"JESUS HAS THE ANSWER"

Matthew 22:15-46
10/14/2018

INTRODUCTION:

***No question could snare the Son of God! Got any questions? - He has the answers!**

I. Jesus answers. . .
A <u>POLITICAL</u> QUESTION ABOUT <u>TAXES</u> (v. 15-22)

II. Jesus answers. . .
A <u>DOCTRINAL</u> QUESTION ABOUT THE <u>RESURRECTION</u> (v. 23-33)

III. Jesus answers. . .
AN <u>ETHICAL</u> QUESTION ABOUT THE <u>GREATEST COMMANDMENT</u> (v. 34-40)

CONCLUSION:
Jesus asks a question to provoke thought regarding Christ's true nature (v. 41-46).

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_____ (v. 34-40)

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INTRODUCTION:

Still smarting from the treatment they received in Christ's series of parables He had aimed at them (Mt. 20-21), the religion leaders now seek to trap Him with a series of "loaded" questions (Wiersbe, p. 79).

In verses 15-40, Matthew purposely and systematically cites Christ's rejection by the Jewish religious leaders of His day.

Their rejection of Christ is seen in three attempts to interrogate Him and to trip Him up or entangle Him in His words.

They like a prosecuting attorney in a courtroom scene fire questions at Jesus seeking to find some contradiction, some inconsistency, any inaccuracy, a slight blunder, error, mistake, any doctrinal heresy, any disloyalty to God or government (any politically incorrect statement).

What is thrilling is how Christ:
--immediately answers their questions (with no time for thought as to what to say or the articulate way of saying it);
--concisely answers their questions (with no "fat" that could be maligned and used to discredit the pillars of His arguments);
--profoundly answers their questions with answers that leave the inquirers baffled, dumb-founded, and amazed
(Note: V. 22 *"they marveled";* v. 33 *"they were astonished";* SEE v. 46)

Christ's response to their questions, and the question He Himself asks shows that He was Who they thought He wasn't -- the Messiah! The King of Israel! God Almighty!

Note: The main points of this outline are adapted from Warren Wiersbe.

***No question could snare the Son of God! Got any questions? - He has the answers!**

I. Jesus answers. . .
A <u>POLITICAL</u> QUESTION ABOUT <u>TAXES</u> (v. 15-22)

V. 15

"The Pharisees" - <u>Self-righteous</u> religious "extremists" Everything about them looked and smelled "religious," but they stunk with hypocrisy (Mt. 23).

"Entangle" - They planned and plotted a way of ensnaring or trapping Jesus in His words. They wanted to say, "I caught you!" when they would find some inconsistency or contradiction in His teaching.

V. 16

In order to ***"trap Him"*** the Pharisees send to Him people with two totally different views of taxation. So if Jesus would swing either way in His answer, they could trap Him and accuse Him of an injustice.

They interrogate Jesus with ***"their disciples"*** and with the Herodians.

1) Their "disciples" - Jews who were made *"two-fold more the child of hell"* than their teachers (23:15), who supported <u>Judaism</u> (they believed in giving to <u>God</u> not government; they believed the land was God's not Caesars)

2) The "Herodians" - Jews who supported the Herodian dynasty (peace at any price) - they supported <u>Rome</u> and Caesar.

It's amazing how when it comes to opposing Christ, heathen of differing views, religions, philosophies (who can never get together on anything) can suddenly find common ground and unite in a common task to fight against Christ and Christianity.

"Neither carest thou for any man" - You don't "take sides," you are <u>not swayed</u> by men.

"Regardest not the person of men" - You don't show preferential, impartial or prejudiced treatment to people or parties.

V. 17

"Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar" - Is it in accordance with the Law (Torah) to pay taxes to government.

V. 18

The omniscient Lord Jesus saw right through their masks and ***"perceived their wickedness".*** He saw their well-covered trap!

If He said, "Yes, you should pay tribute to Caesar" - the Pharisees' disciples could accuse Him of being disloyal to Judaism (and send the religious inquisition after Him and hang Him as a heretic).

If he answered, "No, you should not pay taxes to Caesar," the Herodians could accuse Him of being disloyal to Caesar (and send the "IRS" after Him and hang Him as a tax evader).

V. 19

"Shew me the tribute money" - Jesus knew what it looked like, but wanted the coin as a convicting object lesson.

"A penny" - a denarius

V. 20

"Whose portrait (picture) ***and whose name is stamped on the coin?"*** Jesus asks.

V. 21

Jesus in His answer wisely and appropriately does not swing one way or the other, but teaches that we should give to government what is due them and should give to God what is due Him!

> ***"Render to Caesar" -*** Pay your taxes
>
> (Rom. 13:7 - *"Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."*
>
> Don't practice tax evasion, hire workers "under the table," cheat on your income tax returns, or slug the toll booths or ignore your traffic tickets.

"Render to God" - Give your tithes and offerings

"the things that are God's" - Certain things that we have already belong to God. These words show an obligatory responsibility that we have toward God. What is owed God when it comes to money?

--God commanded Israel to "pay" a tithe (10% to Him) (SEE: Mal. 3:8-12; cp. Lev. 27:30; Prov. 3:9-10, 11:24-26).

--The practice of the New Testament believer was to give to God through the local church when they gathered on Sunday (I Cor. 16:1-2; cp. II Cor. 9:6-12).

By showing a distinction between God and government, Christ's answer shows how He favored a separation between church and state (i.e. the state [Caesar] is distinct from the Church, and the state is not to control the church, nor is the church to be a state church like the R.C.C. of the Dark Ages).

II. Jesus answers. . .
A <u>DOCTRINAL</u> QUESTION ABOUT THE <u>RESURRECTION</u> (v. 23-33)

V. 23
"Sadducees" -

Whereas a "Pharisee" was self-righteous and thought that his good works would get him to Heaven [That is why "I'm so 'fair-you-see'!"], a "Sadducee" did not believe in life after death, he denied the resurrection ["That is why I'm so 'sad-you-see'!"]

--They did not have the faith of Joseph, who requested his bones be buried in the land of promise because of his faith in the resurrection (Gen. 50:24-25; Heb. 1:22).

--They did not believe the words of ancient <u>Job</u> who said, *"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."*

--Nor did they have faith like King <u>David</u>, who said: *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."*

--They did not trust the words of the prophet <u>Daniel</u> who predicted
Daniel 12:2-3 - And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

--Perhaps they ignorant of the prophecy through <u>Ezekiel</u> who heard God say, *"Son of man, can these bones live?"* (v. 3). . . *"Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord."* (Ezek. 37:5-6).

V. 24

"Seed" = Children. SEE: Deut. 25:5-6; Gen. 38:8.

"The object of such a marriage law (a Levirate marriage) was to perpetuate the <u>line</u> of the dead brother and to keep his <u>property</u> within the family" (Ryrie note)

V. 25
"There were <u>with us</u> seven brethren" - Whether their story is true or fictitious is uncertain. They may have lied to make up a scenario that Jesus would have to

answer.

V. 28

They no doubt with self-confident smirks on their faces asked this question, thinking they had trapped Jesus.

V. 29

Everyone errs (is lead astray) who does not know the Scriptures (the surest way to prevent a life of error is to know God's Word!).

V. 30

Concerning their ignorance of the Scriptures, they thought that there was marriage in Heaven, whereas the Bible nowhere teaches this.

(Marriage is a bonding limited to this life - *"till death do we part"* Cp. Rom. 7:1ff)

*"*There will be no need for marriage in the next life because there will be no death. Therefore it will not be necessary to bear children to replace those who die" (Wiersbe, p. 81).

We do not become angels (EX: The man "earning his wings" in the old film "It's a Wonderful Life") - but are ***"as"*** angels.

"As the angels" - Angels are not male and female; do not cohabitate; do not marry; do not reproduce.

If you don't like your gender, wait a while. You will be "neuter" in eternity!

V. 32

Since the Sadducees only based their beliefs solely on the Pentateuch (the first five books of Moses), Jesus quotes it to again show them their ignorance of the Scriptures, and that their own Law proved there was life after death.

Jesus bases His whole point on the tense of the verb. *"I am"* (presently) not *"I was"* (which would imply that they were dead and gone.

Jesus was saying, "These patriarchs are still alive today!"

(cp. the presence of Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration - Mt. 17:3).

Those who die as believers go straight into the presence of God as living spirits (Rev. 6:7) awaiting their future bodily resurrection (I Cor. 15:5ff; I Th. 4; Rev. 20).

III. Jesus answers. . .
AN ETHICAL QUESTION ABOUT THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT
(v. 34-40)

V. 35

"Tempting Him" - testing Him

After hearing Christ's good answer to the Sadducees, this lawyer (doctor of the Law of God; a master in the Scriptures) tested Him with an ethics exam.

The Jews of Christ's day had documented 613 commandments in the Law (248 positive and 365 negative) (Wiersbe, p. 81).

V. 36

"The great commandment" - Which command is paramount? reigns supreme? ranks as the top? is first and foremost?

Loving God is not merely a N.T. priority, but is an eternal priority that also applied to the Old Testament saint.
SEE - Deut. 6:4-7
Deut. 10:12

HOW should we love God?

"Heart . . . soul . . . mind. . . strength" = Love Him with your whole being; with everything you have.

When we love God totally (with our whole being), He is:

1. The center of my affections

   "Heart" - my inner being which thinks, feels, and chooses (what I feel deeply about reflects what I really love).

2. The center of my life

   "Soul" - the immaterial part of man as it relates to this life (what I live for reflects what I really love).

3. The center of my thoughts

"Mind" - my ideas, convictions, thoughts, philosophies of life should revolve around God. (what I spend my time thinking about [dwelling on, pondering] reflects what I really love).

4. The center of my activity

"Strength" - my physical ability (so translated in I Pet. 4:11), talents, etc., should be used for God (what I use my abilities on reflects what I really love)

WHY should we love God?

1. Loving God is the key to obedience
(the greatest stimulus [motivating factor] to obeying God is to love Him)

I Jn. 5:3 - *"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous."*

--Love makes obedience easy!

The reason "Love" is stated as the top priority attitude is because it is the motivating factor behind everything we do.

- If one loves God, he will seek to please God.
- If one loves God, he will be holy.
- If one loves God, he will do right.
- If one loves God, he will keep His commandments.--John 14:15, 21

2. Loving God is the key to close fellowship with Christ

Jn. 14:23 - "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."
I Cor. 8:3 - "But if any man love God, the same is known of Him."
Ja. 4:8 - "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you . . ."

3. Loving God is the key to blessedness.

Showers of benefits fall upon those who make it their priority to love God.

Rom. 8:28 - "...All things work together for good to them that love God..."

Ja. 1:12 - "He shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

Psalm 91:14-16
Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

If the greatest command is to love God, then the greatest sin is to not love Him!

If the greatest command is to love God, then the greatest sin is to not love Him!

"If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema" (I Cor. 16:22).

God foretold that in the last days men would be "lovers of their own selves . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (II Tim. 3:2, 4).

As the End draws near, lovelessness will be a sign: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt. 24:12).

V. 39

Note: Jesus does not command us to "love ourselves"; we automatically do already (Eph. 5:29 - *"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church")*

It is natural to love yourself; it is supernatural to love others in the same way as you love yourself.

How do you know when you are loving others the same way as you love yourself? Ask yourself: What do you do to help or benefit yourself? Do the same for others.

You are concerned about:

--Your relationship with God . . . then concern yourself with others'
--Your health, wealth, prosperity. . . then concern yourself with others'
--Your protection. . . then concern yourself with others'
--Your pleasure . . . then concern yourself with others'
--Your success . . . then concern yourself with others'

If you love God, totally, you will love others mutually.

A true love for God will manifest itself in a love for others who were made in God's image. No one can love God without loving our brother (I Jn. 4:20, 21).

Christ's combines Lev. 19:18 with Deut. 6:5 to summarize the whole Law.

V. 40

All of the Old Testament Law and prophets could be hung on these two commands. The pole that supports the hanger holding all of God's commands is love.

Rom. 13:9-10 - *"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."*

Gal. 5:14 - *"For all the law if fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*

CONCLUSION: Jesus asks a question to provoke thought regarding Christ's true nature (v. 41-46).

Now the Interrogated interrogates; now the Questioned asks questions.

V. 42

"Christ" - the Messiah; the Anointed One (who in their minds was not Jesus).

"*In Spirit" -* What David wrote in the Psalms, he wrote under the control of the Holy Spirit.

V. 44

"Lord" = Hebrew *Adonai* (a title for deity)

Every Jewish expert in the Law interpreted Psalm 110 as Messianic and v. 1 as specifically referring to the Messiah, since no one else had the right to sit at Yahweh's right hand.

V. 45

David's calling the *"Christ" "Lord"* proves three things:

1) Christ was <u>pre-existent</u> to David
2) Christ was <u>pre-dominant</u> over David (*my Lord")*
3) Christ was <u>pre-eminent</u> over everything (He is Deity)

SEE: Mark 12:32-37 for the connection between the lawyer acknowledging <u>monotheism</u> (one "God") with Christ's implicit teaching that He as the *"Lord"* of David is Deity.

Because they did not have the courage to admit that Jesus was the Christ, they did not have the courage to ask Him any more questions.

V. 46

Every question they asked just added more weight to Him being the Messiah by how He answered it. With every question, they were "digging their own graves." His responses muzzled them!

Jesus has the Answer!

John 7:46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

John 21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

He not only had an answer to any question. He IS the answer! We need to hear what He says, but we most importantly need Him for who He is!

Who is Jesus? Those who questioned Him so as to trap Him didn't know who He was. They failed to realize that He was the Lord, whom they were to "*love with all their heart*" (I Cor. 16:22 - *"If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema. Maranatha."*)

He was the One who is the *"resurrection and the life"* (Jn. 11:25). He is the God to whom we are to render our entire lives (like Paul, who considered himself a slave of Jesus Christ - Rom. 1:1).