

## 2. True Religion (Luke 20:20 – 21:4)

Have you ever felt trapped by a question in front of others? How did you respond?

### *Read 20:20-26*

The strategy of challenging Jesus directly over his status and authority hasn't worked well for the religious leaders (19:45-20:19). What is their strategy now? (20:20-22)

What do you think would be the implications of answering a straight 'yes' or 'no' to their question in v22?

As usual, Jesus outwits his opponents and manages to answer them and more without falling into their trap. What is the essence of his answer?

Why do you think Jesus goes on to say 'and give to God what is God's'? How do you think this relates to his question about who's image is on the coin? (cf. Gen 1:26-28)

How does Jesus' teaching here help us approach questions about compliance and priorities as Christians living in a secular society? (Try to consider a concrete example in our own context and apply Jesus' response)

### *Read 20:26-40*

The Sadducees were one of the religious factions within the Jewish community who placed a great emphasis on the books of Moses (Genesis to Deuteronomy). As Luke explains, one of their defining characteristics was that they say there is no resurrection. In particular, they did not believe the Scriptures taught the idea of a resurrection, whereas many of the other teachers and religious leaders (such as the Pharisees) did.

What do you think is the motivation of their question to Jesus in verses 28-33?<sup>1</sup> Do you think it is sincere or not? Why / why not?

Jesus manages to answer their question on two levels without falling into the trap of providing a silly answer to an impossible question. What does he say about 'whose wife will she be'?

We might find the idea of not being married in the age to come disturbing, given we place such a high value on romantic relationships here and now. What other parts of the Bible help us understand why this isn't bad news?

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<sup>1</sup> Their question is based on a law of Moses given in Deuteronomy 25:5 designed to sustain the family line and the woman herself in the event of a man dying before being able to have children.

What does Jesus say about the deeper issue of belief in the resurrection?

**Read 20:41- 21:4**

After Jesus' response, we read that 'no one dared to ask him any more questions'. The religious leaders' strategy to publicly discredit Jesus has completely failed. But Jesus is not content to leave it there – he now goes on the offensive.

What is the puzzle that Jesus draws attention to in v41-44?

What is the implied answer?

Why do you think Jesus asks this question?

What kind of behaviour and attitudes common in the leaders is Jesus warning his disciples against in verses 45-47?

What do you think these kinds of attitudes and behaviors look like in our context?

How does the example of the widow in 21:1-4 contrast with the behaviour of the 'teachers of the law'?

The text literally reads 'she gave all the life that she had'. How does her example relate to Jesus' challenge earlier to "give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's"?

**Reflection**

How are you going at 'Giving to God what is God's'? What could it look like to embrace this calling more wholeheartedly?

How do you think belief in the Resurrection and hope in a 'more than human Messiah' help us to give God the devotion and honour he is due?