

# The Life of Christ

this authority?"

3. We are told to always be ready to give an answer to those who will question us (I Peter 3:15). In this case, Christ answered their question with a question. This strategy often gets people to think on their own as it does here. Jesus says He will tell them the source of His authority if they can answer one question: "Was the ministry and baptism of John the Baptist from God (Heaven) or of men (man-made)."
4. They began to reason: "If we say he was of God, he will ask why we didn't believe him. If we say he was not of God, we fear the people and they will stone us for they are persuaded that he was a prophet."
5. They responded to Christ's question by saying, "We cannot tell."
6. Jesus responded to them similarly by saying, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things." Christ knew they would not believe anyways. In a few days when He did tell, they accused Him of blasphemy—a crime worthy of death (Matthew 26:63-65).

Note: Following this questioning Christ continued to teach in the temple that day on the following subjects:

- The Parable of the Two Sons (Matthew 21:28-32).
- The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (Matthew 21:33-41; Mark 12:1-9; Luke 20:9-16).
- The Parable of the King's Son (Matthew 22:1-14).

When the chief priests and pharisees heard these parables, they perceived that He spake them against them. They sought to lay hands on Him to arrest Him, or kill Him, but they feared the multitude that gathered that day because the multitude considered Christ a prophet (Matthew 21:45-46).

Then the chief priests and pharisees left Him and went their way (Mark 12:12)

## **H. Christ Questioned by the Pharisees and Herodians About Paying Taxes. (Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26)**

1. When the Pharisees left the temple, they took counsel with each other on how they might entangle Him in His talk.
2. They sent out some of their disciples and the Herodians to catch Him in His words. These men are described as spies, who feigned themselves just men whose goal it was to take hold of His words that they might deliver Him unto the power and authority of the governor—Pontius Pilate. It is interesting to note that the Pharisees hated the Herodians and yet their hatred for Christ was so far greater, they used them to try to destroy Him. Herodians were Jews who were either related to the Romans or loyal to the Roman government. The Pharisees despised Rome.
3. These men used flattery. They did not believe it, but said to the Lord, "Master, we know you teach right, that you are true, that you do not care what men think about Your words and that You do not accept persons and are impartial. . ." To flatter means to praise insincerely. Jesus perceived their craftiness and exposed it, "Why tempt ye Me?" Flattery is a temptation. A temptation to manipulate a person with feigned words to gain their favor or admiration or service. Jesus exposes this temptation and their evil hearts. Consider these Scripture warnings against flattery:  
Job 17:5; Proverbs 2:16; 6:24-25; 7:5; 20:19; 28:23; 29:5.  
There is a great power to control people by flattery. This is usually done in a sexual way or as a means of gaining power over people. So much fornication begins with flattery.
4. Their question is, should we pay taxes to Caesar or not? The Jews would have loved to hear Him say, "No," but He did not.
5. Jesus said, "Show me a penny; whose image and superscription is on it?" When they brought it to Him, they answered, "Caesar's." He knew their hypocrisy.
6. Jesus answered that they were to give to Caesar what is his and give to God what is God's. When it comes to money:
  - The taxes belong to Caesar—government (Romans 13:6-7). The story in Matthew 17:24-27 expressly teaches us that Christ paid His taxes. (Also study Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14.)
  - The tithe belongs to God (Matthew 23:23; Leviticus 27:30,32).
7. They could not take hold of Jesus in His words and marvelled at His answers. They held their peace.

## **I. Christ Questioned by the Sadducees (Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-38)**

1. The same day, the Sadducees came to Him in the temple. He is questioned the third time this day.  
The Sadducees were a sect of religious leaders who disagreed with the Pharisees over certain doctrines. They did not believe in the resurrection. They only believed in the here and now. They also did not believe in the spirit of man or of angels. (See the argument that was started over this issue long

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after this time in Acts 23:1-10) Even though Christ taught them the truth about these doctrines, they still didn't believe and long after this meeting, they still held to their false doctrine.

We can only teach and preach the truth, we can not make people believe it. If Christ's ministry did not change some people, ours will not either. Do not be discouraged.

2. Their question is a ridiculous hypothetical question. They call into question the teaching of Moses in Deuteronomy 25:5. If a man died and did not leave a firstborn son, that man's brother was to go into his wife and raise up seed so their name would go on and their inheritance. Their question was that suppose seven men had this woman (who were all brothers) having succeeded each other when the elder died, if she still did not have a man-child, in the resurrection (next life) whose wife would she be? For seven men had her for their wife.
3. Jesus answered their question by revealing to them that they were in error. Two things caused their error, which are usually the same things that cause anybody to err regarding the knowledge of God:  
First, they did not know the Scriptures. They were ignorant of what God said. They had not studied out the issue fully in the Word of God.  
Second, they did not know the power of God. Their "faith" was in human understanding. If they did not understand something, they did not believe in it. We are told in I Corinthians 2:5, "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." Every human being has their faith in one of two directions: toward man and his wisdom or toward God and His Word. The Sadducees had theirs directed solely toward man.
4. Jesus takes this opportunity to teach the truth about marriage about the resurrection.  
Regarding marriage, we are taught that it's only in this world. That those who are saved and accounted worthy of the resurrection of the dead do not marry in the next life nor can they die anymore. They are like the angels in eternity which neither marry nor are given in marriage. They are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Today the death of a spouse ends the marriage (Romans 7:2-3).  
Regarding the resurrection: Jesus testifies that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are still alive. God is not the God of the dead but of the living. It is the eternal life of God that is in the believing sinner. Jesus said that the Sadducees greatly err. A great doctrinal text on the resurrection is found in 1 Corinthians 15. Be sure to read it and believe it. In that chapter, Paul challenges the doctrine of the Sadducees- "...how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Corinthians 15:12). It is important to read that whole chapter.
5. When the multitude heard this, they were astonished at His doctrine. This reaction has happened before (Matthew 7:28;13:54; Mark 1:22; 10:24,26; 11:18; Luke 2:47; 4:32).

## **J. Christ Questioned by the Lawyer (Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34)**

1. The Pharisees heard that Jesus had put the Sadducees to silence. They gathered together again for the second time this day.
2. Then one of them, a lawyer who was also a scribe, asked Him a question. This lawyer had heard the Pharisees reasoning and perceived that the Lord had answered them well, he tempted the Lord saying, "Which is the first and great commandment of all the law?"
3. Jesus answered immediately and quoted Deuteronomy 6:4-5. We should love God our Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. This is the first and great commandment. He goes farther and tells them that the second greatest commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18) There are no greater commandments than these. On these two commandments hang all of the law and the prophets.
4. The lawyer responded to the Lord very discreetly. He said that the Lord (though he only addressed Him as master) had said the truth-that there is one God, and to love Him with all of the heart, understanding, soul, and strength and to love your neighbor is more than any sacrifice that can be possibly made.
5. When the Lord heard his response, He said, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." This man started out tempting the Lord, but after was closer to the Lord. He was almost there. This is why we should be prepared to answer (1 Peter 3:15). Someone might really be touched by your answer, even if initially their heart is not right.
6. After this answer no man dared ask Him any more questions from that day forward. No man was able to answer Him a word.  
"There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord." (Proverbs 21:30). Stick with