

Mathew 22: More Parables And Questions.

I. 1-14: The Wedding Feast.

Jesus continued to explain to the religious leaders and to the listening crowds the danger of rejecting Him.

A wedding was (and often is today) the most significant social event in society; people were invited but without a set time. On the appropriate day, when the host was ready to receive the guests, they sent out messengers to say that all things were ready and it was time to come to the feast.

The king persisted in making the invitation as attractive as possible. He really wanted those invited to come. All things are ready is the message of the gospel. You don't come to God's feast and prepare your own meal. He has made it ready for you; you come to receive.

The reaction of those invited gives an accurate description of the reaction of many to the gospel. Many made light of it; others go back to their business and others treated the ill messengers.

The king rightfully brought judgment upon the offenders for not only did they reject his invitation, they also murdered his messengers.

This was a prophecy of what would happen to Jerusalem, the city whose religious leaders so strongly rejected Jesus and His gospel.

This parable demonstrates that those indifferent to the gospel, those antagonistic against the gospel, and those unchanged by the gospel share the same fate. None of them enjoyed the king's feast.

II. (15-22) Taxes.

Here the Pharisees and the Herodians worked together. This was evidence of their great hatred of Jesus, because they were willing to put aside their own differences for the sake of uniting against Jesus.

Jesus' dilemma with this question was simple. If He said that taxes should be paid, He could be accused of denying the sovereignty of God over Israel (making Himself unpopular with the Jewish people). If He said that taxes should not be paid, He made Himself an enemy of Rome.

Jesus answers: give to Caesar what is his, but give to God what belongs to God.

Again, with His wise answer, Jesus showed that He was in complete control. He rebuked the wickedness and hypocrisy of the Pharisees and Herodians.

"Every Christian has a double citizenship. He is a citizen of the country in which he happens to live. To it he owes many things. He owes the safety against lawless men which only a settled government can give; he owes all public services." (Barclay)

Everyone has the image of God impressed upon them. This means that we belong to God - not to Caesar, or not even to ourselves.

Romans 13:1 - Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Psalms 29:2 - Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

III. (23-33) The Resurrection.

The Sadducees denied everything supernatural, so they asked Jesus a hypothetical - and ridiculous - question, hoping to show that the idea of the resurrection is nonsense. Based on Deuteronomy 25:5-10, if a married man died childless, it was his brother's responsibility to impregnate his brother's widow and then count the child as the deceased husband's descendant.

Their mistake was rooted in two causes. First, they did not know the Scriptures (though they thought they did). Second, they did not know the power of God, being basically anti-supernaturalists.

"If you knew the power of God, you would know that God is able to raise the dead ... If you knew the Scriptures, you would know that God will raise the dead." (Poole)

First, Jesus reminded them that life in the resurrection is quite different from this life. It does not merely continue this world and its arrangements, but it is life of a completely different order.

The glory of heaven will be a relationship and connection with God that surpasses anything else, including present family relationships (Revelation 21:22-23).

"The living God is the God of living men; and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still alive and identified as the same persons who lived on earth." (Spurgeon)

1 Corinthians 15:21 - *For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.*

IV. (34-40) The Greatest Commandment.

When the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together: Matthew gives us the fascinating scene of the opponents of Jesus working hard to embarrass Him - unsuccessfully.

It is clear enough what it means to love the LORD with all we are, though it is impossible to do perfectly. Loving your neighbor as yourself doesn't mean that we must love ourselves before we can love anyone else; it means that in the same way we take care of ourselves and are concerned about our own interests, we should take care and have concern for the interests of others.

V. 1. (41-45) The Messiah.

The Pharisees were right in saying that the Messiah is the Son of David. But they didn't have a complete understanding of who the Messiah is. He is not only David's Son (a reference to His humanity), but He is also David's Lord (a reference to the deity of Jesus, the Messiah).