

THE MAN IN THE MIRROR

Matthew 22:15-22 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. 16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. 17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? 18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? 19 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. 20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? 21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. 22 When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

I. The Unpopular Jesus

A. The teachings of Jesus

1. Jesus challenged the established religious authority
 - a) *More form than following*
2. Cast out the money changers - Matthew 21
 - a) *Profit and not prayer*
3. Jesus emphasized a personal relationship with God
 - a) *Jesus is all about changing us*
 - b) *He does not allow us to remain the same*
 - c) *He always challenges us to improve and deepen our walk with Him*
4. The Pharisees try to challenge Jesus
 - a) *The Pharisee's tried to trip him up morally*
 - (1) This man is a glutton and a winebibber (drunk)
 - b) *They tried to trip him up Spiritually*
 - (1) Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?
 - c) *Now they are trying to trip him up politically*

B. The Roman Occupation

1. The Romans had successfully invaded and conquered Israel
 2. All of the Jews were under the governance of the Roman Empire
 - a) *The head of the Roman Empire was Caesar*
 - b) *At this time Caesar Tiberius*
 3. There is a great irony and sadness here
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- a) *The Pharisees hated the Romans*
- b) *But now they sought to use the Romans to destroy Jesus*
- c) *Which is ultimately how they end up getting Him crucified*
- d) *Once you start out on the wrong path, there's no telling how far down you will go.*

II. The Pharisee's challenge

A. Is it lawful to pay taxes

- 1. If yes - then the popularity of Jesus with the Jews goes down
- 2. If no - then the Romans will view Jesus as a rebel and execute Him

- a) *The Pharisee's saw this as a win-win situation*
- b) *Either Jesus loses influence or Jesus loses his life.*
 - (1) Be careful, some people will twist what you say
 - (2) Or try to trip you up in bad questions
 - (3) Groucho Marx - Have you stopped beating your wife?

B. Jesus response

- 1. Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar
- 2. Give to God what belongs to God
 - a) *His response answers both the political & spiritual issues*
 - b) *Jesus turned the Pharisee's win-win question into a non-issue*
 - (1) This shows you that when you think there is no way out Jesus can find a way.

(2) When you can't figure it out on your own Jesus can show you the way

III. The answer

A. The coin

1. Whose image do you see? And whose name?

a) They said Caesar's

(1) The emperor of Rome was known as Caesar, and this was Caesar Tiberius

B. The comparison

1. Jesus compares giving things to Caesar and giving things to God

2. He draws a parallel between this natural human emperor and the supernatural almighty God

a) What does Jesus say is the basis for deciding what should be given

(1) Whose image, and whose name?

IV. Caesar

A. Represents the Natural

1. Tiberius emperor of the Roman Empire

2. The leader of the largest government in the world.

a) He was famous beyond measure

(1) His name and image were on the money used all over the Roman Empire

(2) Across much of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East

(3) Everyone knew who Tiberius was

(4) We are still talking about him today, because of his impact on history

b) *He was wealthy*

(1) He owned palaces, not one several

(2) He controlled the treasury of Rome

(a) Just think about that for a moment

3. He was corrupt

a) *During his reign the historian Tacitus describes Tiberius as being vengeful and without morals*

(1) He held sham trials and executed anyone he considered to be a threat

(2) He held lavish parties filled with all manner of sexual perversions

(a) It is recorded that his palace was a place of “Never-ending sexual excess”

(3) His cruelty to servants and common people was well known

(4) He raised taxes again and again to finance his excesses

4. His Death

a) *Upon the announcement of the Death of Tiberius, the gathered populace raised a mighty shout. When a few moments later that statement was amended to pronounce that he had recovered the crowd grew silent. When a few moments later it was announced again that Tiberius had been smothered to death, the crowd shouted in happiness again.*

b) *The Senate refused to grant him honors*

c) *The cry was raised “To the Tiber, with Tiberius” A burial in the Tiber river was for convicted criminals in Rome.*

V. More than money

A. Jesus is speaking of more than money

1. Jesus never says, give taxes to Caesar and tithe to God
 - a) *Although that is a good principle as well*
 - b) *A parallel that some money belongs to Government, taxes*
 - c) *And some money BELONGS to God, tithe*
2. Jesus says the “the things that are” plural, multiple items.
 - a) *This is an all encompassing term*
 - b) *It involves more than just money*

B. Whose image, whose name?

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

1. We were originally created in the image and likeness of God
 - a) *Adam was perfect in the Garden just like God*
 - b) *There was no sin or corruption*
 - c) *But then came the fall*

Genesis 5:3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, and after his image; and called his name Seth:

2. Adam's son was after Adam's image
 - a) *Fallen, no longer perfect*
 - b) *That line continued on down through time*
3. The birth of Jesus
 - a) *Jesus was not a true descendant of Adam*
 - (1) He was fully man, the same as the first man Adam
 - (2) But he was perfect
 - b) *He was conceived by the Spirit of God*
 - (1) He was made in the image of God

VI. Contrast

A. Compare Jesus with Caesar

1. Jesus was uncorrupted
 - a) *It was false charges that eventually got Him crucified by the Romans*
 - b) *He was perfect*
 - (1) He started a new uncorrupted line of Humanity

VII. In the Mirror

A. The image is a reflection of the original

1. Whose image is in your life?
 - a) *Are you giving your life to selfish pursuits?*
 - b) *Are you living in sin?*
 - (1) Eventually Caesar was rendered what he deserved.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

B. The Natural man will die

1. Whether through natural death at the end of your life
2. Or by repentance, baptism in Jesus name, and infilling of the Holy Ghost

a) *Repentance is the death, Baptism is taking on the name of Jesus, Receiving the Holy Ghost is walking in the newness of life*

b) *Once the natural man has died, we are assured of eternal life in Jesus Christ. This is what it means to be "born again"*

c) *We take on a new Father, no longer Adam, but Christ.*

1 Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

James 1:22-24 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. 23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

C. Whose image is on your life

1. Is it Caesar's or Jesus?
2. I've shown you the mirror, examine yourself in it
 - a) *Are you giving your all to Jesus today?*
 - b) *Do you have His name? Whose image do you see?*
 - c) *Caesar was given death. Have you died out to your natural man, and been "born again" into a new life?*

