



GROW AT HOME

DAILY DEVOTION

DAY 21

READ

LUKE 20:1-19

FOCUS

¹⁹ THE TEACHERS OF THE LAW AND THE CHIEF PRIESTS LOOKED FOR A WAY TO ARREST HIM IMMEDIATELY, BECAUSE THEY KNEW HE HAD SPOKEN THIS PARABLE AGAINST THEM. BUT THEY WERE AFRAID OF THE PEOPLE.

REFLECTION from DIRECTOR AUTUMN IGO

In 1994 Mother Theresa was invited to speak at the National Prayer Breakfast. Standing at the podium, surrounded by lawmakers, politicians, and the President of the United States himself, she denounced abortion and the people who would make laws to uphold it...many of whom were sitting in the room with her. She had her opportunity, and she took it. If you watch the video, it is interesting to watch the responses of the folks sharing the stage with her. Some enthusiastically applaud her statements, while others stand uncomfortably... How do you express your disapproval of a tiny, frail, saintly, old woman who is held in such honor by the crowd?

This is just a shadow of the frustration and anger that the religious leaders (called Sadducees, Pharisees, priests, and scribes throughout the Gospels) feel toward Jesus as He walks through His last few days before the cross. Up to this point, Jesus has kept a relatively low profile, He hasn't avoided conflict with the religious elite but He hasn't purposely fueled it either. As you saw yesterday, this all changed during Holy Week. On Sunday Jesus enters Jerusalem as King to the wild acclaim of the crowd. On Monday, the crowds look on in joy as He clears the Temple and overturns the unjust economic system that the leaders had set up. Today is Tuesday, and far from calming the anger and frustration the religious leaders feel for Him, Jesus continues to add fuel to the fire. His moment had come to speak, and He takes it.

The religious leaders had a few reasons to hate Jesus. First, they considered Him to be an uneducated country bumpkin who was making ludicrous and blasphemous claims. He also was intent on undermining their authority with the people, even undercutting the corrupted economics of the Temple that they had come to depend on. Finally, He threatened their politics; by claiming to be the ruler of the Jews, He put them on an unstable footing with their Roman rulers. Early in His ministry, Jesus had skirted direct conflict with them, but by coming to Jerusalem at this time, He has brought the fight directly to their doorstep. A confrontation is unavoidable and Jesus is consciously choosing to bring it to a head.

If Luke 20 were a boxing match, Jesus would be the fighter that comes out swinging. Jesus often tells a parable--a story with a specific point or meaning--in a situation where speaking plainly would cause His audience to reject His message outright. The parable He tells here is part of a series of direct attacks against the religious leaders. Jesus is telling a story whose villains are thieving, unjust, greedy, conspiring, foolish, ignorant, wicked murderers. And He makes it very clear that these imaginary villains were represented in real life by the religious leaders standing right in front of Him. It's really quite amazing that He can pack so many insults into just a few verses. As my grandpa would say, "Them's fightin' words!!" These attacks inspire so much hatred in the leaders that they immediately begin to take the steps that will ultimately lead to Jesus' crucifixion in just a few days' time.

Ok, so that's a lot to digest on a Tuesday morning, but as we walk through Holy Week with Jesus day by day, I wanted to point out to you the intentionality with which Jesus stepped towards the cross. He was not willing to let anyone, especially the religious elite, stand in the way of His people coming into a relationship with their Father. And these men had built up a wall of religion and ritual that were separating God from His children. But here's the thing, Jesus came to save the world--even the greedy, murdering villains. So as we watch Him argue and escalate tensions with these leaders we have to ask, why? Maybe, even as He argued with them,



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REFLECTION from DIRECTOR AUTUMN IGO (CONT'D)

Jesus was trying to save them--trying to get them to recognize their error. Did you know that some of the first people to become Christians in the early Church were these same religious leaders? Isn't that crazy? Some of the very people who had plotted to kill Him recognized just a few days later they were sinners in need of the Grace He offered. Just like you. Just like me.

QUESTIONS

- HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN ARGUMENT WITH GOD? WHAT DID YOU DISAGREE ABOUT?
- HOW HAVE YOUR CONFLICTS WITH GOD LED YOU TO A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF HIS GRACE?

SONG OF THE DAY

LISTEN ALONG ON YOUTUBE | [HTTPS://BIT.LY/SCGWORSHIP](https://bit.ly/scgworship)

GREAT ARE YOU LORD // SCG WORSHIP (ALL SONS AND DAUGHTERS COVER)