

The True Messiah

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[0 : 00] Good day everyone. At school I didn't grow until quite late. But what came a long time before size and strength was attitude. Not that surprising for a schoolboy really.

But since I was small and weak I had to be careful if I got frustrated. Once I was playing basketball with some guys and I was getting hot under the collar. I think everyone was. And at one changeover I lost control a bit. And without thinking I pelted the ball at someone's head instead of handing it over.

And as quick as it happened and he started walking towards me jaw and fists clenched. I snapped my senses. What had I done? I'd bitten off more than I could chew.

The challenges of today's passage are a bit like this. Jesus is in Jerusalem teaching the people. Do you remember? He'd arrived to shouts of praise but in tears because of Israel's blindness to the true meaning of his arrival and the peace that he was bringing.

Despite that the crowds are very happy about him being there. Hanging on to his every word. But not everyone in that crowd is happy are they? The Jewish leaders don't like what he's saying and doing. In fact they want to kill him. But they can't do it. Because they're afraid of the people.

[1 : 39] They're leaders with no authority. Compared to Jesus who had it all. In this passage they have another go at him. And once again they want to change public opinion so that arresting him will be easy.

But instead of doing it themselves they need the help of the government. It's like they've given up the battle of authority. The Jewish leaders have cowed away and they've sent spies to lay traps. They wanted to get him into trouble with the law. So they would do the dirty work for them because they couldn't do it themselves. Remember last week. But they still don't know who they're dealing with do they? They are biting off more than they can chew.

Because this isn't just another troublemaker. But the true and promised Messiah that they're questioning. And so in three brief episodes Jesus demonstrates that he understands God and life so much more than these so-called experts who are trying to expose him.

In the first with no power to arrest Jesus as they wished. The Jewish leaders send spies to ask sneaky questions to trip Jesus up.

[2 : 56] Let's take a look. Verse 21 in your Bibles. So the spies questioned him. Teacher. We know that you speak and teach what is right.

That you do not show partiality but speak the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?

It's a good question. If you wanted to find a reason to get the governor involved surely that's the way to go. The Jews in the first century were under Roman occupation.

They had to pay a tax to Caesar. It was about a day's wage per year. Not that bad for a tax really. But the Jews wanted to catch Jesus out.

Maybe if we can get him to say something bad about Caesar or maybe about dishonoring God. But these guys haven't thought things through have they?

[3 : 52] I wonder if you've picked their first mistake. I mean sending spies to Jesus. They're like kids who put hands in front of their face thinking that you can't see them.

But we shouldn't be surprised. They were blind to God's coming. And that's exactly who they're talking to. How does Jesus respond? Verse 23.

He saw through their duplicity and said to them show me a denarius whose image and inscription are on it. Caesar's they replied. He said to them then give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.

It's a bit of a mic drop moment isn't it? Like how do they respond to that? Caesar's the one who owns the money and makes the rules about it. So Jesus is like keep his rules. Give him what he demands. But at the same time God is the one who owns everything and makes the rules about everything including Caesar, his money and his rules.

[4 : 57] So give God's what is God's. There's no surprise they had nothing to say in response. So not only did he answer the question but he challenged everyone who was listening that even the Roman conquerors were under God's authority.

And paying your taxes doesn't mean you can't or shouldn't give due honour to God and vice versa. And what I find so helpful about this is that Jesus didn't do or say anything that I couldn't have said. Even though I might not have known how to respond. It's a very rational answer isn't it? And when you hear it's like of course.

That's the best way to honour Caesar and God. Sometimes you might feel like it's impossible to honour the law and God. You might feel like the legislation is too oppressive.

They don't have the right. We shouldn't have to do that. No actually God is my master and I don't have to do what you say. We can feel that way sometimes can't we?

[6 : 13] The government does ask things of us that we may not like. But Jesus' wise response makes it very clear. So for example if the government decided to tax Anglican churches.

If we didn't pay it we can't meet. That would ruffle some feathers wouldn't it? They can't do that. It's gone too far.

When will it stop? We'd have all kinds of conversations wouldn't we? I imagine people would leave over it. But what would Jesus say to such a conundrum?

Well probably the same thing that he says here. Now hopefully also a reminder. That the Roman government was far tougher on Christians than ours is.

Yet the challenge is the same. The Jewish leaders and the spies. Didn't know who they were dealing with. They treated Jesus like another wise guy.

[7 : 22] But his wise response to their challenge revealed that he knew more about honoring Caesar and God than they did. And the reason for this is because Jesus is not who they think he is.

But he is who he says he is. After this another group of people have a crack at him. They are called the Sadducees. The Sadducees are a funny bunch.

They come up a few times in the Gospels. But this is the only time they are mentioned by Luke. They differ in their theological position than other Jewish leaders because they don't believe in the resurrection.

That's why they are called this. They think there is no life after death. And that makes them sad. You see. That's not actually true.

I just. The Sadducees also think they can trip Jesus up as well. And so. Their humor is even better than mine.

[8 : 26] They come up with the most ridiculous story about marriage and the resurrection. But they too have underestimated Jesus. Jesus knowledge of the Old Testament is far superior to theirs.

Let's have a look at it. Verse 27. Some of the Sadducees who say there's no resurrection came to Jesus with a question. Teacher. They said. Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children.

The man must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. The second and the third married her. And in the same way the seven died leaving no children. Finally the woman died too. Now then at the resurrection whose wife will she be since the seven were married to her.

Well. I wonder what your reaction is to this story. Mine is. Gee I hope it's not true. Because wow.

[9 : 33] What terrible luck. What an awful life. Keep in mind the Sadducees. Don't believe in the resurrection. But they're deliberately asking Jesus what they think is an impossible question to catch him out.

I wonder what you would have said. I would have struggled I reckon. Especially with everyone listening. They're trying to use the Bible against him.

Explain this issue. Make sense of it. And when people do that it can be tricky can't it. But. Just like you don't try and tell Mark Chu how to balance coffee cup on a bike seat.

You don't try and trick Jesus. With a question about the Old Testament. Like before. With complete. Knowledge of God. And wisdom.

In the scriptures. Jesus answers their question. And at the same time. Jesus shows their error. He says that those who are worthy.

[10:42] To take part in the resurrection. Won't marry. They no longer die. They're like the angels. Children of the resurrection. They are wrong. About marriage and the resurrection.

It is for people. Of this age. God has given us marriage. For a purpose. To point to the true marriage. Of Jesus and the church.

And once that eternal marriage begins. In the age to come. There'll be no more marriage. As we know it. You know what that means?

That married people. Should live. Like marriage is going to end. Your heavenly family. Is your true family. And single people.

Point us. Toward that reality. And you know what else that means? Because of the promise of heaven. The relationship that Christians will have with each other.

[11:42] And their Lord then. Will be far better than any marriage. Or relationship. That they might have now. That's encouraging isn't it?

But after answering. Jesus isn't finished with them. They wanted to trap him. In what they thought was a hole in scripture. And they thought Moses could help them.

And so Jesus corrects them with Moses. Verse 37. He says. In the account of the burning bush. Even Moses showed that the dead rise. For he calls the Lord. The God of Abraham.

The God of Isaac. And the God of Jacob. He is not the God of the dead. But of the living. For to him all are alive. The resurrection was a belief. Commonly held by the Jews.

But the Sadducees didn't believe. However. They did rest heavily. On the first five books of the Bible. This is why. They went to Moses.

[12:38] Who he. Sorry. This is why Jesus went to Moses. Who he calls the Lord. God of Abraham. God of Isaac. God of Jacob. His argument being. If God is still.

The God of these patriarchs. As he speaks to Moses. Long after their deaths. They must still be alive. Or present somehow.

In the midst of God. And so Jesus has soundly answered their question. And then he schools the Sadducees. On the resurrection.

From the part of the scriptures. They trust. And what happens? He silences them. And a teacher of the law. Probably because.

Of his support. Of the resurrection. Responds. Well said. Teacher. These religious experts. Thought they could take Jesus down.

[13:34] But it's them. Who've been given a rude shock. With only wise words. And knowledge of the scriptures. Jesus has sprung their traps. And silenced his opponents. But Jesus wasn't finished.

Was he? He wanted to go another round. He knew where he was going. So in the process. He would teach them. Their missteps about him. The true Messiah.

He asked them a question. About King David. And why he calls his son. Lord. Take a look. Verse 41. Then Jesus said to them.

Why is it that the Messiah. Is the son of David? David himself declares. In the book of Psalms. The Lord said to my Lord. Sit at my right hand. Until I make your enemies.

A footstool for your feet. David calls him Lord. How then. Can he be his son? This is a passage. That Nathan read for us before.

[14:35] It was commonly held by the Jews. That the Messiah. Was the son of David. And like with the Sadducees. Jesus was using scripture. To challenge their understanding.

Of the Messiah. In the Psalm. David says. The Lord. That is God. Says to my Lord. The King. Or Messiah. Sit at my right hand.

Until I make your enemies. A footstool for your feet. Even King David. King David. Recognizes the Lordship. Of the Messiah. Who sits at the right hand of God.

Whose enemies. God will put under his feet. Now we know. This to have already happened. In Jesus. In Ephesians chapter 1. On the slide. It says. God raised Christ from the dead.

And seated him. At his right hand. In the heavenly realms. In verse 22. God placed all things. Under his feet. And appointed him. Head over everything. The thing that Jesus is questioning.

[15:32] In particular. To those listening. Is. How can the Messiah. Be the son of David. The reason being. How odd it is. For a father. To bend.

To a son. And I suppose. It would be a little bit. Too today. Though in my culture. I wonder if. There's a little bit. Less respect.

Of elders and parents. That I observe. I don't know about yours. It may just be me. You'll have to decide if. Grammar Nazi. Is derogatory or not.

What's interesting about this. Question. Especially compared to the others. Is that there's no answer. Not for them. And not for us. Actually. We don't even know. How they responded. The lack of answer.

Though. Makes us wonder. Doesn't it? Why did Jesus. Raise this. What's he telling them? Well the Jews. Were awaiting.

[16:32] A Messiah. And they agreed. The Messiah was. A son of David. And even more than all that. In the psalm. King David. The greatest.

Of the Israelite kings. And the father. Of all the legitimate kings. Calls the Messiah. Lord. He bows. To him. Even the great king David.

Recognizes the authority. Of the Messiah. He worships him. He calls him Lord. And now Jesus has come. He demonstrates here.

His divine nature. And he's fulfilling. Messianic prophecy. Yet these leaders. Who literally. Have him.

In their presence. Who've seen. And heard him. They are. Unwilling. To see. Unwilling. To hear.

[17:28] Unwilling. To respond. Unwilling. To listen. Unwilling. To worship. Well as I was. Saying my prayers. Before I received a beating.

On the basketball court. I realized my mistake. Sorry. Sorry. Sorry. In God's kindness. The brute. Who was coming to kill me. It was just Adrian.

He actually knew me pretty well. We'd been school together. Since prep. He forgave me. What a good man. Friends. The true Messiah. The Lord Jesus.

Has come. But these complacent leaders. Who thought they knew better. Didn't think. Didn't listen. Refused to see him.

Refused to worship. Even though. All the signs. Pointed to him. Remember that psalm. From David. That we heard. What is God going to do.

[18:27] With the enemies. Of the Messiah. Make them a footstool. For his feet. And it goes on to say. In verse 5. On the slide. The Lord is at your right hand.

He will crush kings. On the day of his wrath. He will judge the nations. Heaping up the dead. And crushing the rulers. Of the whole earth. After the resurrection.

And ascension. When Jesus returned. To his father in heaven. Where he is now. The apostle Peter. When preaching to the crowd. Who had killed him. Told them about the resurrection.

And the vindication. Of Jesus the Messiah. He said. On the next slide. God raised this Jesus to life. And we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God. He has received.

From the father. The promised Holy Spirit. And has poured out. What you now see. And hear. For David did not ascend to heaven. Yet he said. The Lord said to my Lord. Sit at my right hand.

[19:23] Until I make your enemies. A footstool for your feet. Therefore. Let all Israel. Be assured of this. God has made. God has made this. Jesus. Whom you crucified. Both Lord and Messiah.

Jesus is now. Victorious. Risen Lord and Messiah. God and King. And although. A final day of judgment.

Is yet to come. The reality of Jesus. As Messiah. Is assured. And when the crowd. Heard. What they had done.

Did they do. What the religious leaders did. No. They came to their senses. On the next slide. In Acts chapter 2. Again. When the people heard this.

They were cut to the heart. And they said to Peter. And the other apostles. Brothers. What should we do? Peter replied. Repent. And be baptized. Every one of you. In the name of Jesus Christ.

[20:21] For the forgiveness. Of your sins. The people recognized. That Jesus was Lord. They recognized. That Jesus rose from the dead.

As the victorious Messiah. They asked for forgiveness. They worshiped him. As Lord. Friends. This is the right response. To the true Messiah.

Take King David's lead. Take the lead of those. Who believe the truth. Worship. The true Messiah. Don't try and outwit.

Outmatch. Outsmart. Even if you might be able to outsmart me. Or his people. He knows all. He rules all. Resistance is only temporary.

Come to your senses. Repent. And be baptized. Every one of you. In the name of Jesus Christ. For the forgiveness of sins. If you feel like you're outsmarted.

[21 : 21] Too often. That you can't answer. Like Jesus does. Well know that you don't struggle alone. But also know that.

No rhetorical wizard. Whether. Skilled Jewish teacher. Antagonistic friend. Or far reaching government. Can disarm him. Because King Jesus.

Is our. Victorious. Risen. Messiah. How about I give thanks to God. For him. Heavenly Father. We thank you. For the Lord Jesus.

Who died. And rose. As the victorious. Messiah. We pray that we wouldn't be complacent. But that we would respond to him.

That we would believe. Amen.