

Meet Jesus: As he goes on the attack

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[0 : 00] So we're in Mark chapter 12, you might like to turn that up, it's on page 849, Mark chapter 12, page 849, and I'll read from verse 35.

Mark 12 from verse 35. And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, How can the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David?

David himself in the spirit declared, The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet. David himself calls him Lord, so how is he his son?

And the great throng heard him gladly. And in his teaching he said, Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honour at feasts, who devour widows' houses for a pretense, make long prayers, they will receive the greater condemnation.

The Evening Times on Monday reported on the switching on of the Glasgow City Lights.

[1 : 20] It was a spectacular occasion. I was there. And this is what they said. George Square glittered as more than, do you know how many people were there? I thought there might be about 5,000.

17,500, says the Evening Times. Festive revellers celebrated the annual Christmas light switch on, signalling the start of the holiday season.

Well friends, I wonder how many of those 17,500 people know that the Lord Jesus Christ created the universe. I wonder how many of them know that they're going to meet him as their judge on judgment day.

That Philippians chapter 2, At the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth. God used to be mentioned, didn't he, in the city motto, Let Glasgow flourish. But they dumped the rest of it, haven't they? The rest of it was by the preaching of his word and the praising of his name. And friends, we ourselves, we can easily drift into patterns of sin, can't we?

[2 : 36] You know, we can downgrade Jesus in our own life as Christians. Friends, the passage before us is about the authority of Jesus.

So fasten your seatbelts. Chapter 12, and we're in the temple with Jesus. And the religious leaders are after him. You might remember, it's like he's strayed onto their territory.

You know, and the guard dogs have woken up. They don't like his presence. It's his authority they don't like. Chapter 11, verse 28. They said to him, By what authority, do you see?

Are you doing these things? Or who gave you authority to do them? I guess they feel intimidated. Don't they, the scribes? You can just imagine it. Jesus is a threat to their status, isn't he?

Within the temple. So what are they doing? They're plotting his death. Just look with me. Chapter 12, verse 13. And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, what?

[3 : 37] To trap him in his talk. And then there's wave after wave of these religious people coming to Jesus to try and trap him. But eventually, look at verse 34, the end of verse 34, they run out of ammunition.

Can you see? The end of verse 34. And after that, look, do you see? No one dared to ask him any more questions. Now, remember the issue, hanging in the air.

It's about the authority of Jesus. And Jesus now speaks about his authority. But think about this. He does it, friends, in the third person. He talks about the authority of the Christ. And some of Mark's readers will know who he's talking about.

Peter knows, doesn't he? Chapter 8, who he's talking about. And perhaps some of the scribes privately, you know, in their own thinking, they know who Jesus is talking about.

[4 : 47] Sometimes I get in trouble with the wife. And I often use the third person. So I say something like this. Someone forgot to put the wheelie bin out.

And it's not exactly an admission of guilt, but we both know it is. Now, let's look at this here. Jesus is about to speak in the third person.

And it's about his authority. So that's our first point, the authority of Christ. And Mark's already been pointing us in the right direction. You might remember chapter 11.

Chapter 1, sorry, verse 11. God the Father says to the Son, doesn't he? You are my beloved Son. And then chapter 2.

The scribes rightly exclaim, they say, Who can forgive sin but God alone? Do you see? Jesus is operating, isn't he, as God on planet Earth.

[5 : 49] He raises the dead, doesn't he? Forgives sin, heals people. He controls nature with a word. It's a little bit like Genesis chapter 1, isn't it?

He speaks and creation jumps to attention. And the reaction, the disciples, you'll know. They say, Who is this? Even the wind and waves obey him.

So each chapter in Mark's Gospel, Mark is bringing in the evidence. And we come to our passage. And Jesus is speaking in the third person about himself.

So let's just look at that from verse 35. And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, How can the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David? David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.

David himself called him Lord, that is the Christ. So how is he his Son? And the great throng heard him gladly.

[7 : 00] Now Jesus is quoting Old Testament scripture. It's Psalm 110. And Psalm 110, well, it had seemed so difficult to understand for a thousand years.

God's people were struggling with that. Whoever was David speaking about, they used to ask each other. And along comes Jesus. And friends, when you've got the second person of the Trinity interpreting scripture for you, it's best to listen to him, isn't it?

Do you see? To try and understand his view. It's the revelation of God. And you'll need to concentrate here. It's quite a complex passage.

I've not found it difficult. You might need to stretch or take a deep breath to get some oxygen pumping around so that you're up to speed and your brain's working properly.

You'll need to concentrate, friends. So here we go. Verse 35. And Jesus describes the scribes' limited view of the Christ.

[8 : 17] Verse 35. And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, How can the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David?

What he's saying, friends, he's saying, In your understanding of the Christ, don't stop with the Son of David.

Read Psalm 110. There's a lot more to it. And because Jesus is using scripture, think about this. He's in the temple. It's like King David comes along into the temple.

Well, the scribes hadn't expected him. They were attacking Jesus, but they wouldn't dare attack King David. So Jesus lifts him from the pages of scripture, doesn't he?

Verse 36. David himself said, Jesus, In the Holy Spirit declared, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.

[9 : 16] David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son? And the great throng, Heard him gladly. David himself said, Says Jesus.

You know, You wouldn't dare argue with King David, would you? In the Holy Spirit, That is inspired by God.

That's what Jesus is saying. So here we are, Friends. We've got King David speaking, Through the scriptures, Inspired by God's Spirit.

And it's like the scribes are in the dock. This is irrefutable. David speaks. The Lord said to my Lord. In Hebrew, That's Yahweh said to Adonai. So the two there, The Lord said to my Lord. And this is what's been troubling the Jews.

[10 : 16] For a thousand years. You know, They've been asking, Was David worshipping two lords? But Jesus is saying, Here, listen, Adonai is the Christ.

That's right. David, One thousand years previously, Knew, Who? The Christ.

You see? In fact, The Christ was his Lord. And so, To rephrase, Friends, What David is saying in Psalm 110. Listen to this.

The Lord said to my Christ. Is this making sense? The Lord said to my Christ, Sit at my right hand, Until I put your enemies under your feet.

And so, Think about this. It's not simply Davidic blood That would identify the Christ. It's his eternal being.

[11 : 13] Isn't it? He spans, He's eternal. He spans the ages. Do you see? What's more, There's intimacy with God. The Christ in Yahweh, There's that intimacy.

David's Lord, Is the mediator, Between David, And Yahweh. Do you see? The Lord said to my Lord, Jesus is presenting the data.

It's about, The Christ. It's about, He's speaking, Isn't he? In a third person. But who is he speaking about? It's him.

Isn't it, Friends? Jesus, Is speaking, About himself. Is lifting, David's words, From scripture, To describe, Himself.

And here, Friends, We move on now. He's the authority, That the scribes were looking for. Here it is, Verse 36. Look at that. David himself said, Jesus, In the Holy Spirit, Declared, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, Until I put your enemies, Under your feet.

[12 : 21] Right hand of Yahweh. That's ultimate, Authority. God the Father is saying that, To God the Son. William Hendrickson, Says this in his commentary, God is speaking to the mediator, He is promising the mediator, Such preeminence, Power, Authority, And majesty, As would be proper, Only for one who, As to his person, From all eternity, Was, Is now, And forever will be, God, Until I put your, Enemies, Under your feet.

Where else have we heard that friends? Can you remember, Genesis, Chapter 3, Verse 15, The devil, Will, Be, Crushed.

Psalms 110, Sit at my, Right hand, Until I put your enemies, Under your feet, Says, Yahweh, To the Christ.

Jesus is saying, Yes, Son of David, As regards lineage, His family tree, But don't stop there. He, Is, Also, Lord, Of David.

And friends, Only God, Could combine, Those two identities, Do you see? It's the incarnation, It's the incarnation, Isn't it? And we move, Now, Towards our second, Point.

[13 : 58] Our first point, Was the authority, Of Christ. Mark says it, Doesn't he, In the opening, Of the gospel even. He says the good news, Doesn't he? About Jesus Christ, The son of God.

And the scribes, Had underestimated it, Hadn't they? Hadn't they? They'd underestimated his authority. They'd not understood the Bibles. And their dangerous friends, That our Christian life, It can get like, It can get like a comfy armchair, Can't it?

That we relax back into, And, And, And, And just forget, The authority, Of Jesus. You know, We can ratchet up, Our own authority, Can't we?

And downplay, The authority, Of Jesus, In our lives. I was, In, Perth, At the weekend, And, I met a French Christian, And I was chatting with him, And, He was married, With two children, I think it was two children, But sadly, He was separated.

Now, I don't know the ins and outs, But what really hurt me, Is a little later on, A young lady, Walked up to us, And this French Christian, Introduced her, As his girlfriend.

[15 : 16] Friends, Whose authority, Are we living under? And our second point now, More briefly, The sham, Of the scribes. Just imagine, If you're a scribe, And you're hearing Jesus, In these verses.

It's like Jesus, Has caught them red handed. Verse 38, And in his teaching, He said, Beware of the scribes, Who like to walk around, In long robes, And like greetings, In the market places, And have the best seats, In the synagogues, And the places of honour, At feasts, Who devour widows houses, And for a pretense, Make long prayers, They will receive, The greater condemnation.

So, Jesus is teaching, Isn't he? In the temple. The crowds, Are enthralled. And think about this, He's effectively, Taken the place, Of the scribes, Within the temple.

It's like he's taken over, The temple. And in the last, In the last, In the last sentence there, He actually, He actually, Condemns them, Doesn't he?

They will receive, The greater condemnation. He writes them off, It's a new era, Isn't it? The scribes are condemned, Jesus is teaching, In the temple, But soon, By the end of the week, In fact, The temple will be finished.

[16 : 42] Do you remember? The curtain, Will be torn, In two. Written off, By God. Because the whole, Of the Old Testament, And all of history, Was waiting, For this Christ.

You see? Such a contrast, Isn't it? To made up, Religion. Beware of the scribes, Says Jesus, Who walk around, In long robes.

The soldiers, Divided, Jesus' clothes, Didn't they? So he had none. He was naked, As he bore, His father's wrath, For you.

Verse 38, And like greetings, In the marketplaces, No greetings, For the Christ. And Pilate said to him, Why, What evil has he done?

But they shouted, All the more, Crucify him, Crucify him. Verse 39, And have the best seats, In the synagogues, In the best places, At feasts, Not a place of honour, For Jesus, But impaled, Friends, For you, Upon a cross.

[17 : 55] Verse 40, The scribes, Devour widows' houses, For a pretense, Who, Though he was in the form of God, Did not count equality with God, A thing to be grasped, But made himself, Nothing.

Philippians, Chapter 2. Verse 40, The scribes make long prayers, Not for Jesus, Friends, A long prayer, To impress others, But a short prayer, To his father, My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?

So here he is, God's son, He visits, But only a few, Notice, Our world edits him out, Doesn't it?

But all, Friends, Is not what it seems, Verse 36, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, Until I put your enemies, Under your feet, And isn't that great news, Friends?

You know, In our times, In your own personal circumstances, That with him, We have, The victory, Oh what a mystery, Meekness, And majesty, Bow down and worship, For this, Is, Your, God, Shall we pray?

[19 : 24] Dear heavenly father, Father, We thank you so much, For sending, Your son into the world, And we know father, That your revelation, Is, Through your word, Yet also through your spirit, So we thank you father, That you, Enable us to see things, That, Would otherwise, Be veiled, We think of our friends, We think of, This great city, And all those, We know, Who don't yet know your son, As their Lord and saviour, We pray that you, Would reveal him, As he is, In his majesty, To them, We pray for the guys, Working on the site, Just next door, That they would get time, To contemplate, What you've done, For them, This Christmas, And we pray, For each other, That you'd abide with us, When we go our separate ways, Just now, And that in all we'll do, We'll bring you glory, And to that end, May the grace, Of our Lord Jesus Christ,

And the love of God, And the fellowship, Of the Holy Spirit, Be with us now, This day, And forevermore, Amen.