

Whose Image Do You Bear?

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Matthew 22:15-22; 34-40

Five Controversies of Holy Week (**Matthew 21:23-22:46**):

1. A Confrontation: Official Confrontation: Questioned Authority (**Matthew 21:23-27**).
2. A Coin: Political Setup: Taxes to Caesar (**Matthew 22:15-22**)
3. A Conundrum: Theological Corner: The Resurrection (**Matthew 22:23-33**)
4. A Commandment: Legal Testing: The Greatest Commandment (**Matthew 22:34-40**)
5. A Challenge: Whose son is he? (**Matthew 22:41-46**)

Render to Caesar (Matthew 22:15-22)

A. The Strange Alliance (**Matthew 22:16**)

1. Pharisees – a Jewish party that exercised strict piety rooted in Mosaic law. The name means “to separate,” “divide,” or “distinguish.” Labeled as hypocrites by Jesus. Against Rome and her occupation.
2. Herodians – a Jewish political party that sympathized with the rulers of the Herodian dynasty and Rome. Herodians and Pharisees had conflicting ideologies; however, in their opposition to Jesus, they were united.
3. Herodians and Pharisees united to entangle (15) Jesus in His words (to catch or ensnare as an animal in a net).

B. The Political Trap (**Matthew 22:17**)

1. *“Is it lawful to pay the tax to Caesar or not?”*

- a) A “Yes” alienates the crowd and validates Roman occupation.
 - b) A “No” gets Him reported to Roman authorities as a seditionist promoting rebellion towards Rome.
2. They do this anyway, three days later, before the Sanhedrin and Caiaphas. **Luke 23:2**, *And 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.”*

C. The Coin (**Matthew 22:18-21a**)

1. The Roman coin bore the image of Tiberius, the Caesar of Rome. The inscription on the coin said, *“Tiberius Caesar Augustus, son of the Divine Augustus, Pontifex Maximus.”*
2. The Four Claims of the Roman Coin
 - a) The graven image of Caesar was an offense to Pharisaical law. Even carrying one into the Temple was hypocritical and a violation. Jesus made them pull the coin from their pocket.
 - b) Son of the Divine Augustus - Augustus (Tiberius' adoptive father) had been formally deified by the Roman Senate after his death in AD 14. The inscription called Tiberius the *son of the deified one — Divi Filius*. In other words, *son of god*.

“Augustus” — the Revered One. *Augustus* is not a name; it's a title. It means “the revered one,” “the august one,” “worthy of worship.”

- d) **“Pontifex Maximus” — Highest Priest.** This is the deepest offense. *Pontifex Maximus* was the chief priest of the Roman state religion — the human mediator between the Roman gods and the Roman people.

The Question - Whose stamp is on your time, your mind, your loves? (**Genesis 1:26-28**) **Genesis 1:27**, *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.* God's? Or, notice **Psalms 115:8**, You become like what you worship!

- a) Image of God is what man is, not something he possesses (Made for Identity).
- b) Image of God is universal, male and female (Made for Unity).
- c) Image of God is vocational “dominion.” (Made for Priestly work)
- d) Image of God is doxological “worship.” (Made for Worship)

Render to God (Matthew 22:34-40)

A. The Test (**Matthew 22:34-36**)

1. The lawyer uses the same word as Matthew 4:1 when Satan was tempting Jesus (**vss. 18, 35**).
2. These were coordinated attempts to trap Jesus, not honest theological inquiries (put to the test, probe,

to see what someone was made of).

The Shema “Hear” (Matthew 22:37-39)

1. **Deuteronomy 6:4-5**, “*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*”

Leviticus 19:18, *You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*

The Structure (**Matthew 22:40**) (The two tables of the Law summarized in love)

1. **Romans 13:8**, *Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.*
2. **Romans 13:10**, *Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*
3. **Matthew 7:12**, “*So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*”
4. **Galatians 5:14**, *For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

III. The Light for our Path

A. The Gospel (Genesis 5:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:45-49)

1. In Genesis 5:1-3, the dilemma (bad news) of our condition is defined. “*When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.*” God made man in His own image. Perfectly righteous. But then, Genesis 3:1-6 transpired, and man fell. Sin (transgression of the law of love) entered into the world, and so did death.
2. Since that time, the image of God in man has been marred by sin’s effect. **See Genesis 5:3**. Every man, woman, and child has been born in the image of Adam, which was marred by sin. **Romans 5:12** *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—*
3. There has only been one man born without Adam’s image being passed down upon him, and that is the virgin born Son of God. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born without a sin nature. He is the image of God (**2 Corinthians 4:4**, **Hebrews 1:3**).
4. It is this Jesus, Son of God, who was crucified, buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (**1 Corinthians 15:1-4**) to purchase salvation for all who would repent and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ.
5. This was done that you might have the image of God restored in you to its intended glory by the gospel of the Son of God (See 1 Corinthians 15:45-49).

B. Diagnostics

1. Where are you giving God the coin but keeping the self?
2. Whose image is stamped on your time, your mind, your loves?
3. Has your love of neighbor (image-bearer next to you) been crowded out by anything?