

Parent Bible Study

Jesus was questioned

Bible Passage: Matthew 22; Mark 12; Luke 20

The religious leaders despised Jesus. He was a threat to their power, and they didn't believe He was the Messiah. The Jews decided to confront Jesus with questions. Perhaps He would misspeak, and they could trap Him with His words. The Pharisees' disciples asked Him, "Teacher, is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

As far as these men were concerned, Jesus could not give a satisfactory answer to this question. If Jesus said God's law required them to pay taxes to Caesar, they could get the Jewish people—who hated paying taxes to the Romans—to turn away from Jesus. If Jesus said God's law did not require them to pay taxes to Caesar, they could convince the Romans to arrest Jesus. But Jesus answered wisely: "Give ... to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). The men were speechless, and they left.

Then an expert in the law asked Jesus which command in God's law is most important. The Pharisees knew the law well and felt prepared to argue. Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." Then He emphasized a second command: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18). These commands summarize the rest of the law, and the Pharisees could not object.

Jesus turned the tables and asked the Pharisees about the Messiah: "Whose son is he?" The Pharisees recognized the Messiah as the son of David. Jesus referred to Psalm 110, in which David calls the Messiah "Lord." Why would he do that? The Pharisees had no answer. As fully man, Jesus is the son of David. But as fully God, He is greater than David; He is Lord. No one dared to question Jesus again.

When the religious leaders questioned Jesus, He answered with wisdom and power. Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. He has authority in heaven and on earth.