



May 24, 2020

F260 Bible Reading Plan

Week 20 (5/18/20)

Proverbs 1-2
Proverbs 3-4
Proverbs 16-18
Proverbs 31
1 Kings 11-12

Week 21 (5/25/20)

1 Kings 16:29-34, 17
1 Kings 18-19
1 Kings 21-22
2 Kings 2
2 Kings 5, 6:1-23

SCRIPTURE

Luke 20:20-26

²⁰ Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be sincere. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said, so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. ²¹ So the spies questioned him: "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. ²² Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

²³ He saw through their duplicity and said to them, ²⁴ "Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?"

"Caesar's," they replied.

²⁵ He said to them, "Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

²⁶ They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

COMMENTARY

LUKE 20:20-26

20:19-21. The religious leaders (scribes... chief priests) understood that Jesus' preceding parable referred to them, and so they wanted to get rid of Him immediately. But in order not to anger the people, they sought to trap Him through a question that would allow them to turn Him over to the Roman authorities. So, while attempting to sound pious and respectful, they asked for Jesus' view on one of the most divisive issues of the day—the Roman poll tax.

20:22-26. The religious leaders thought they had found the perfect way to trap Jesus, no matter how He answered. If He said it was lawful to pay the poll tax to Caesar, it would turn the Jewish people against Him. If He said it was not lawful, it would provide grounds for the Romans to arrest Him for treason. But Jesus did not fall into their trap. By asking for a denarius, the specific coin used to pay the poll tax, Jesus demonstrated that the religious leaders themselves found it necessary to cooperate with the ruling Roman government. Give back to Caesar the things that are Caesar's was a proper recognition of the legitimate role of human government in God's plan (Rm 13:1-7). To God the things that are God's does not divide life into secular and sacred, which would imply that God is indifferent about some aspects of human existence. Rather, Jesus' statement demonstrates that all facets of life have reference to God, including the need to submit to governmental rule. This answer amazed the scribes and chief priests (v. 26), thwarting their efforts to catch Jesus in a self-condemning statement.

MAIN POINT

Human wisdom cannot best godly wisdom. Jesus operates from heavenly authority as the beloved Son of God, and we must submit to Him.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

How do you respond to authority? In your workplace? In government? In family relationships? In the church?

In which of those areas is it most challenging for you to respect authority? Why?

What does our response to authority figures reveal about us?

While He was on earth, Jesus taught and acted with a sense of authority that stood out from everyone else's. It was an authority that belonged to God alone. God is in authority

over us, which means everything we have—from our money to our lives—belongs to Him and comes from Him.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

- Ask a volunteer to read Luke 20:20-26.

This scene took place amid conflict between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders who failed to see the authority He had as the Son of God. What authority did these leaders think they recognized? In reality, did they recognize God’s authority at all? Explain.

What does deceit, trickery, and duplicity say about a person’s view of authority?

What might’ve been behind the leaders’ question (v. 22)? What trap did they try to set?

What’s so insightful about Jesus’ response?

The religious leaders had spies ask Jesus a question designed to test His authority to Caesar and find a way to arrest Him. Jesus had a simple retort. Render to Caesar what he controls, and render to God what He controls. Caesar’s image is on coins. Let Caesar have coins. God’s image is on people. Let people be devoted to God. This would include all people, for Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Certainly people are more important to God than things, so Jesus placed devotion to God on a higher plane than devotion to Caesar without positioning Himself in opposition to either God or government (see Rom. 13).

What aspect of the Lord’s authority have you resisted at some point through dishonesty or duplicity before Him? What did you learn from that experience?

These religious leaders could speak to Jesus in person. What might a person’s prayer life reveal about his or her view of God’s authority today?

What in your life do you have the hardest time giving to God? Why?

What do we communicate to God when we fail to surrender everything we have, from our possessions to our lives, to Him?

Jesus understood what the religious leaders missed—even the coins that Caesar claimed ownership of really belonged to God. “My” is one of the most misused words in our vocabulary. We are quick to declare: my job, my money, my talents, my wealth, my

belongings, my family, and, even, my life. Biblically speaking, God owns it all, and we are managers of what He has entrusted to us during our brief stay on earth.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What do our attitudes toward money and giving reveal about our view of His authority?

What would it look like practically for you to “give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s”?

How might living honorably this way give you opportunity to share the gospel with others?

PRAYER

Close your small group time with prayer thanking God for His authority in your life and over all the world. Ask God to show you areas of your life where you may be clinging to a lesser authority. Ask Him to help you use all you have been given for Him and His glory and to bless others.