

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

RLJ-1945

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PART 46: TAXES AND OFFENSES

THE TAX QUESTION

The Jews in Galilee and Judah were hit with a plethora of Roman taxes on customs, import and export, toll bridges, crops, sales, property, and special taxes when there was a war, building project, or a campaign to finance. They also paid a temple tax to the Jewish religious leadership.

When Jesus returned to Capernaum from Caesarea Phillipi, the apostle Peter was approached by a tax collector and asked if Jesus paid taxes. **Matthew 17:24**

Peter responded affirmatively and then walked into the house where Jesus was staying. The God-man showed supernatural ability by informing Peter He was already aware of the conversation with the tax collector. Then He posed a question, does a king collect taxes from his children or strangers? **verse 25**

Peter answered that taxes are collected from strangers and Jesus affirmed that children are indeed free from taxation. **verse 26**

NO REBELLION

The Roman empire had no God-given mandate to occupy the land of Palestine since each people group has been appointed their own land. **Acts 17:26**

As far as God was concerned, Rome conquered Palestine and illegally occupied it through force. Nevertheless, Jesus did not come to re-establish the Kingdom of Israel, but to pay for the sins of humanity. The God-man specifically stated He had no earthly kingdom. **John 18:33-37**

The tax demanded by the Romans was illegitimate, but Jesus did not want to start a tax rebellion and distract from the task at hand, so he told Peter to quietly pay the tax.

Jesus did not make payment with personal funds, but moved in the spirit world and got the necessary money supernaturally. **verse 27**

THE TAX TRAP

Sometime later the Pharisees sought to trap Jesus by asking if it was lawful for Jews to pay Roman taxes. They were hoping that Jesus would make fiery nationalistic statements that could be reported as insurrection. **Matthew 22:15-17**

The Son of God recognized the wickedness of their endgame. **verses 18**

It was foolish of the Pharisees to try and outsmart the Son of God and He quickly turned the tables by asking whose image was on the coin. He then settled the matter by stating that whatever belonged to Caesar render it to Rome, and whatever belonged to the Lord should rendered likewise. The Pharisees were surprised by the answer and walked away. **verses 19-22**



KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

The Bible speaks about the “Kingdom of Heaven” and the “Kingdom of God.” What is the difference between the two?

Matthew uses the term “Kingdom of Heaven” while Luke emphasizes the “Kingdom of God.” There really is no difference between the two phrases because they both refer to the Kingdom of the Son.

Jesus stated some people standing with Him would not die until they saw the Son of man coming in His Kingdom. When did this take place? At the resurrection! This new kingdom is operating in full power on the earth now. **Matthew 16:28**

Jesus explicitly stated that His kingdom was not of this world. **John 18:36**

Jesus also specified that Satan has a kingdom. These two kingdoms are at war with each other. **Luke 11:17-20**

The Kingdom of Heaven exists in the spirit world and there is only one way you can become a citizen of this spiritual kingdom. You must be born again to overcome the spiritual death brought about by Adam’s sin. **John 3:1-8; Romans 5:12-19**

Every little baby that comes into the world automatically becomes a citizen of Satan’s kingdom. However, there is life in the Messiah (Redeemer), and through the born-again experience, you can join God’s team and become a citizen in the Kingdom of Heaven. **Colossians 1:12-14**

The church of Jesus Christ is the physical embodiment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Jesus has appointed officers (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers) to run His church. **Ephesians 4:11-16**

There are also bishops and deacons in the church. **1 Timothy 3:1-2, 8-13**

WHO IS THE GREATEST?

The apostles were not perfect men and they voiced their selfish ambitions when they asked the God-man who was the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. **Matthew 18:1**

The question must have grieved Jesus because He called a small child to the center of the group. **verse 2**

The Son of God stated that God the Father was seeking individuals with humility. Anyone that wants to be great in the Kingdom of Heaven should be humble. **verses 3-4**

The apostles would figure this out later on. **James 4:5-10; 1 Peter 5:5-7**

Jesus considered a child to be a virtuous symbol of a true disciple because they are meek and modest in contrast to the pride, ambition, and envy that was being exhibited by the men He selected. Do not hinder anyone from Jesus. **Matthew 18:5; 19:13-15**

CHILD OF GOD

Jesus uttered a strong warning to anyone that would lead a child astray. This can also apply to adults who are despised and whose Christian ministry is hindered and trampled upon. Woe to the person that is responsible for discouraging them to the point that they quit serving the Lord. Whether you offend a child or an adult, the same weight by which

you have encumbered them, is going to literally be hung around your neck. You will get to experience that same magnitude as a millstone in deep water hijacks and ends your life. **Matthew 18:6**

Christians will certainly be attacked, but woe to the one that mistreats or leads a child of God astray. Anyone who brings in false doctrine is in danger of judgment from God. **verses 7**

Leaders and members of false religions who lure the unsuspecting, gullible, and those not firmly grounded in Bible are in danger of the Lake of Fire. **verse 8**

The God-man stressed this was such a serious issue that it was better to cut off the offending hand or foot or to pluck out an eye rather than misleading people into false doctrine. **verse 9**

There are holy angels in heaven assigned to protect believers in Christ. These angels have access to God the Father and they will mete out punishment against the perpetrators. **verse 10; Hebrews 1:13-14**

Jesus came to rescue the lost. How do you think He is going to view wicked behavior? **Matthew 18:11**

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?