









Read Mark 12:28–34. **Who steps up to the plate this time? What’s the result?**

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So, what does this mean for us? What’s Mark trying to point out? For those who’ve begun this journey of discipleship, the reality is we’ll face powerful people who want nothing to do with Jesus.

Maybe you have already. If you haven’t you certainly will. A boss. A family member. Maybe even a politician. The truth that Mark wants us to walk away with is simple: The powerful persecutors in our lives have no real power over us.

**Has there been a situation in which your beliefs were held against you? How did you react?**

**In what ways did that situation impact your view of Jesus and the cost of following him? Is it still worth it? Was your faith shaken, or did it strengthen?**

Read Mark 12:38–40. **Whom does he warn against? What aspect of them is he condemning?**

Now read verses 41–44. We see a living example of Jesus’s teaching in the preceding verses. **How does Jesus’s response to the widow’s miniscule offering reflect his perspective on power?**

*[Note: For further study on the widow’s “mite,” see Go Deeper Section 2 at the end of the session.]*

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In Mark 13:1–3, we witness a conversation between Jesus and his apostles that foreshadows future events regarding the destruction of the temple. Then the two pairs of brothers, James and John, Peter and Andrew, privately ask Jesus when those violent events will happen.

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Read Mark 13:3–13. You'll see that Jesus doesn't really answer his disciples' questions. Rather, he focuses on how they can remain faithful to him during their future suffering and trials.

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**What are their responsibilities when facing persecution?**

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**What hope does he give them for those critical moments when they must defend themselves to the authorities?**

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**Describe a time you have needed the right words to defend your faith. What happened?**

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Read Mark 13:24–37. Remember that Peter (whose story Mark is transcribing throughout this book), James, and John were with Jesus when he was transfigured. Now, Jesus promises that one day he will return in that same radiance but with an army of angels at his back. In Mark 13:32–33, Jesus challenges the disciples to live every day in light of his return.

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Most of us live in relative comfort, and our routines can lull us into a sense of stability—that everything will be the same until the day we grow old. So, here's the question: **Are you ready for Jesus's return? Are you living like he could return tomorrow? If not, why?**

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peace (whereas, a king riding a horse was declaring war).

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So Jesus, by riding into Jerusalem on a never-before-ridden donkey, declared himself the Messiah—a savior coming in peace, not to overcome the Romans. He dramatically re-enacted the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

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The people—including the disciples—failed to recognize that he was coming not as a warrior but as the Prince of Peace. Their joyful adulation, while rightly directed at their savior, anticipated the wrong kind of salvation.

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**What ideas about Jesus did you have previously that you’ve since learned were untrue or mistaken?**

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The people saw in Jesus what they were hoping for, not what he truly was. **In what ways have you expected God to do things or be a certain way based on your circumstances rather than his Word?**

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**2. Background: What exactly was a widow’s “mite”?**

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Jesus observed a poor widow quietly putting her donation into the temple coffers, praising her “mite” over the abundance that the Pharisees ostentatiously poured in. What exactly is a mite? The word is a contraction of “minute,” from the Latin *minutum*, which is the translation of the

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