

A.M. OUTLINE
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THE KINGDOM'S BORDERLAND

(Mark 12:28-34)

INTRODUCTION

(v34) "You are not far from the kingdom of God"

There are 3 questions being asked of Jesus (v13, v23, v28), each trying to "catch Him in his words," and this lesson looks at Jesus' response to the question asked by the scribe.
(Matthew 22:35) "a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him ... "

1. THE FACT OF THE BORDERLAND / "not far"

There are degrees of spiritual distance from the kingdom (church) - "not far" implies degrees of distance: far, farther, farthest.

Illustrated in scripture:

(Matthew 15:8-9) "This people draw nigh to me with their mouth ... heart far from me"
(Mark 10:17-22) "... one thing you lack ... "
(Acts 24:25) "Felix trembled ... when I have a convenient season, I'll call for you"
(Acts 26:28) "Agrippa said, ... You almost persuade me to become a Christian"

2. THE MEANING OF THE BORDERLAND / "not far"

To the scribe (lawyer):

He acknowledged to Jesus (v32) "Teacher, You have spoken the truth"
He made an application of Jesus' answer (v32-33).
Yet, Jesus says, "You are not far from the kingdom of God"

To people today:

Some here today are "not far from the kingdom of God"
You are close, "not far," but not in the kingdom of God, and perhaps it is one thing that keeps you from entering the kingdom of God.

3. THE TRAGEDY OF THE BORDERLAND / "not far"

In life: it is difficult to convince the borderland resident because one may be satisfied with his nearness, or being so close. (John 14:15; Mark 16:16)

In death: it is the Christian's death that's "blessed" (Revelation 14:13), and it is "precious" (Psalm 116:15).

In judgment: it's right/left, saved/lost, sheep/goats, come/depart, ...

You've heard it said, "A miss is as good as a mile," meaning, to miss heaven by a fraction is to miss it altogether.

CLOSE - If you are in the borderland, you are close, but far enough to be lost; and you can be near and never enter.