

LESSON 10

WATCH OUT FOR TRAPS

MARK 12:1–44



1 How are you a spiritual leader at church? in your neighborhood? at work?



Read Mark 12:1–44 and the following notes:

☐ 12:14 ☐ 12:17 ☐ 12:18–23 ☐ 12:28 ☐ 12:38–40 ☐ 12:40

2 If you had lived in Jerusalem at this time, would you have favored the Pharisees, Sadducees, or the supporters of Herod?



3 Who are the religious leaders of our day and our society?

In this chapter, the religious leaders, infuriated by a parable, tried to trap Jesus with several well-thought-out trick questions and were embarrassed when unable to answer Jesus' question. While it's easy to be appalled at the attitude of those religious leaders, the fact is that we may have the same tendencies. It is easy to become embroiled in theological arguments and ignore or forget the purposes and power of God. We may feel threatened by what the Scriptures are saying about certain areas of our life. And we may pretend to be interested in spiritual things in order to keep up good appearances. While correct doctrine is important, we should not use it as a weapon, setting traps and roadblocks for those who are trying to do God's work.

4 The question about the resurrection was an issue that sharply divided the Pharisees and Sadducees. What thorny issues or theological questions divide believers in a similar way today?

5 The religious leaders became furious at the implications of the story of the evil farmers (12:1–12). What kinds of accusations would make you furious?



6 Many of the Pharisees pretended to be pious. In what ways do you pretend to be something you are not?

7 Teachers of the law craved recognition and honor. In what ways do you seek recognition and honor?



8 Ask God to make you sensitive to his purposes and plans so that you do not become a hindrance to those who are genuinely trying to do God's work. If you had to select one, what kind of trap are you most inclined to set for others?

MORE
for studying
other themes
in this section

A Why would Jesus tell a parable that was sure to infuriate the religious leaders (12:1–12)?

B What arguments were used to try to trick Jesus (12:13–15, 19–23, 28)? What do Jesus' answers tell us about him (12:15–17, 24–27, 29–34)?

C Whom do you know who is “not far from the Kingdom of God” (12:34)? How can you help bring that person closer?

D The religious leaders were more interested in the technicalities of their laws than in loving God and their neighbor. When do you tend to get caught up in rules and forget about people?

E Why did Jesus commend the poor widow for her gift (12:43, 44)? What in her example does Jesus want us to copy? What are some ways you could do this?

