**BCM Participant Guide**

**Mark 12:28-13:37**

*Context: Jesus has been verbally sparring with the Pharisees. They attempted to trap Him with questions, but He navigated each with ease. This study picks up at the end of this “discussion.”*

**Matter of the Heart**

**Mark 12:28-34**

* Who in your life has loved you well? What did they do that conveyed that love?
* Jesus asserts that the greatest command is a passage known to the Jews as the Shema (see notes for more information). It calls us to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. What does it look like to practically love God in each of these areas?
  + Which of the four is easiest for you? Which do you struggle with the most? Why?
* Jesus goes further and adds a second command. Why is it significant that Jesus connects the command to love our neighbors to the first command to love the Lord?
  + What does it look like practically to love your neighbors?
* The scribe’s response impressed Jesus, but his heart posture was still incomplete.
  + What made the scribe close to the kingdom of God?
  + Unfortunately, his courage and intellectual acceptance were not enough. What was he missing?
    - Of these three ideas, which is hardest for you? Why?

**Mark 12:35-37.**

* Jesus quotes the first verse of Psalm 110, which was widely known as a messianic prophecy. What does it reveal about the Messiah?
  + What cultural messages easily distract you or other Christians from God’s truth?
  + How can we avoid being deceived by our cultural context?

**Mark 12:38-44**

* What do you want others to notice about you? (Character traits, abilities, etc.)
  + What things are you tempted to do or say to get others to notice you? Are there specific situations that tempt you to act for praise instead of out of a love for God?
  + How can you fight those temptations?
* The widow in v. 42 provides a stark contrast to this mindset. **Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3**. Why was the widow’s offering more noteworthy than the others Jesus observed?
  + How have you seen this type of sincere, sacrificial giving in the church today?
  + What other things might God call you to give besides your money?
  + This type of sacrificial, selfless giving is challenging. What tends to hold you back from giving in this way?

**The End Times**

How do you feel about the end times? Do you find this period fascinating, scary, irrelevant, etc.? **Read Mark 13:1-37.**

To clarify before moving forward, Jesus is addressing two different future events.

1. When the temple will be destroyed (v. 1-23, 28-30)

2. When He will return (v. 24-27, 31-36)

Looking at the first 23 verses, what are the signs that the temple is going to be destroyed?

* Of these signs, the abomination of desolation is the only one that predicts the temple’s imminent destruction. Why, then, does Jesus mention the other signs?
  + Why is it dangerous to believe something is the end of the world when it is not?
  + How can warnings of suffering help believers remain faithful?

In contrast to the destruction of the temple, there will be no warning of Jesus’s second coming. As a result, we must always be ready for His return.

* **Read Titus 2:11-13**. What should we be doing while we wait?
* In what ways do you often grow apathetic while waiting for Jesus?
* What steps can you take to remain alert?

**Conclusion**

The overarching encouragement in this passage is that we have hope! God is in control, and our salvation is guaranteed. Though we do not know the timing of the end times, we can endure through these trials because we know Jesus WILL return. The Lord’s victory is certain. Over this next week, take time to reflect on that truth.