



Lesson 24

Paying Taxes to Caesar

Matthew 22:15-22;

Mark 12:13-17;

Luke 20:19-26



Matthew 22:15-22 (Blue – Mark, Green – Luke)

And they¹ sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk.

The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people. So they watched him and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere, that they might catch him in something he said, so as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor.

¹ And they came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him, ²⁸ and they said to him, "By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?" . . . And they were seeking to arrest him but feared the people, for they perceived that he had told the parable against them. So they left him and went away. (Mark 11:27-28; 12:12)

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. ¹⁶ And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, **we know** that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances.² ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” ¹⁸ But Jesus, **perceived their craftiness**, aware of their malice, **knowing their hypocrisy**, said, “Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” ²¹ They said, “Caesar's.” Then he said to them, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.” ²² When they heard it, **they were not able in the presence of the people to catch him in what he said, but marveling at his answer they became silent.** And they left him and went away.

² Matthew and Mark, Literally, “you do not look at people’s faces” / Luke is similar, “do not take faces”

James 2:1-9 – *My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called? If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin . . .*

Mark 12:13-17

And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk. And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone's opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?" But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it." And they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to him, "Caesar's." Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at him.

Luke 19:20-26

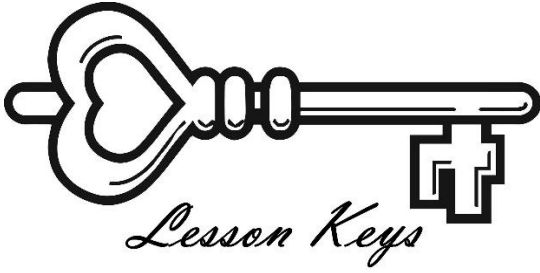
The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people. So they watched him and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere, that they might catch him in something he said, so as to deliver him up to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor. So they asked him, "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly, and show no partiality, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" But he perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's." He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were not able in the presence of the people to catch him in what he said, but marveling at his answer they became silent.

Luke 23:1-3

Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate. ²And they began to accuse him, saying, "**We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar**, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king." ³And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so."

Romans 13:1-7

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.



1. We see the continued efforts of Jesus' enemies, and the progression toward His trial and crucifixion. We see the motive behind the questioning and how the enemies used the topic in a completely fabricated charge when Jesus was before Pontius Pilate.
2. Jesus indicates differing roles for government and faith.
3. Jesus directs obedience to government, even with paying taxes – something the Jews especially hated under Roman control.
4. An illustration for the 4th commandment