



**Tricking Jesus—"What About Money to Rome?"
Matthew 22:15–22**

April 23, 2023

DAILY DEVOTION

Find a rhythm in God's word this week! Follow this 5 day plan on your own or with your group!

<https://my.bible.com/reading-plans/29941>

INSPIRATION

"Answering a question with a question is typical of challenge-response interactions. And when such interactions are in play, rarely does the point of discussion stay in fixed focus.

Rather the point of the interaction is challenge-response, honor and shame, and this is always in firmly fixed attention [i.e., "top of mind"]."—Bruce J. Malina, *Windows on the World of Jesus*, p. 8

ICE BREAKER

1. What good thing can you say about paying taxes?
2. Would you ever voluntarily pay more taxes than you're required to? Why or why not?

DEEP DIVE

Read this out loud

An excerpt from the message this week:

"So the Pharisees – the ruling religious group send[s] out their minions – interns – disciples and some Herodians – which were Jews who were OK with Rome ruling – so these 2 opposite groups – the Pharisees – who hate Rome – and the Herodians who like Rome – get together to conspire against Jesus."

Read Matthew 22:15–17 and then answer the following questions:

3. Keeping in mind the opening "Inspiration" quote above, what was the goal of those who questioned Jesus about paying taxes to Rome?



4. If these unlikely allies had succeeded in catching Jesus off his guard and making him fumble for words, how do you think Jesus would have looked to his followers?
5. Has anyone ever tried to catch you off your guard or trip you up with your own words? Are you able to recognize it when someone is trying to do this to you? How did you respond, or recover?

Read this out loud

An excerpt from the message this week:

“That is haunting – knowing their evil intent. ‘I know what you are up to. I know what is going on. I see what you are all about. You are trying to shut me down. Make me look foolish or worse – to make me lose my voice. You want to cancel me.’”

Read Matthew 22:18–22 and then answer the following questions:

6. Did Jesus answer their question directly? Indirectly? How do you think his answer impacted the listening crowd and their opinion of him? His detractors?
7. If a robber pointed a gun at you and said, “Your money or your life,” how would you respond? If Jesus asked you the same question, without the gun, how would you respond?
8. What are some ways you can “give back” or have been giving back to God?

Additional Study

If you have time during your Small Group or you want to study more about the message topic, read and consider the following passages:

- Romans 13:1–7
- 1 Kings 12:1–17 (Solomon’s successor, Rehoboam)
- Matthew 19:1–9 (Zacchaeus the Tax Collector)
- Mark 12:13–17; Luke 20:20–26 (parallel passages to Matthew 22:15–22)

NEXT STEPS

9. How are you going to apply the lessons learned in the message this week?
10. What can you do to encourage someone in your group to take their next step?

PRAYER

1. After sharing prayer requests, pray for the person on your right. Pray for that person throughout the week.
2. Is there someone in your group that could use a prayerful reminder that God is present in their lives?



SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY

Establish a regular rhythm of serving together! Below are some service opportunities.

- BENSON - Local Mission Partner is ABIDE. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- MILLARD - Local Mission Partner is Heartland Hope. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- FREMONT - Local Mission Partner is LifeHouse. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- OMAHA - Local Mission Partner is Open Door Mission. Contact Lyndsey Deyoe for more information.
- Or get to know your community! Seek out service opportunities in your area.