]

The Vineyard?

[Powerpoint 6a-Vineyard]

Brings to mind Israel - see Isaiah 5:1-7 - especially verse 7

But here in the parable - the vineyard is not the nation of Israel as much as God's people in His Kingdom - God's people as a nation producing good fruit for God by obeying and serving Him

The Owner of the Vineyard?

[Powerpoint 6b-God]

God

The wicked farmers or tenants?

[Powerpoint 6c-tenants]

Are Israel's leaders - the chief priests, scribes, teachers of the law and elders. The one's who constantly rejected Jesus and questioned Him

The servants that the owner sends?

### [Powerpoint 6d-prophets]

Are the prophets of Israel - mentioned in the OT  
As a nation, Israel rejected many of the prophets  
Lookup 2 Chronicles 36:15-16

<sup>15</sup> The LORD, the God of their ancestors, sent word to them through his messengers again and again, because he had pity on his people and on his dwelling place. <sup>16</sup> But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the LORD was aroused against his people and there was no remedy.

The landowner's son is

### [Powerpoint 6e-son]

Jesus Himself

The others that the owner will give the vineyard to?

### [Powerpoint 6f-others]

They are genuine believers - including Gentiles -  
Which would have been a scandal to the Jews listening

As we said the parable concludes with a quote from Psalm 118:22-23

Lookup passage

The stone the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone;  
<sup>23</sup> the LORD has done this,  
and it is marvelous in our eyes.

### [Powerpoint 7a-Rejection]

The rejection of Jesus had been foretold in the OT in this psalm

The builders were the religious leaders of the nation of Israel

The stone they rejected was Jesus

Jesus was here predicting what was about to happen to Him - He would suffer and be put to death by the religious leaders of the nation of Israel!

Yet this 'rejected' stone - Jesus -

God Himself - will make Jesus - the son - the chief cornerstone!

And the apostle Peter says this in 1 Peter 2:4-10:

<sup>4</sup> As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— <sup>5</sup> you also, like living stones, are being built into a

spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup>For in Scripture it says:

“See, I lay a stone in Zion,  
a chosen and precious cornerstone,  
and the one who trusts in him  
will never be put to shame.”

<sup>7</sup>Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe,

“The stone the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone,”

<sup>8</sup>and,

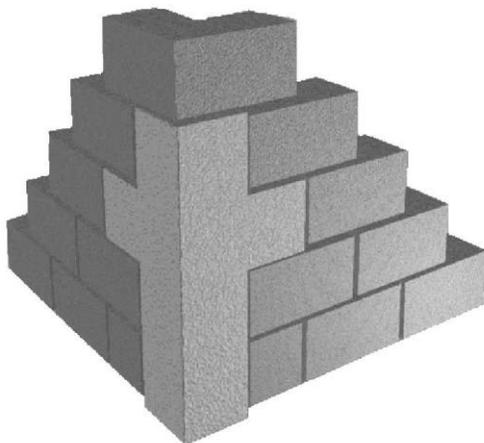
“A stone that causes people to stumble  
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup>Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

So the idea is Jesus is the cornerstone and we are stones connected to Him as we believe in Him

[Powerpoint 7b-Connected]



The parable was so obvious to the religious leaders of Israel  
That they would have arrested him straight away if hadn't been for the crowd

### Application

#### [Powerpoint 8a-App1]

1. Like the nation of Israel - as God's people - we have privileges
  - a. Freedom to access God's Word
  - b. Freedom to worship without fear of persecution (unlike many places in the world)
  - c. We have forgiveness through the cross of Jesus - and His blood
  - d. We have hope of eternal life to hang on to
  - e. We have the gift of prayer - talking to God
  - f. We have the Holy Spirit living inside us
  - g. We have the joy of fellowship in God's family & Church family

#### [Powerpoint 8b-App2]

2. Are treasuring what God has entrusted to us? Or are we like the tenants?
  - a. Are we constantly coming to God and confessing and repenting of our sins?
  - b. Do we come to God in prayer - of praise, thanks, confession?
  - c. Are we neglecting meeting with our brothers and sisters in Christ
  - d. Are we sharing the precious word of Jesus' forgiveness and promise of eternal life?
  - e. Are we bearing fruit for God - as His vineyard? Are we serving God and others as we are called to do?

#### [Powerpoint 8c-App3]

3. Are we staying connected to Jesus as our cornerstone?
  - a. Because Jesus says He is the vine and we are the branches (John 15:1-2, 6) - He says we must stay connected to Him to bear fruit and <sup>5</sup>"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.
  - b. He warns in verse 6 - <sup>6</sup>If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.
  - c. How do we stay connected to Jesus anyway? [Open for Answers]

#### [Powerpoint 8d-App4]

4. There is also a solemn warning in this parable - in verse 9 - those who reject Jesus - will themselves be rejected - and their privileges given to others

## Conclusion

### [Powerpoint 9-Conclusion]

The bottom line is that Jesus is the **Cornerstone of our Faith**

Are we building our lives on Him as our foundation stone? Are we respecting Him

We must build our lives on His message of forgiveness and eternal life

We must build our lives on His teaching and His example

We must follow His summary of the commandments:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength and 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' (Mark 12:30-31)

Without Him we have nothing - we can do nothing - and we have no hope!

Q & A

Let's pray...