

Following Jesus - The Life of a Disciple - Part 42

Lesson 42– More Confrontations with the Religious Leaders

Background:

The Pharisees continued their attempts to trap Jesus in some way and accuse Him so that they could bring about His death. This time they work in cooperation with the [Herodians](#) who were leaders who were prepared to submit to the leadership of the Herodian family who were supported by the Romans, and the [Sadducees](#), a powerful religious political group.

In turn, Jesus points out the hypocrisy of the religious leaders and the judgement that is waiting for them.

Read: [Mark 12:13-34; Matthew 23:1-5;13,37-39](#)

Read the Following Quote

“No Jews particularly enjoyed living under Gentile rule. The Pharisees hated with a passion, whereas the Herodians adapted a more tolerant view. If Jesus openly endorsed paying a tribute to Caesar, He would alienate many of the Jews. If He spoke against Caesar, they would hustle Him to the Roman authorities for arrest and trial as a traitor.”
[William MacDonald](#)

Questions:

What kind of relationship do you think Christians should have with the government and legal system of their home country today?

Scripture Passage:

Now answer the questions based on [Mark 12:13-34](#)

Taxes For Caesar

1. Which two groups of leaders tried to trap Jesus in verse 13? How would you describe their attitude as they talk to Jesus? Do you think that they sincerely want to know how a godly person should behave towards the government?

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2. Should Christians pay taxes? What if the taxes are unfair? What if the taxes are being used unwisely by the government? Are there situations when Christians should disobey the government? Compare the Apostle Paul's teaching about the Christian and government in [Romans 13:1-7](#).

3. How did Jesus respond to the Jewish leaders in verses 15-17? How clear was His answer? The Jewish leaders do not have another follow up question. Do you? If you were sincerely seeking the truth, what question might you have asked Jesus?

Discussion about the Resurrection [Mark 12:18-27](#)

4. Which type of leader now approached Jesus? Why do you think that so many different groups of leaders were challenging Jesus?

5. Describe the imaginary situation that the Sadducees ask Jesus about? Does it sound realistic? Why would they ask such an unusual question if they are seriously seeking an answer? Read [Deuteronomy 25:5-6](#) to understand the cultural background. What do you think should be the answer to their question?

6. How does Jesus answer their question in verses 24-25? Why do you think Jesus says they do not understand the Scriptures? What does this tell you about where Jesus thinks we should first look for answers to difficult questions?

7. Now Jesus takes the Sadducees in a slightly different direction in verses 26-27. What do you think Jesus meant? What serious error have the Sadducees made? Do you believe in the resurrection? What does the Bible teach about resurrection in [I Corinthians 15:50-58](#)?

The Most Important Commandment [Mark 12:28-34](#)

8. Who approaches Jesus now? Do you think this man had a sincere question? What makes you think that?

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9. Describe how Jesus answers this man in your own words. Do you think that the average person would agree with the answer Jesus gives? Why is it important that there is only one God? Why is it important that we love God the way described? Why should we love our neighbour?

10. Does this teacher of religious law agree with Jesus? What might the world be like if everyone followed these two most important commandments?

Jesus Criticizes the Leaders and Cries For Jerusalem [Matt 23:1-5;13,37-39](#)

11. How does Jesus describe the Jewish leaders in verses 1-5 and 13? Do you think this is a fair evaluation based on what you have learned about their attitudes towards Jesus and the people? What could change their hearts?

12. How does Jesus describe Jerusalem? What has been the history of Israel and Jerusalem since Jesus made this comment? What might Israel's future have been like if they had accepted Jesus as the Messiah?

Suggested Prayer:

Heavenly Father we are disturbed as we read about the reactions of most of the Jewish leaders. Nevertheless, we recognize our sinfulness and realize that we need forgiveness for all the wicked thoughts that we have had over the years. Have mercy on our souls and keep us focused on Jesus so that we might become more like Him. Help us to love you and love our neighbour like Jesus would. In His precious name we pray, Amen.

For Further Reading:

[The Two Greatest Commandments: Loving God and Loving Others](#)

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