



## READING PLAN FOR WEEK OF OCTOBER 18, 2020

### DAY 1

#### READ ► Mark 12:13-17

For the Pharisees and the Herodians, this was about much more than tax policy. Paying taxes to Rome was somewhat of an open sore for the Jews. After all, they were supposed to be God's free and redeemed people. Their question to Jesus about the lawfulness of Jews paying a Roman tax was their vain attempt to get Him in trouble before the temple crowd. If he said yes, the Jews would reject Him as a Roman sympathizer. If He said no, they could turn Him in to the Romans as a rebel.

Jesus' response was brilliant. He refused to be crammed into a political box. Therefore, He answered with wisdom, emphasizing the priorities of life: Give Caesar his tax, but don't give him ultimate authority over your life; honor the law, but honor the Lord above the law.

**How do you need to shift your priorities to honor the Lord above all?**



### DAY 2

#### READ ► Mark 12:18-27

The Sadducees tried a theological trap, but Jesus revealed that the topic of their misguided question—marriage in the resurrection—is something that will not continue to exist in the new heavens and new earth. Is Jesus minimizing the beauty of marriage? Far from it! We know from Ephesians 5 that Jesus Himself is the archetype for understanding the meaning of marriage. Instead, Jesus is expanding their categories of what heaven will be like. In heaven, the relationships we have with the Lord and our fellow saints will mysteriously surpass any form of love we experience here on earth. This is the "power of God" that Jesus referred to. He invited the Sadducees to see that God's wisdom and power are so much greater than we could imagine, and the glories that will be revealed on the other side of eternity will be more magnificent than we could ever dare hope.

**Why is it important that we listen to the Scriptures for our understanding of what heaven will be like?**



## DAY 3

### READ ► Mark 12:28-34

Jesus cited what the Jews call the Shema from Deuteronomy 6. “Shema” is the Hebrew word for “listen” or “hear.” This passage is one of the most well known passages of all the Old Testament Scriptures. At the time the Shema was written, there were many false gods and religions competing for the belief of the people. In the middle of all this religious confusion, the Lord revealed through the prophet Moses who He really is: “The Lord is one.” In other words, He is different, unique, and set apart in His nature and character. He is all-sufficient and all-powerful. He is the one true God.

We should consider it a great gift that God would be kind enough to reveal Himself to us and tell us something about how to relate to Him and to others.

**What distractions surround you as you go throughout your day? How will you listen to and obey the one true God in the midst of those distractions?**



## DAY 4

### READ ► Mark 12:35-37

With a knowledge of the Old Testament prophets, Jesus’ listeners understood there was a Messiah who would come one day to make everything right again in Israel, and this Messiah would be a descendant of David. Jesus quoted from Psalm 110 to challenge their assumptions about this Messiah. The popular belief was that the Messiah would be merely a human descendant of King David. If that were so, Jesus asked, then why did David call the Messiah his “Lord”? The only way to make sense of Psalm 110 is if the Messiah was not just a man but also God. Jesus revealed that according to this familiar psalm, the Messiah would be God’s Son coming through David’s lineage.

Jesus invited His listeners to abandon what they thought or assumed He should be like and to see Him for who He really is according to the Scriptures.

**What are some ways you will show honor to Jesus as your Lord?**



## DAY 5

### READ ► Mark 12:38-40

In these three verses, Jesus gave a scathing rebuke to those with hypocritical devotion—they appear to be devoted to God on the outside but are actually far from Him on the inside.

Jesus provided five marks of hypocritical devotion:

1. Focuses on the external over the internal
2. Is driven by the applause of others
3. Craves positions of power and privilege
4. Abuses power for personal gain at the expense of others
5. Has outward religion that doesn’t match inward reality

We tend to think of others as hypocrites but not ourselves. We must resist this, because we are all prone to hypocrisy to some degree. No one on this side of the resurrection reads the Bible and decides to be a self-righteous Pharisee on purpose, but we all easily drift in that direction if we take our eyes off of Jesus.

**Which of the marks of hypocritical devotion do you struggle with, and how will you fight to resist that drift?**

