

All right. Good morning, everyone. As is announced, I'll be taking over this week. Pastor Josh is on a break. We will not, however, be taking a break from Mark. Our journey through the gospel of Mark continues on. If you will turn in your Bibles to Mark chapter 12. And we will begin our reading at verse 35. All right, if you would please stand for the reading of God's word. Starting at verse 35, and Jesus began to say, as he taught in the temple, how is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself said in the Holy Spirit, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies beneath your feet. David himself calls him Lord. So in what sense is he his son? And the large crowd enjoyed listening to him. And in his teaching he was saying, beware of the scribes who want to walk around in long robes and want respectful greetings in the marketplaces, and thus seats in the synagogues, and places of honor at banquets, who devour widows' houses and for appearances' sake offer long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation. And he sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the crowd was putting money into the treasury, and many rich people were putting in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two lepta, which amount to a quadrants. and calling his disciples to him, he said to them, truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of those putting money into the treasury, for they all put in out of their surplus, but she out of her poverty put in all she owned, all she had to live on. You may be seated. Let's pray together. Gracious Heavenly Father, Lord, we are thankful to you for the gathering of your body this day, for the worship of you. We're thankful for the unity and the blessing and the salvation that we all share in your son. We pray you would be with us today for the preaching of your word and we pray that our hearers, our brothers and sisters will be edified and built up Encouraged I pray for myself that you would grant me by your spirit the ability to teach your word faithfully and clearly without confusion We pray Lord that ultimately in all these things your son would be glorified We ask this in Jesus name Amen Okay Well, we are in a very interesting passage today in Mark. If you recall what has been said of Mark so far, what has been happening during this part of Jesus's ministry, Jesus has had an ongoing contention with the scribes and the Pharisees. He has been subjected to a continuous onslaught of questioning, constant attempts to trap him, to pit the crowd against him. And as we saw in our passage last week, Jesus had finally silenced the scribes. And this week in our passage, as Jesus is in the temple teaching before the crowd, Jesus now somewhat goes on the offensive. not to trap the scribes in the same way they were doing to him, but to reveal to the crowd, so to speak, that these scribes, these esteemed experts in the law, are not what they appear to be. Jesus with a question, a quotation from the Psalms, and a follow-up question, then a warning, and then with some remarks on the offering of a widow is going to expose the false understanding and the false worship of the scribes. Now, it might seem hard or difficult to understand how these passages actually fit together, how Jesus's line of questioning to the crowd

will lead into this warning of the scribes and then to this offering of the widow. It's difficult to see how these things may be connected. So to help us to grasp this, I'm going to lean upon the famous reformer known for his wit and his pithy statements, John Calvin. He has this to say, and I think this will help us as we go through our passage today. Man with all his shrewdness is about as stupid about understanding by himself the mysteries of God as a mule is incapable of understanding musical harmony. John Calvin, like Luther, is oftentimes very blunt and very crass in how he speaks, but he gets to the heart of the point. What he is getting at here is this prevalent contrast in the scriptures between earthly, worldly knowledge and heavenly, spiritual knowledge. We see these two things contrasted all the time in scriptures in the writings of Paul in the writings of James and here in the in this narrative about Jesus. Jesus is going to touch it with the needle by using the scribes as an example. So with that let's begin. We start off with our first point of a messianic misconception, meaning a misunderstanding about who the Christ is. In verse 35, Jesus began to say, as he taught in the temple, how is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? Now, what's curious about this question, it's interesting that Jesus is asking this question, namely because that's not a wrong view of the Christ to have. Christ oftentimes refers to himself as the son of David in multiple instances. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus is introduced as the son of David. So this is a right view to hold about Christ. So it's interesting that Jesus would be questioning this about the scribes. There's a parallel passage to this in the gospel of Matthew in chapter 22. Jesus asked this, actually this very direct question to the Pharisees as well, asking them, what do you say of the Messiah? Whose son is he? And they reply with David. He is the son of David. This was the common view in the first century. And honestly, this is the, if you were to ask a first century Jew this question, this is the response that they would give you. It's expected. And it's expected because this is the Old Testament hope. Going back to King David himself, he was given a divine promise in a covenant relationship with the Lord. King David was promised that he would have a son who would reign eternally on the throne. And then you have the prophets in Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel. You have the prophets who all foretell of one day a righteous branch of David will be raised up. He will reign on the throne. He will execute justice and righteousness in the land. He would save Israel like a shepherd. He would overcome their enemies and lead them to greener pastures, a time of peace, a time of prosperity. So again on the surface this understanding isn't wrong and it's it's curious as to why Jesus is questioning it. And so just to get to the heart of the matter, and as you walk through the text, I think this will be demonstrated for us plainly. What we have here is a misconception about the Messiah, and it's rooted in a classic case of proper denotation, wrong connotation. To put it in a more simpler way, they have the title right, they have the certain core facts right, but they missed the big picture of who Jesus actually is. to use a comical analogy to help

you understand what I'm meaning. So imagine if I was to walk out of the building this day after this service, I go to my car and I see a bright orange or yellow piece of paper on it. And on that piece of paper, it says, parking fine. Now imagine instead of me giving the typical response I would give in receiving a citation, I say instead, well, that's the best compliment I've received all week. The city thinks I'm parking fine. It's the same idea. I have the right term, but I have the wrong meaning. Me and the city of Marshfield are on two different wavelengths there. And this is the actual problem with the scribe's view of the Messiah. Let's continue on our next few verses and let's see this demonstrated a little more plainly. Jesus after asking that question in verse 36, he gives a quotation from a Psalm. This is Psalm 110. Now it's important to note some things about the Psalm that it is a Messianic Psalm. It means that it is a Psalm that actually speaks of the coming Messiah. And this is one of the most important Messianic Psalms because it reveals that the coming Messiah is both a king and a priest, which of course, these are the opposites that Jesus Christ actually holds. He's a greater high priest of a greater order than the tribe of Levi, and he's a greater king than even King David. The quotation is this, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies beneath your feet. This is one of the most quoted Psalms in the New Testament. And it is also a very important fact here that might seem obvious is King David wrote this. And this is not a mundane detail about the Psalm. This is actually a very important part of Jesus's reasoning and asking this question. See, Jesus is driving at something here. And I think we can begin to see an argument forming here, but let's just break it down what Jesus is getting at. If the Christ, as the scribes understand him, is merely a son of David, merely a descendant of David according to the flesh, then why would David call him his Lord? That's the idea. Why would David call someone who is his own son his Lord? Because, I mean, a father naturally has more authority than a son. And if Jesus was only a son, if the Christ was only a son of David, then the order is somehow flipped in the Psalm, because David would be the more authoritative figure. And the son would only be an heir of David, an heir of his throne. But it's also important to note that David was the king of Israel. He was the only king of Israel. See, when you read this entire Psalm, Psalm 110 in context, the person David speaks of is clearly much greater than just a king of Israel. He's on a far greater throne than just the throne of David and his rule is going to span far more than just the nation of Israel. Psalm 110 depicts a Messiah ruling at the right hand of the Father who reigns over the nations and executes justice over the nations and is part of a priesthood that is eternal. I think we can kind of begin to see what Jesus is driving at here. If you take up the entirety of Old Testament revelation that speaks concerning Christ, you're going to see that the Christ is something so much more than just merely a flesh descendant of David. Now, not to take away of what I said before, there was an expectation of a son of David. So it's not, there's not a contradiction in the scriptures here. If you

actually, if you've been part of the Sunday school lesson we've been going through, we actually covered how the Old Testament in a way reveals, but also conceals the Messiah and kind of a veil of mystery that gets pulled once Jesus is incarnated. There is a sense of mystery about the development of Christ. But when even in spite of that when you take up the entirety of Old Testament Revelation, Jesus is something so much more and so much greater than just a mere human King. So the scribes had a big misconception, but this misconception was not just simply because of a lack of information. It's not like this is the scribes first time hearing the Psalms and they just needed this extra bit of information to set them straight. There's actually a lot of places I wanna go to demonstrate this, but I would like for us to turn over to John 5. If you will turn to John 5, we'll be reading one verse just to establish the point here. Again, there's numerous examples I could give for this, but most of them are long. John 5, verse 13. Oh, I apologize. I think I had that verse wrong. Okay, I got a better idea. Let's turn to John 8. My apologies. I must have made a typo in my notes. Okay, John 8. Let's just cover this section in stride because it's a bit of a longer passage. Looking at verse 31. So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed him, if you abide in my word, then you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free. They answered him, we are Abraham's seed and have never yet been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say you will become free? Jesus answered them, truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. And the slave does not remain in the house forever, the son does remain forever. So if the son makes you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are Abraham's seed, yet you are seeking to kill me. because my word has no place in you. I speak the things which I have seen with my father, therefore also do the things which you heard from your father.' And they answered and said to him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said to them, If you are Abraham's children, you would do the deeds of Abraham. But now you are seeking to kill me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God. This Abraham did not do. You were doing the deeds of your father, they said to him. We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one father, God. Jesus said to them, if God were your father, you would love me. For I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come of myself, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear my word. You are of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But I speak the truth, you do not believe me. Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe me? He who is of God hears the words of God. For this reason, you do not hear them because you are not of God. The Jews answered and said to him, do we not rightly say that you are a Samaritan and have a demon? Jesus answered, I do not have a demon, but I honor my father and you

dishonor me. But I do not seek my glory. There is one who seeks and judges. Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death ever. And the Jews said to him, now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died and the prophets also. And you say, if anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death ever. Surely you are not greater than our father Abraham who died. The prophets died too. Whom do you make yourself out to be? Jesus answered, if I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my father who glorifies me, of whom you say he is our God. You have not known him, but I know him. And if I say that I do not know him, I will be a liar like you. But I do know him and keep his word. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad. So the Jews said to him, you are not yet 50 years old, and have you seen Abraham? Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am. Therefore they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. See the point I'm making here is that the Jews did not have a problem with just simple ignorance about who the Christ was. It's not simply that they just didn't have the right information. The identity of the Christ for the scribes and the reason Jesus begins asking them these questions is because of a deeper rooted problem that the scribes have with their view on who the Christ is. I think to highlight what that misconception is, I'm going to quote a famous commentator named William Barclay, who I think puts this in a way far better than I can. William Barclay describes the misconception about the Christ as a son of David the scribes had in this way. The trouble was that the title son of David had got itself inextricably tangled with the idea of a conquering Messiah. The title son of David had got involved in political and nationalistic hopes and dreams, aims and ambitions. See, the idea is that the scribes rightly believed that Christ was the son of David, but what they got wrong is that they expected this son of David that was to come to be like the king David, a conquering king, one who defeated Israel's enemies, one who liberated Israel and would exalt them as a nation. And this happened throughout centuries of scribal tradition. The identity of the Messiah began to morph into something other than what was initially revealed. With their understanding of the Messiah's identity, their expectations of what the Messiah would do naturally followed. The Messiah gradually just developed into this merely national savior of Israel. A political savior, a conqueror, a warrior. They expected the Christ to come and liberate them from Rome. And this was just not a misunderstanding on the scribes part. This was a misunderstanding for Jesus disciples as well. We see over and over again, the disciples are constantly missing the big picture and they did this all the way until right before Jesus ascended. They just saw Jesus raised from the dead conquering death and right before he ascends the question they ask him is this in Acts chapter 1. Will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? What they were looking for was that for Jesus now that he's been raised from the dead, they were looking for him to finally free them from their Roman occupiers. Still, even after the resurrection, still missing it. Now, on the disciples end, this was

simply a problem of slowness of heart to believe. They were somewhat, in some sense, dull and hard-hearted. But for the scribes, this is something a little more sinister. As we read in John chapter eight, again, the issue is not that Jesus didn't reveal himself to the scribes. He did it in very plain terms. They heard his word. They saw his miracles. They saw him raise someone from the dead. Their issue is not their inability to understand or their ignorance. The issue is that they will not understand, well, they don't understand because they will not understand. In other words, it's not an issue of the intellect. It's not an issue of information. It is an issue of the heart. Their issue was the same problem that their fathers had, the same fathers who stoned the prophets. Their issue was the same problem back in Exodus, right before they left for the promised land when they made a golden calf. Their problem is the same back in Samuel when Israel wanted a king like this world and they nominated King Saul to be their king. The problem is the same for Israel all across the board in both Old Testaments and New. They did not want God as he is. They did not want a Messiah as he is. They wanted a Messiah in their own image. One that functioned according to their own understanding. One who would fulfill their hopes, their ambitions, their desires. They wanted a worldly Messiah, a Christ according to the flesh. Not one who is bringing the spiritual blessings of God, but one who is bringing temporal blessings, temporal provisions, land and seed, prosperity, national prosperity. And they wanted their nation to be exalted above all the other nations, which makes sense and to some degree because they were God's chosen people. But their view of the Christ, though they may have some picture of his identity correct, their view of Christ was ultimately motivated by their idolatrous hearts. They wanted Jesus to fulfill their own desires. And when Jesus revealed himself and that he was not the Christ that they were wanting, when he revealed himself in plain terms, they sought to kill him every time. They cannot see because they won't see. See, the scribe's rejection of the Messiah is a symptom of their evil, unbelieving heart, but it is also a judgment against them. We talked about how Psalm 110 is one of the most quoted Psalms in the New Testament. There is another Old Testament verse that is often quoted in the New Testament as well, and that's Isaiah 6. We've actually heard it before back in Mark, in previous chapters. Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive. For the heart of this people has grown dull, their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their heart and turn so that I should heal them. See, Jesus quotes this verse when he's explaining to the disciples why they get the mysteries of God plainly explained to them, but everybody else gets parables. Jesus often quotes this verse whenever the scribes and Pharisees reject him and reject who he is. Jesus actually calls them a living fulfillment of this prophecy. Well, we have to recognize here, in this passage in Isaiah, Isaiah, when he was commissioned as a prophet, was given a ministry of

hardening. Isaiah was sent to proclaim the word to the nation of Israel, who was currently in rebellion, but the idea was that Isaiah's preaching, his proclamations, would not turn them from their sin, it would only further harden them in their sin. Isaiah's ministry was in and of itself a judgment against them. Because hearing the words, they wouldn't actually hear them. Seeing, they wouldn't actually see. Their hearts had become so hardened that they were dead set on their course of rebellion all the way to exile. And what Isaiah's ministry did is once those judgments came into play, it left them with no excuse. The people of Israel received one of the worst judgments God can give in this age, in this life. The judgment of God doesn't always come with other nations invading or catastrophe or sickness. Sometimes the judgment of God is when God lift up his hands and say, your will be done. The Lord will hand you over to your own hard heartedness and rebellion and allow you to continue in the course that your heart is fixed on. The Lord will often hand them over to their own sinful delusion. And this is hinted at all over scripture. Romans one talks about this for the Gentiles, the Gentiles who suppress the truth, who did not want to retain God in their knowledge, God hands them over to their own desires. This is the same thing for the scribes and the Pharisees. Jesus had a similar ministry of hardening like Isaiah did and it was all for a purpose. It was a judgment against them. But ultimately what this is all moving to is Christ's crucifixion. The very means that we have for eternal life, our redemption, the shed blood of Christ accomplished and God used the wicked hearts of Israel to do it. Jesus' ministry of hardening was so effective that right at Jesus' trial, they stood before Pontius Pilate saying, we have no king but Caesar, crucify him. Israel was becoming hardened in their sin. But of course we have to note that not all of Israel was subject to this judgment Many of Jesus disciples were Jewish many of his all of his apostles were Jewish God always has a remnant in every place in time and One of these apostles that Jesus has he actually got the identity of the Christ right turn to Matthew 16 verse 13 and And I'm gonna read it as well, so you don't have to turn there if you do not wish. Matthew chapter, sorry, Matthew 16 verse 13. Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he was asking his disciples saying, who do the people say that the son of man is? And they said, some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, but still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. And he said to them, but who do you say that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, you are the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said to him, blessed are you Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my father who is in heaven. And here we have our contrast spoken of before demonstrated so plainly the contrast between a earthly worldly understanding and knowledge and the heavenly. The scribes had an earthly Messiah, a worldly Messiah that conformed to their own sinful understanding, but knowledge of Christ comes by revelation. It comes by the Father revealing Jesus Christ to you. And that gives us our first application of this point. because the problem we see with the

scribes is only a small glimpse of the problem that affects humanity as a whole. To quote John Calvin again, it just worked out that way, the human heart is a perpetual factory of idols. See, in the natural state apart from Jesus Christ, our hearts have a desperate, unbreakable gravitation towards idolatry. Whether you profess to be religious or not, whether you profess to be spiritual or not, this problem affects every single person. It does not matter what you proclaim to be. Every single person on this planet worships. Every single person on this planet has faith to some degree. The distinction is not those who worship and those who have faith and those who don't. The distinction is what the object of worship is. The distinction is what the object of your faith is. No matter what, our hearts, apart from Christ, will always find something in this world to latch on to, to give us what only God can provide. And you can pick your poison, comfort, joy, security, meaning, purpose, morality. Whatever it is, we will always find something. C.S. Lewis said it best, every person is incurably religious. This is not a Jews and scribes problem, this is an everyone problem, and it is our problem apart from Jesus Christ. Ever since the fall in the garden, human affections have been flipped away from their creator, away from their father, and now worship and serve the creation. The scribe's view of the Messiah is an example of this idolatry. It's the same thing as the golden calf. It's the same thing with King Saul. It is an example of their prevalent idolatry. And it's not fixed by information. It's not fixed by simply willpower. There's nothing in this world that can actually cure it, but one thing, which is salvation. We need the Spirit of God to reveal Jesus to us and to change our hearts. The knowledge of God only comes by revelation. The knowledge of God does not come from the natural human mind. It's not attained by the human mind. The human mind is so tainted and stuck in sin that it can never understand Jesus rightly apart from a revelation from the Father and apart from the Spirit's work on our own hearts. And this is exactly what the victory, the salvation that Jesus accomplished for us. Through his life, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, Jesus raised to the heavens, he defeated sin and death, and he has given us his spirit to apply his work onto our hearts, revealing himself to us, and saving us from the sinful condition where we refuse to come to God, we refuse to believe. Our sinful condition is the very thing we need saved from. This rejection of God that we refuse to come to him is the very condition that Jesus came to save us from. He came to save his people from their sins. And so I guess you may be asking is like, how do I actually apply this knowledge? How do I, if the knowledge of Christ comes by revelation, how do I apply it? Do I just wait around for God to zap me with knowledge one day and then everything is fine? No. The answer is no. Yes, God reveals Jesus Christ to us, revelation comes by the spirit, but God oftentimes uses means to do that. God uses means, the proclamation of his word, the promises of Jesus Christ, that all who come to me, I will never cast out. That if we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more will our father in



heaven give the spirit to those who ask him. We do not wait around for Christ to just zap us with knowledge. We hear the proclamation of the gospel. We believe, we trust, we hear his promises, believe them, and we seek. So our application is very simple. Know the Lord. Call to the Lord. He invites all to come, to come to know him. Don't wait for a revelation just to come and hit you one day and set you straight. Jesus opens the door all who come to me I will never cast out and you're coming to Jesus your recognition of a need for a Savior is the very evidence of God revealing him to you so seek him and when we seek him that is only the start we will spend eternity knowing Christ more and more We will be in heaven 10,000 years and not even come close to knowing the full depths and treasures of knowledge that is in Jesus Christ. Come to him, draw near to him. That is a promise if you draw near to God, he draws near to you. So we have the scribes false view of the Messiah. And then Jesus moves from addressing this false view of Messiah into a warning. And I think we're gonna see how these two things are connected. How does the scribe's view of the Messiah lead to this specific warning? Looking at verses 37, the second part of verse 37, and the large crowd enjoyed listening to him. Now, let that sink in for a moment. See, the scribes had spent so much effort trying to trap Jesus before the crowd. And here we have Jesus now making a public spectacle of the scribes. And to such a degree that the scribes didn't even have an answer to give to Jesus's question. If you read closely, there's no answer ever actually given. So not only has their plan to sabotage Jesus been foiled, but now these experts are going to be exposed before the entire crowd in this warning, in this warning where Jesus crawls out the scribes for multiple things. Here's the warning in verses 38 through 40. In his teaching, he was saying, beware of the scribes who want to walk around in long robes and want respectful greetings in the marketplaces and best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets, who devour widows' houses and for appearances sake offer long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation. See, Jesus warns the crowd and in his warning, he calls out a couple things that the scribes are doing. First, he calls them out for their self-serving worship. They want to walk around in the long robes to display their prestige and status. And in a parallel passage in the gospel of Matthew, and there's many parallel passages, Jesus points out how they wear broad phylacteries. These are kind of these pieces of leather or boxes that will be strapped to your body, and inside are verses inscribed on them. And they would wear these large phylacteries on their head and on their chest, displaying for everybody their holiness, their godliness. They would wear these long tassels on the robe. They would have this obnoxious display to show everyone their piety. They do all these things so they can be noticed by men and receive honor from men. They want the best seats at the synagogue. They want the seats of honor at the banquets. They would offer up these long-winded, obnoxious prayers. and so that their devotion can be heard by everyone. All these things were done for appearances sake. Their worship was self-serving. Their worship was

done to make a name for themselves. Their worship was also exploitative. Jesus says that they devour widows' houses. Now how they do this is not explicitly mentioned in scripture. But in through tradition, we learned that one thing that would happen is when husbands are writing their will, they would appoint a legal expert of the law, a scribe to manage the widow's estate if he was to pass. And what these scribes are known for doing is that they would use their knowledge of the law to actually take over the widow's estate, to take them for everything that they're worth, to take possession of all their items. See, the widows were one of the most underprivileged members of society. They had no one to provide for them. They had no standing in the courts to really plead their cause. So the scribes were intended to help them with that, to plead their cause for them, to care for the widows. And in the Old Testament, God gave specific laws. He gave laws so that the widows would be taken care of in the nation. and the laws he gave specifically, plead the widow's cause, don't mistreat them. And here we had the scribes, the experts of the law, doing those very things. And because of this Jesus issues a harsh sentence on the scribes. He says they will receive the greater condemnation and we had to step back and appreciate just how inexcusable these things the scribes were doing were they were experts on the law if anyone should know better. it is them. If anyone should be pleading the widow's cause, it is them. And they are doing the exact opposite. They are making an absolute mockery of their position, using their knowledge of the law instead to be oppressive to the widow. These scribes knew the law, they knew the individual commandments, they knew the promises given, And they even taught these promises, they taught these laws. They were teachers of the law. As the scriptures say, teachers fall into stricter judgment. That's why the scripture says that not many of us should be teachers. Because when we proclaim the word and yet demonstrate that when we behave the oppositely of what we teach, we are without excuse. So the scribes were oppressors, using their knowledge of the law to oppress the widow, and they will receive the greater condemnation. The scribes have overturned their purpose. Their practices and values have become entirely attached to what their position was meant to be, the capacity they were meant to serve in. They have flipped entirely backwards. And now we see here a progression developing here. So we had again, the scribes false view of the Messiah addressed. And now we have their false worship addressed. The scribes were blinded by their sin. They fashioned a Messiah according to their own image who would fulfill their worldly hopes and ambitions and desires and exalt them as a people. And now their worship and their practice has followed in kind. From the lending tables in the temple that Jesus overturned, to their teaching and their practice, their entire system of worship had turned into a system of oppression for their own selfish ambition. And I think a clear application for us here today, our view of Christ has an impact on everything. The Christ we worship, we will reflect. See, if you worship a Jesus who is unforgiving and unmerciful, you will reflect that with a bitter and vindictive heart.

If you worship a Jesus who wants to give you all the material possessions you want and to give you a happy life, you will reflect that with a life of selfishness and greed and materialism. Or you can ask Martin Luther, if you worship a Jesus who is an avenger against sinners, a strong judge against sinners and not a savior for sinners, you will live your life with fear and trepidation and guilt, trying to appease God instead of worship Him. Our view of Jesus Christ has implications. Our view of him will never be just in a vacuum. It will always pour over into other aspects of our life. The scribe's view of the Messiah, the one who will provide them the worldly hopes, they reflected that by turning their worship into a system of self-exaltation. See, in the church, there are numerous doctrines and discussions of secondary matters. There's many church councils, and I love studying those things. But I think the important thing we have to grasp is our view of Christ is not one of those secondary things. That is not a secondary doctrine. That is not a doctrine where there's much room for disagreement. You take every false teaching, every cult that proclaims the name Christian, all these false teachers out there, you know what the vast majority of them have in common? They all have a false view of Christ. Their false view of Christ becomes the foundation for them upon which their entire structure of doctrine rests, and a false view of Christ, that structure will be lopsided, and will eventually topple. A false view of Christ will impact everything. And even if not now, we become consistent with what we believe over time. Our views always bear fruit over time. It is a dangerous thing to play with the doctrine of Christ. Our doctrine of Christ is a serious matter. There is not much room for disagreement. Go back to some of the ancient councils. I mean, there's actually a very funny story of one of the saints, St. Nicholas, punching Arius in the face over this conversation. It is a very serious conversation. I don't recommend doing that, but you get the point. This is not a small matter. This is not a doctrine that we can lock arms with people who think so differently about it. We can't lock arms with Mormons who think that Jesus is a created being and Satan's brother. We can't do that. Their false view of Christ has been the foundation for all their crazy doctrines. And it's the same across the board. A false view of Christ will always bear fruit. So I encourage you to pursue as one of the most utmost priorities for your Christian life to know Christ better. Study his word, get into a church that proclaims Christ week after week, stay there until you die and go to glory, or when the Lord returns and brings glory to us, and then we can have all of our questions answered. And of course, you can also move in. But if you move, go to a church that proclaims Christ week after week and stay there until you do. However many times you move, the point is, that should be the highest priority for your biblical walk. Be in fellowship with this people. So many of these false teachings, what they always start with is one solitary contentious member of a church who thinks he knows better. And then what he does is he isolates himself away from a church and starts a new one. That's how all these things start. Keep yourself in

fellowship with the body. Stay plugged into a church body. Hear Christ week after week. Continue this pursuit of knowing him more and more. So now moving into the next part of our section here in verse 41, we had this interesting providential shift here. Because after Jesus gives the questions, he gives the warning, and he sits down, and now we have somewhat of the same thing he was addressing with the rich, with the scribes. The rich are now coming in and offering publicly these large sums of money. And then we have of all people, a widow, which Jesus just addressed the scribes as the targets of their oppression, a widow. And you have a providential example here. He sat down and observed the crowd putting in money. We have two categories of people in this passage. We have the rich offering large sums, and we have the widow. And listen to what she gave. She gave, she came and she put in two lepta, which amounts to a quadrants. That's unfamiliar currency to us. I'm not an expert on Jewish currency, but that's not what we use. But just in doing some digging on this passage, what this amounted to was 1/32nd of a day's wage. So what a worker would make in a day's wage, this was a tiny little percentage of that. To put it in kind of modern American terms, if someone was to offer this amount in the church offering today, Pastor Josh could probably go buy a gumball from a quarter machine, maybe. That's how small and minuscule this amount was. And so Jesus, after seeing this widow's offering, he calls the disciples over to himself, and he says this to him, truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all those putting in money in the treasury, for they all put in out of their surplus, she out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all that she had to live on. So according to Jesus, this widow put in more money than the others. Why would he say this? That clearly is not the case. As the kids say that the math doesn't math, what does that mean? So this offering made in worship, though it wouldn't provide much to the priests, was sacrificial. It was a sacrificial offering. See, everyone else's offering was given out of an abundance. They would hardly miss, the rich would hardly miss what they gave. It was a great sum, it was not a great sacrifice. But this widow gave all she had to live on. She gave out of her poverty. And now I need to offer some brief qualifications on this, just because of popular teachings about this instance. First, I need to clarify, this is not a case, a scenario of rich, bad, poor, good. This is not a case where the rich are being condemned for their wealth. In the first century church, there was a mix of wealthy, there was a mix of poor, and neither are condemned. The rich are never commanded to become poor, the poor are never commanded to become rich. Paul instructs them directly, and all he does is he instructs them how to conduct themselves in their current situation. So this is not a condemnation of wealth. Secondly, if you are thinking of applying this text to yourself, you need to understand some context. Offering is a normative part of worship in the Bible. From the Old and New Testaments both, offering is an integral part of worship. Throughout scripture, an offering is both a glad, sacrificial gift, an offering, and it is also God's primary means for providing for his servants. The Old

Testament priests depended upon the offerings of the people. And the same in the church. The teachers who are given full time to the preaching of the word are dependent upon the offerings of the church. Yet God in sometimes will do miraculous things like send Elijah Ravens with food, but that is a miracle. That is not the normative practice. Offering is the means God uses to provide. However, this widow, though she was making this great sacrifice as an offering, she was more than likely doing so out of compulsion, and that is not part of offering. Offering is never compelled to offer. And she was likely doing this under the teachings of the scribes. See, the Old Testament law of God made multiple provisions for widows so that they would be taken care of. And if the laws were followed, the widows would not have any lack, they would be provided for. But the scribes here have been taking these widows for all that they were worth. Instead of caring for them, they were robbing them. And they were only compounding their suffering. The widow's offering here would have put her in a precarious circumstance, leaving her with nothing or almost nothing. Now, if you recall back in chapter seven, Jesus actually gives a rebuke to the Pharisees, who instead of providing for their family, they claim their offering is Corbin given to God. Their offering came at the neglect of their family. So to put it in other words, if you are struggling and your family is destitute or you are in a tight circumstance, okay, keep the offering, provide for your family. Don't apply this passage to yourself in that way. What was happening here was not a good thing. It was not something that was expected out of a widow. This widow was being robbed and now she was compulsory giving. That's not offering. That's just slavery. Don't apply this passage to yourself in that way. Now, there is a time and a place to discuss offering, and this passage does give us much to say, as much we can glean about it, but that's a different time and a place. That's a different sermon. That's not the point here. The widow's offering in Jesus' explanation, what we see is the overturning of the scribe's values in worship. The scribes worshiped in these grandiose displays, the clothes, the status, the seats of honor, the performance, the large sums of money. It was all a fleshy, magnificent display of hypocrisy, and it meant nothing, and it was worth nothing. but Jesus here wholly flips the script and gives more value to the small and the minuscule offering. You see, it wasn't about the currency. The value of an offering isn't measured by its physical value. It's measured by the sacrifice made to give it. External appearances do not determine value of worship. The heart motivation does. So in worship currency, this widow gave exponentially more than the wealthy. The offerings of the wealthy, according to the wisdom of this world, would have been a greater offering that could have provided much. But its amount was slight in terms of worship. It meant nothing. That barometer was not moved an inch. The widow's offering, though practically nothing in the world's eyes, was of a far surpassing value because of the sacrifice made to give it. See, God doesn't need our money. He can create an entire universe out of nothing. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. He

needs nothing. He desires hearts that honor and trust him. That's what he wants. God does not look on the external appearances, but the things unseen, the matters of the heart. And just as a final point of application for us today, when we consider the true nature of worship, we as believers can very well be tempted to overvalue temporal things. And here's an example, the Corinthian church, they valued these great displays of eloquence and speech. They liked good speakers. They listened to good speakers. They valued status and strength. They valued what their culture valued. And the problem emerged for the Corinthian church when these so-called super apostles were raised up and began questioning Paul's authority. They were better speakers than Paul. They were stronger than Paul. They were smarter and more intellectual than Paul. And they denied his very authority as an apostle. And Paul calls this behavior the Corinthians thinking according to the flesh, the fact that they would value this. And so Paul corrects this for them in this way, and we'll read our final passage here that we're gonna jump to, looking at 1 Corinthians 1. 1 Corinthians 1. verses 26 to 31. Listen to how Paul corrects this issue with the Corinthian church. For consider your calling brothers that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong. And the base things of the world and the despised things, God has chosen the things that are not so that he may abolish the things that are, so that no flesh can boast before God. but by his doing you are in Christ Jesus who became to us wisdom from God and righteousness and sanctification and redemption so that it is written, let him who boasts, boast in the Lord. See in God's church, in Christ's church, it is full of people who in the eyes of the world are nothing. In the eyes of the world, there's nothing to admire about them, to respect about them. They don't have the things the world values, strength, intellect, nobility, wealth, status. And sometimes there are people in the church who do have those things and they get taken from them. This is all intentional. For one, God is putting everything in this fallen world to shame. He is bringing all the things this fallen world values to nothing for His glory and His glory alone. But another reason is that is a grace from the Lord to us at times. When we have the things the world values, the temptation to follow the course of the world becomes far more potent. If you've ever heard, there's a story in Homer's Odyssey about sirens. There are these mermaids that hung out on the banks in the ocean, and they would sing these beautiful songs to lure sailors to steer their ships into the rocks. And when they wrecked, the sirens would come out and eat the sailors. It was all a trap. the lusts of this world, the desires of the flesh, the boastful pride of life, all these things have a stronger allure to them when you have what the world values. It's not that these things are inherently bad. In fact, many of these things are blessings. They are blessings to have them. If God gives these things to you, what a blessing, praise the Lord. But these things can

quickly also, they also can shift our hope. And sometimes in the worst cases, tempt us to abandon our hope just to keep those things or attain those things. It's not that any of those things are inherently bad. Sometimes actually those things are very good. But if those good things draw you away from a pure and simple devotion to Christ, those good things are the worst thing to ever happen to you. Those good things mean nothing. And so I asked, what is our hope? That one day we can attain those things? Or if we had them and lost them, that one day we'll get them back? No, our hope is founded on something far more substantial, a far greater glory that is yet to be revealed in us. And that glory is the glory of the Lord. Think of King David who was known for all of his great feats, all of his great military campaigns and victories. At the end of his life ended up a frail old man who couldn't even keep himself warm in his own bed. When those moments come and they will, we lose our health, we lose our money, our reputation, our status, our talents. This fallen world has a wear and tear, and we are all subject to it. And all of us are subject to the trials that come in this life. Those days are always coming. But what will we say on the day when that comes? My encouragement to you all is to say with King David, the Lord is my glory. Though I have absolutely nothing in this life, Though I have nothing to commend me to this world, I have a far surpassing glory in Jesus Christ. every spiritual blessing, things that have not even entered into the heart to imagine, things above all that we can ask or think, we have in Christ. And we have it because Jesus Christ left his glory, took on the lowly form of a man, and lived a life of humiliation on this earth to die in our place. We have that because of him. and all our sufferings, the lack, the weakness, the poverty, the sickness, all those things that we feel now, God uses all of these things to prepare us for glory, a glory that is to be revealed when he returns. On that day, we will see the glorified Christ and we will praise him for all the things, even our trials, we will praise him for because of the weight of glory that is being prepared for us. In the worship of Christ, the worldly knowledge is flipped. The worldly wisdom is flipped. God uses the weak things, the despised things. So know Christ, know him rightly. Let's pray together. Gracious heavenly Father, we thank you for your word, for your spirit revealing Christ to us. And Father, we ask you, Lord, that you would bless us this day, that you would stir our hopes, help us to have a deeper assurance of what you have given us. We pray that your praise could come from our lips, that you would preserve us all of our days so that we can sing your praises in glory when you return or we come until you call us home. We thank you, we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.