Gospel of Mark
Lesson 52 “The Final Warning

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on “The Gospel of Mark” this morning.

A. Review - This series comes from **Galatians 2:20**. It’s now Christ living in us so in order for us to understand how He lives in us, it’s helpful to study how He lived on earth.

B. Over the past few weeks, we have studied Jesus’s final week in Jerusalem — the week leading up His crucifixion. We saw Jesus curse a fig tree, which represented the Old Covenant and man’s attempt to earn favor with God through his own performance.

C. Today, we are going to see Jesus tell two parables to the religious leaders that serve as a final warning to them to repent and receive the grace of God. These parables are simple, and direct: **stop trusting our performance and receive the Son—or lose everything you’ve tried to work for.**

II. The Final Warning

A. **Matthew 21:28-32 NIV The Parable of the Two Sons**

1. The vineyard represents the kingdom of God (according to ***Matthew 21:40-43*****).**
2. The two sons represent two groups of people. The first group is the sinners, tax collectors and harlots who initially said no, but later repented and believed.
3. The second is the religious eestablishment that said the right things, but whose heart was far from God.
4. Some would say, “but Pastor Brian, you are being judgmental. God looks at our hearts, not our action.” Really, what about **Titus 1:16?**
    a. We can profess to know God, but deny Him by our works.
    b. In the context, it wasn’t the outwardly holy who knew Him. It was the tax collector, the prostitute, and the sinner.
    c. The work He is looking for? Repent and accept the grace of God.
5. John Wesley seemed to be doing everything right. He was an ordained minister who studied Scripture, prayed, fasted, served the poor, and traveled to America as a missionary. While crossing the Atlantic, his ship entered a violent storm. Wesley was terrified while a group of Moravian Christians calmly worshiped. He realized they had a peace he lacked. After an unsuccessful mission, Wesley returned to England discouraged. At a meeting on Aldersgate Street, he heard Martin Luther’s introduction to Romans and said his heart was “strangely warmed.” He wrote, “I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation.” Wesley worked for. Jesus and preached Jesus, but he still needed to trust Jesus. **Performance or the Son?**
6. The point Jesus is making isn’t our actions (prostiution, tax collection) that keep us from being saved, it is our pride that keeps us from trusting in a savior.7. This

parable sets up the harsh judgment the next parable discusses.

B. **Mark 12:1-12 NIV The Parable of the Vinedressers**

1. The man who planted the vineyard is God, the vineyard is the kingdom of God and the farmers represent the religious establishment.
2. God looked for fruit at harvest time and found none. Not the fruit of the law.
3. Throughout Israel's history, its leaders rejected the prophets God sent. Jeremiah was beaten and imprisoned, Zechariah was stoned in the temple courts, Micaiah was struck and imprisoned, and according to tradition, Isaiah was sawn in two. **They wanted the benefits of the kingdom without surrending to its king!**
4. God then sent the Son who He thought they would respect, but they killed Him with the aim of taking His inheritance, which was people. They wanted control.
5. Jesus warned that the owner would judge the farmers and entrust the vineyard to others (Gentiles -sinners, tax collectors, prostitues.
    a. This was fulfilled in 70 AD when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, bringing the temple-centered Old Covenant system to an end. God's kingdom was now revealed in His New Covenant people—believing Jews and Gentiles built upon Jesus.
    b. **But don't get lost in the date. The point is that a system designed to bring people to God had become a barrier keeping people from Him.**
    c. This judgment was just because their religious system crushed the people it was supposed to help. They piled on rules no one could keep, used shame to control people, and then killed the Son who came to set them free. **Luke 11:46-52**.
    d. Unfortunately, legalism is still alive today….*God will love me more if I do better. If I pray more.I am struggling, I must not have enough faith.* And God still wants to tear down every performance-based mindset that tells people they must do more before they can receive what Jesus died to give them freely. These demonic mindsets lay burdens on us that make Jesus angry!
6. ***Verses 10-11*** Jesus is the cornerstone the builders rejected! They rejected, but we have received!
7. ***Verse 12*** Religion became so angry it plotted to kill the grace of God!

III. Conclusion - The religious leaders lost everything because they ignored God's final warning and rejected the Son who came to give them grace. Their story leaves us with one simple question:

What will we do with Jesus? Will we continue trying to prove ourselves—or receive the grace only He can give?

A. Pray Closing Prayer