



The Kingdom Coming

Trap-Setting Questions for a Truth-Telling Teacher

Sunday, November 12/23 --- Matthew 22:15 – 46

Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle Him in His words... But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, 'Why put me to the test, you hypocrites?'... And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask Him any more questions.

- Matthew 22:15, 18, 46

Blessing and cursing are not compartmentalized Bible words at all. They are simply the two ways of treating people. They are as inescapable as breathing out and breathing in. We are acutely sensitive in our souls to being blessed or being cursed... The reason we are so sensitive is that our souls were made to be blessed.

- John Ortberg

Introduction: The Plot to Entangle Jesus in His Words (22:15)

1. A Question about Politics from the Herodians (22:15 – 22)
2. A Question about Doctrine from the Sadducees (22:23 – 33)
3. A Question about the Commandments from a Lawyer (22:34 – 40)
4. The Most Important Question from the Most Important Man (22:41 – 46)

Conclusion: No More Questions (22:46)



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Discussion Questions:

- i. Have you ever had the experience of someone 'saying' words of blessing to you, but 'feeling' that their heart was really cursing you?
- ii. Have you ever been guilty of the hypocrisy that says words of blessing to someone while harbouring a disposition of cursing? Why did you do this?
- iii. Why do you think the various religious leaders were so adamant about trapping Jesus in His words? (Clues: Mt. 21:12, 23, 45 – 46)
- iv. Why does Jesus say that the greatest commandment of all is to love God with our whole being and to love our neighbour as ourselves? (22:37 – 40). Is this an order to be obeyed (or else)? Or is it an invitation to a whole new way of living?
- v. When it was Jesus' turn to ask the question, why does He choose the question He does? (See Mt. 22:41 – 46)

Application:

Psalm 51:6 says that God desires truth in our inner being. Jesus said we should let our yes be yes, and our no be no (Matt. 5:37). Paul writes that we grow up into Christlikeness when we speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15).

These verses remind us of 'integrity'... the idea that all parts of us (our thoughts, emotions, will, words, attitude) are all integrated. Only then do our souls rest and our hearts find peace.

This week think about the posture of your soul toward other people. Is it a posture of blessing or cursing? If you find a hint of cursing, bring that to God in prayer. Read Matthew 18:21 – 35.