

Q&A with God

Luke 20:20-44; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 1-26-2012

How closely do you read your Bible?

1. The Question about Taxes (20:20-26)

The religious leaders did not come to Jesus with questions from a heart that wanted to know the truth but from a heart that wanted to oppose the truth. (19-20) The ‘pretenders’ flattered Jesus and then asked Him a question with only two possible answers: pay or don’t pay. The question was designed to force Jesus into a wrong answer whatever He said: to either upset the people who hated the Roman government and saw paying taxes as wrong or upset the Roman government who required taxes. (21-22) Jesus knew what they were doing and exposed their hypocrisy by asking them to give Him a Roman coin (which they obviously were using to get what they wanted even though it had a picture of Caesar as King on it). (23-24) Jesus answers their question in a third way that evades their trap and amazes them and silences them: give to Caesar those things that bear his image and to which he has a right and give to God those things that bear His image and to which He has a right! (25-26) Jesus simply affirmed what the Bible says about honoring those in authority and honoring God, at the same time! No one likes to pay taxes, especially if we don’t like those in power. And therefore, we look for arguments for not doing so (while still wanting the benefits that the government affords). Jesus says it is right to pay taxes even to those we are opposed to for various reasons and that it is a part of our honoring of God when God’s place is preserved in it all. And the Bible affirms what Jesus said. (Proverbs 24:21-22; Ezekiel 17:11-21; 1 Peter 2:17; Romans 13:6)

2. The Question about the Resurrection (20:27-40)

The Sadducees were largely part of the priestly class and they held only to the OT and especially the first 5 books of the Bible (while the Pharisees also held to oral tradition). They did not believe in life after death and they asked Jesus a question that seemed to settle the issue of whether there was life after death. They want to know who a woman who had 7 husbands in this life would be married to in the afterlife (they use the law of Levirate marriage in Deuteronomy 25:5-6 for the basis of the story and the 7 marriages). This assumes that the idea of an afterlife is just more of the same but longer and better. Jesus answers by saying that their assumption that there is marriage in the next life is wrong and it is not needed for procreation because there is no death or the need to replace the population as it is here and now. Then Jesus takes them to the Pentateuch and the story of Moses and the burning bush in Exodus 3 (see 1-5, 15) to argue that there is life after death because if God calls Himself the ‘God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob’ it is because they are still living and He is still their God! Again, people are impressed with Jesus’ answer and the religious leaders are afraid to ask Him anything else. The religious leaders don’t see how there could be an afterlife in light of what they think it would have to be. Jesus argues that the problem is not with the afterlife but with their expectations about it. And the Bible affirms Jesus’ perspective.

3. The Question about the Son of David (20:41-44)

The religious leaders have been asking Jesus questions to try to trap Him and lead him to death. Now Jesus asks them a question in order to teach them and lead them into life. Jesus raises a question about the familiar designation of the Christ (or Messiah) as the son of David. He asks essentially: If the Messiah that is to come is a descendant of David, why does David call him 'lord' in Psalm 110? The assumption is that an ancestor is greater than his descendant. The implication, though unstated, is that the 'son of David' Messiah must be more than simply a human descendant of David. And if he is David's Lord, he must be the Son of God. And if the Son of God, he must be the One to trust. (Hendriksen) The religious leaders believed Jesus had crossed the line by receiving honor as the Messiah and by claiming authority that only God could have. Jesus argues that that is just what they should expect the Messiah to receive and do! And the Bible affirms that.

Application: *How should we question God?*

❑ **Come humbly to God with your questions.** – Luke 1:30-34

We often let our questions keep us from going to God or if we go to God with our questions, we go to try to 'trap' Him in some kind of wrongdoing. Recognize that we all have wrong ideas and false assumptions. There is no question you can humbly ask that God will not answer, if needed.

❑ **Believe there are good answers to difficult questions.** – 2 Kings 7:1-2

The fact that we can ask difficult questions does not mean there are no good answers to those questions. There is no good question you have that God does not have a good answer for.

❑ **Read your Bible carefully.** – Luke 10:25-26

If they had read their Bible carefully, they would not have seen a problem with paying taxes to Caesar and worshiping God. If they had read their Bible carefully, they would not have rejected the truth of the afterlife and the resurrection from the dead. If they had read their Bible carefully, they would have seen that the Messiah had to be more than simply a man. There is no good question you have that God has not addressed in His Word, so that is where we should look.

Conclusion

There are three gospel connections we need to make in order to apply this passage:

- ❑ **The connection between happiness and God.** Hope in God for your help and happiness! – Psalm 16:11
- ❑ **The connection between happiness and humility.** Rest in Jesus for your pardon and perfection. – Matthew 11:28-29
- ❑ **The connection between happiness and holiness.** Pursue love by obeying God's Word. – John 15:10-11