



## 43: **More Than What They Asked For** (Mt 22:15-33)

When the enemies of Jesus formed a coalition to confront and trip Him up, Jesus takes their best pitches and swats them out of the park. Today we discover how enemies & followers of Jesus alike, will find that Jesus offers them **more than what they asked for**.

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## teachingnotes

### Pharisees & Herodians vs Jesus

**Matthew 22:15-17** (NIV) Then the **Pharisees** went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. They sent **their disciples** to him along with the **Herodians**. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?"

The **disciples** of the Pharisees and the '**Herodians**' were a strange combination.

- The **Pharisees** saw themselves as guardians of the Scriptures, pointing to and awaiting the Messiah who would release them from Roman rule.
- The **Herodians** were appreciative of Rome's authority given to Herod & his family. Giving their allegiance to Rome meant they must compromise their beliefs & behavior because of their political position.

✗ This is a coalition of differing political & religious perspectives who joined forces to take Jesus out. Their words to Jesus are simply smooth flattery to cover up their real agenda - **to trap Him in His words**.

This **imperial tax** was a reminder that Jews were under the rule of Rome, and it could only be paid with a **denarius**.



The **denarius** was about the size of a dime and was the average pay for a day's labor.<sup>1</sup> One side of the denarius was an image of **Tiberius** with this inscription: "**Tiberius Caesar, son of the Divine Augustus**".<sup>2</sup> (Augustus - the emperor at the time of Jesus' birth.)

✶ Kent Hughes: "The demand was sobering because for an upright Jew the image of Caesar on a coin was an abomination. The inscription "divine Augustus" was considered a transgression of the Second Commandment against graven images (Exodus 20:4) and thus obvious blasphemy."<sup>3</sup>

- According to Josephus, this **imperial tax** infuriated nationalist Jews, like a Galilean named 'Yudah' (English - Judas), who led a revolt against Rome in A.D. 6 over this very tax.<sup>4</sup>

The question posed - "**Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?**" - had no right answer. Jesus would either prove to be 1) loyal to Rome and her Emperor OR 2) loyal to Israel and the One True God.

- **If Jesus says "yes"**, then the Pharisees can **undercut His claims to be the Messiah** - who they thought was coming to loose them from Rome's grip.
- **If Jesus says "no"**, then the Herodians could charge Him with being a **revolutionary** who stood against the Romans, which would likely bring an expedited execution. Note: This is what they later charge Jesus with to get Him crucified -

**Luke 23:2** (CSB) They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation, **opposing payment of taxes to Caesar**, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king."

<sup>1</sup> Darrell L. Bock, Luke, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), Lk 20:20.

<sup>2</sup> Craig S. Keener, The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009), 525.

<sup>3</sup> R. Kent Hughes, Luke: That You May Know the Truth, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 266.

<sup>4</sup> Craig S. Keener, 525. - (Jos. War 2.118)

## Jesus' Answer Leaves His Opponents Amazed

**Matthew 22:18-22** (NIV) But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, "You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax." They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, "Whose image is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said to them, "So **give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.**" When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

The coin belongs to **Caesar**, because **his image** is on it...that's obvious. But Jesus uses this as a springboard to make a more important point: "**give back...to God what is God's.**" As the **IMAGE** of Caesar is imprinted on the denarius, **the IMAGE of God is imprinted on PEOPLE.** The Scripture declares that God created man & woman in His image (Gen. 1:27)!

✓ Give THIS (coin) back to Caesar, but give YOUR LIFE to the God who created you in HIS IMAGE!

**Who else could get out of that...LIKE THAT?** They threw their best pitch and Jesus swatted it over the fence!

## Sadducees vs Jesus

**Matthew 22:23-28** (NIV) That same day the **Sadducees**, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. "Teacher," they said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for him. Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. Finally, the woman died. Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?"

The **Sadducees** were "mean spirited, religious aristocrats" who served on staff at the temple.<sup>5</sup> They had the lock on the high priesthood, and had to play the political game with the Romans to stay in power at the temple. These men were responsible for allowing the selling of animals in the temple. The high priest - Caiaphas - was a Sadducee, the one who would ultimately condemn Jesus to death. Now, these religious elite approached the Galilean country boy to put Him in His place, likely using a tactic stumping the Pharisees in the past.

**The Sadducees say there is no resurrection** - you live, you die, it's over. Base on their philosophy, *if there was a physical resurrection of the dead*, the next life would be a big mess, with more problems than answers. **Which of the 7 brothers will she be married to in eternity?**

## Jesus' Answer Leaves His Opponents Tucking Their Tails

**Matthew 22:29-30** (NIV) Jesus replied, "**You are in error** because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven."

The **Sadducees believed parts of the Scripture & discounted other parts** that didn't fit with their belief system. They leaned on the Pentateuch (the 1st five writings, Gen-Deut), & stressed that they contained no reference to resurrection. Yet they dismissed other Old Testament writings that *DID* speak of resurrection of the dead (e.g. Job 19:26; Psalm 16:9-11; Isaiah 26:19; Dan. 12:2-3)

✓ **Don't bend the Bible to fit your presupposed Beliefs.** Instead, bend your beliefs to fit the BIBLE!

Ultimately, **Jesus explains that the relationships in eternity will be different than the relationships on earth.**

We won't BE angels, but will be **LIKE angels** in several ways. (Sadducees didn't believe in angels either - Acts 23:8).

First, **This is NOT teaching that people become angels.** They don't. In fact, *YOU* are a greater creation than an angel and the apostle Paul says we will judge angels one day (1 Cor. 6:3). Instead, we will be like angels in that:

1. **At the resurrection**, we will never get sick & never die.
2. We will be able to be in the very Presence of our Creator - forever!
3. **We will not BE married nor GET married.** Our relationships are going to be MUCH BETTER than any marriage relationship, completely free of sin! *Imagine...* NO lies, NO selfishness, NO pride! Where EVERYONE there is your FAMILY!!!  
**imagine relationships where NO SIN enters in** - NO lies, NO selfishness, NO pride! Where EVERYONE is your FAMILY!!!

**Matthew 22:31-33** (NIV) But about **the resurrection of the dead**—have you not read what God said to you, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead but of the living." When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

Jesus uses the Pentateuch (the only part of the Scriptures they believed) to prove His point about eternal life. Jesus reminds them of Yahweh's meeting at the burning bush with Moses:

**Exodus 3:6a** (NIV) ...He said, "**I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.**"

By the time of Moses, the Jewish patriarchs - **Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob** had been dead for over 400 years!. God DOESN'T SAY, "*I WAS* the God of Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob." but, "**I am the God**" of those men.

🔍 Jesus gives his opponents & His followers **More Than What They Asked For** - His desire to go to the cross to pay for THEIR sins.

## heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

\* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), **Gary** (850-673-2507), **Betty** (850-973-3266), or another follower of Jesus soon!

\* Or call our **deacons & wives: Alan & Christy Androski** (850-464-1428), **Steve & Debbie Bass** (850-673-7952), **Noel & Patricia Barnes** (813-767-2881), **Tim & Joni Hughey** (850-464-1156), **Rob & Rebecca Leatherberry** (229-232-1087), or **Mark & Dot Mancil** (850-253-5405).

## discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. **Read Matthew 22:14-18.** It looked like either way Jesus answered, He would be in trouble - discuss why this was so.
2. **Read Matthew 22:19-22.** How did the answer Jesus give sidestep their trap? Explain how the answer Jesus gave, told him to submit to the authority of the emperor, as well as the authority of the Creator
3. **Read Gen 1:27** and consider how we bear the image of our Creator. What does that mean and how should it impact us to live?
4. **Read Matthew 22:23-33.** What dilemma did the Sadducees point out to Jesus, and how did Jesus respond to their question about marriage and resurrection?
5. What did Jesus use as evidence to prove His point about eternal life when responding to the Sadducees? (read v Mt 22: 31-33 & Ex 3:6) If Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob are currently alive, even though physically dead, what is the current state for followers of Jesus who have passed away?
6. What does it mean that people will be "like angels" (Mt 22:30)? How does this encourage you & how does it challenge you? Take a few minutes and wrestle with the fact that there is no marriage in heaven...AND that our relationships will be BETTER - with no sin!
7. Just as the Sadducees had chosen to discount, some of the scriptures, we can fall into the danger of doing the same thing. What can we do to make sure that we rightly interpret the scriptures and recognize which writings come from God in which do not?
8. What does God want YOU to do with what we studied today?
9. How can we pray for/care for one another this week? (Pray for one another.)