

Luke 20:20-40

Paying Taxes to Caesar

²⁰Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be honest. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. ²¹ So the spies questioned him: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. ²² Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

²³ He saw through their duplicity and said to them, ²⁴ “Show me a denarius. Whose portrait and inscription are on it?”

²⁵ “Caesar’s,” they replied.

He said to them, “Then give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

²⁶ They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

The Resurrection and Marriage

²⁷ Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question. ²⁸ “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and have children for his brother. ²⁹ Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. ³⁰ The second ³¹ and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children. ³² Finally, the woman died too. ³³ Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”

³⁴ Jesus replied, “The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. ³⁵ But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, ³⁶ and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection. ³⁷ But in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ ³⁸ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.”

³⁹ Some of the teachers of the law responded, “Well said, teacher!” ⁴⁰ And no one dared to ask him any more questions.

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1. What do you and your friends think about having to pay taxes? How did the Jews feel about having to pay taxes to the Roman Empire?
2. What does “flattery” mean? How did the spies use flattery when questioning Jesus? Do you like to be flattered? Why do we flatter others? Should we use flattery or should we avoid it?
3. In what way was the question the spies asked Jesus a trick question? (20:21-22)
4. How did Jesus answer the question? What does this reveal about Jesus’ wisdom?
5. As Christians, do we have a responsibility to pay taxes and obey the laws of our government? When should a Christian go against the demands of government?
6. Jesus said we should give to God what is God’s. (20:25) What belongs to God that you should give to Him? What have you held back from the Lord?
7. In the world today, why do you think there is so much confusion and controversy about the afterlife?
8. How were the Sadducees trying to trick Jesus with their question? (20:27-33)
9. What was the basis of the Sadducees beliefs? How can we guard against misinterpreting Scripture as the Sadducees did in Jesus’ day?
10. How do academic or speculative questions like this one hinder our seeking after God? (20:27-33)
11. Jesus answered the question the Sadducees asked and he also answered their unasked question which was what?
12. What can we learn from Jesus’ example that would help us answer tough questions like: “How can a loving God allow people to starve?” or “If God knows what I’m going to do, do I really have free choice?”
13. In the age to come, what did Jesus promise those who are part of the resurrection? (20:36) Why is belief in the resurrection so important to Christians? How should the promise of eternal life affect your everyday actions?