



That Dont Impress Me Much | Ryan Wekenman | 3.29-30

Weekly Study

SHARE

Hey Red Rocks and welcome to the third week of our series leading up to Easter, Holy Week. At the end of Mark 12, we see people constantly trying to impress each other, and even God, but what Jesus reveals is not about outward acts or gestures. Instead, Jesus focuses on what truly gets His attention: surrender and sacrifice.

In the culture of Jesus' time, impressing others (especially religious leaders), was a big deal. They constantly performed acts meant to show how pious or devoted they were, but Jesus repeatedly challenges these superficial standards. Mark 12 provides a clear picture of how these efforts fall short and how God sees through the façade to the heart beneath it.

As we think about the past week, take a moment to reflect: Where have you been trying to impress someone, whether it's others, yourself, or even God? How has this week's study on surrender and sacrifice challenged that approach in your own life?

- Reflecting on last week's message, what area of your life have you surrendered to Jesus as King?**
- How has this week's message brought you back to the simplicity of the Good News?**

GROW

Read Mark 12:13-17

In this passage, we find the Pharisees and Herodians, two groups that didn't typically get along, trying to trap Jesus in a dilemma. They asked Him whether it was right to pay taxes to Caesar, a question designed to corner Him. If He said yes, He would alienate the people, who hated Roman rule. If He said no, He would be arrested for treason. But Jesus, as always, responds with wisdom that flips the situation on its head.

In verse 17, He says, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." While the question was about taxes, Jesus takes it deeper by drawing attention to the image on the coin and implying something profound: everything bears an image, and just as the coin bore Caesar's image, we bear God's image.

This response shows that what matters is not about our outward actions, like paying taxes or impressing others with what we do; what matters is that we recognize whose image we bear and live in a way that reflects that image. Jesus calls us to align ourselves with God's kingdom, to live with integrity and authenticity, not to try to impress others or God with our external acts.

- In what areas of your life do you find yourself trying to impress others or even God with outward actions? Are you more focused on what others think than on living authentically in God's image?**
- How do we get caught up in seeking approval from others or God, rather than focusing on the truth that we already bear His image? Reflect back on your life and why this may be something you struggle with.**

MOVE

Read Mark 12:41-44

This is one of the most powerful and moving moments in the Gospel. In a scene full of people flaunting their wealth and giving out of their abundance, a poor widow enters the temple and places two small coins, all she had, into the treasury. Jesus, noticing her sacrifice, stops everything and declares that her offering was greater than all the rest because she gave from a place of true surrender.

Why does this small, seemingly insignificant act get Jesus' attention? Because it was a complete sacrifice. The rich gave what they could afford, but the widow gave all she had, and that's what impressed Jesus. It wasn't about the quantity, but about the heart behind the gift. Jesus was impressed by the depth of her surrender, by her willingness to trust God with everything, even when it seemed like she had so little to offer.

This widow's story challenges us in several ways:

- She gave all she had, not because of what she could gain, but because of her complete trust in God.
- Jesus is not impressed by the outward, showy displays of wealth or status; He looks at the heart, at the willingness to surrender and trust Him.

The widow's sacrifice was a reflection of her trust in God, showing that true transformation happens when we surrender everything we have—our time, resources, and even our desires—into His hands. Her example invites us to consider how we can live with the same radical surrender, trusting that God values the condition of our hearts far more than any outward display.

- Are there areas of your life that you are holding back from God? Have you been trying to impress others with what you have or with your actions instead of surrendering everything to Him?**

- What is God calling you to surrender this week? This could be your time, your possessions, your ambitions, or even a specific attitude or mindset that you've been holding onto tightly.**

P R A Y

Take a moment to discuss what it means to truly surrender and sacrifice before God. Reflect on those areas where you may be holding back or trying to impress, and ask God to help you move from a place of performance to one of genuine surrender.

Here are some prayer prompts to guide your time together:

- Pray for the courage to stop performing and start living authentically as the image-bearers God created you to be.
- Pray for the wisdom to know what areas of your life need to be surrendered to God, and for strength to release control.
- Ask God to help you recognize the beauty of sacrifice and the power that comes from giving Him everything, even if it seems small or insignificant to others.

Take the time to share prayer requests and pray for each other in the group. Remember, prayer is not just about asking for things but also about surrendering and listening to God's voice.