

Turn to Matthew chapter; 22 in your Bibles. We're in the closing days of Christ's ministry in Matthew 22, the events of the final week of the crucifixion and the opposition that Jesus Christ has solidified. The intensity is building, and in the events that are, recorded in chapter 22, we have one of the busiest days that we have recorded any time in Christ's earthly ministry. It is a day of intense opposition. He is constantly being challenged by group after group with an attempt to discredit Him, to catch Him in an inconsistency. To have Him say something that will cause a significant number of the people to turn against Him, or would be something that the religious leaders can use against Him in accusation. We can appreciate something of the intensity of these events as Christ is constantly responding to their questions. He has revealed clearly that the character of these religious leaders is of spiritual bankruptcy and decadence. They are going the opposite way from God and yet they are the spiritual leaders of the nation. He's told a series of three parables, which revealed clearly that they were a people who professed to know God, professed a relationship with God but in reality were the enemies of God and were resisting and rebelling against God. The third of those parables was in the opening verses of chapter 22, and there the analogy was of a wedding feast and God had invited the nation Israel to His wedding feast honoring His Son. And yet the nation was unwilling to come. They rejected and despised the invitation and the Son that would be honored. For that, judgment would come and thus the invitation would be expanded inviting all peoples to come in and share in the wedding feast. The parable closed with a solemn note, that even though everyone is invited to come to the wedding feast, and the invitation goes out in the Scriptures "that whosoever will, may come." The Spirit and the Bride invite people to come. You must be prepared with the garment that God provides. That garment is the righteousness of His salvation. There was a guest found who did not have a wedding garment, which was indicative of rebellion and a rejection of the provision that the king had made. For that, he is cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. That will be the end of those who continue to resist the gracious invitation of God to come and share in the righteousness that He provides. Come share in the feast that will honor His Son. In spite of the fact that the religious leaders recognize that they are the ones being addressed, that they are the subjects of these parables, they continue their attack.

Back in chapter 21, verse 45, we are told: "When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them." They recognized that they are the subjects of these parables, and yet they do not turn from their sinful rebellion. They do not pause and contemplate and consider the seriousness of this situation. It is so easy to be in a situation that is very momentous and very significant and not recognize it. We look back on history and read about historical events, and we think about what it would have been like to be part of history at that time. But you know, when we stop and consider the people going through that didn't realize the overwhelming significance of that event. When Abraham Lincoln penned the Gettysburg Address on a scrap of paper on the way to give the speech, he didn't say "Now I have to be careful because kids in school will be studying this in a hundred years!" He had no sense of the significance of that event. That's the way the religious leaders are in

Jesus' day. Here they are in the presence of the Son of God, the One the Scripture says is the Creator of all things, the One in whom their eternal destiny rests! The One who will be the judge of the living and the dead! And they are so caught up with thoughts of how they can trip Him up, how they can trap Him, how they can discredit Him, why they don't believe in Him, that they fail to grasp who He really is. Much the same as goes on today. How many people will be in Bible studies, will have portions of Scripture given to them, will hear messages on the Word of God, and their minds are so caught up with things such as why they don't believe this, why this doesn't make sense, why they won't pay attention, that they fail to understand the significance of what is going on in light of eternity and they miss the point of the message. In all eternity, that exposure to the truth of the Word of God will be significant.

So it is with the Pharisees in chapter 22, verse 15. They have been challenged. They've been confronted. Their spiritual depravity, their own sinfulness, has been clearly revealed by God and they recognize they are the subjects of the parables! And now they come back to confront Christ again. But it's not, "You're right, we're sinful creatures. We do need to consider the righteousness of God." No, they're back with the same purpose. We have to get Him! We have to discredit Him!

So verse 15 you read, "Then the Pharisees went and counseled together how they might trap Him in what He said." You see how set they are in their opposition against Him? They are gathering together, now, the religious leaders of the nation. Not to evaluate the fact that here is a man who claims to be from God who is speaking what He claims is truth from God, but how they can trap Him in what He says. How they can discredit Him. There are going to be two issues that are going to come up--taxation and resurrection, the right of taxation, and the reality of resurrection. Two areas in which there were disagreements, even among the leadership in the nation Israel. What about paying taxes to Caesar? What about submitting and supporting the Roman government? What about resurrection? Does it make any sense? How do you answer some of the problems that seem to make resurrection a ridiculous concept?

First, we're confronted with the matter of taxation. Does the government have the right to demand taxation of the Jews? Now you see that the enemies in Israel have joined forces against Jesus Christ. We're told in verse 15 that the Pharisees "sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians." Now the Pharisees and the Herodians weren't exactly friends. The Herodians--we don't know a lot about them, but you can tell by their name--they were committed to the support of the Herods as the rightful, valid kings of the nation Israel. Now that was an anathema to the Pharisees. The Herods are Idomeans. They're not in the kingly line of David at all. They have no right to the throne. So there are major differences, major animosity between these two groups, but they have one thing in common. More than their dislike for each other is their dislike of Jesus Christ. Isn't it amazing how many diverse religious groups can be pulled together with this one thing in common? No matter what we disagree on, we agree on one thing--that those who say you are saved from your sins, forgiven your sins by faith in Jesus Christ alone, His death and resurrection, we know we're against that and we'll stand together against that no matter what our personal disagreements are. That's the way the Pharisees and Sadducees are.

So they send the disciples of the Pharisees and the Herodians to confront Christ. Note that these pious religious leaders are not above outright lies, deceit and hypocrisy. So they start out, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one, for You are not partial to any." That's so gooey it's sticky! Now everything they say there is true! "You are truthful. You teach the way of God in truth. " He doesn't defer to any one. He isn't partial to any one. He simply stands for the truth! You know what's so ugly about this? They don't believe any of it! They don't believe He's teaching the truth. They don't believe He's teaching them God's way; otherwise they wouldn't be set on His death! It's all flattery, hypocrisy. What they're trying to do is lure Him into a trap. They'll say nice things about Him, say nice things to Him, maybe He'll let His guard down and say something we can use against Him.

So after saying how they know He's teaching the truth, He's teaching then God's way, and He wouldn't give an inch on the truth to flatter someone, "Tell us what you think about taxes?" "Is it lawful to pay the poll-tax to Caesar, or not?" You see what they've done? "You don't defer to anyone; you're not partial to anyone; you just speak the truth--tell us about taxes." Now what they want Him to do is to say something they can use against Him. Like taxes today, it's hard to say anything that won't get you into trouble with someone. That's the way it was then. What is Jesus to say? If He says, "Yes, pay the taxes," the Jewish population will be against Him, because payment of taxes was acknowledging the right of the Roman government to exist. It was acknowledging your submissiveness to Rome, and the Jews were looking for a Messiah who was going to lead them out from under Roman bondage. So if Christ says "Yes, pay the taxes, He's going to lose credibility with the nation because He's saying "Yes, we ought to submit and follow Rome." But if He says "No, don't pay the taxes," some of the Jews will love it because they're looking for a Messiah to lead a rebellion. But then He will be advocating rebellion against Rome. And it's interesting, because that's the very charge the Jewish are going to use against Him. They don't get the answer that they want here, but that doesn't matter. They'll lie and say they got it anyway.

Look over in Luke 23--and keep in mind, this is just a couple of days after the events that we're studying. Luke 23, and Christ is brought before Pilate. In verse 2, note the accusation: "They began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar..." That's just the opposite of what Christ is going to do in this section we're considering. He's going to say "You owe taxes to Caesar, pay them." But when they bring Him before Pilate you note what the accusation is? "He told us not to pay taxes!" You see, they've already made up their minds what they want Him to say. Since He wouldn't say it, they'll say it for Him! They'll lie about it. Great religious leaders, these men are. It's amazing how much the perverted character of a person comes out when you're brought to confront Jesus Christ and you have to deal with Him face to face.

Come back to Matthew 22. It's amazing when you think about it, here are mere human beings confronting face-to-face the Son of God, the One the Bible says is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and they're trying to trick Him! They think they can trap Him in what he says! Jesus isn't fooled by it, so He says to them, in verse 13, "Jesus perceived their malice (wicked intent)

and said, 'Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites?'" Strong language Christ uses when He deals with false religious leaders. "You hypocrites!" They are hypocrites! They are pretending to be something they are not, and you remember that's the background of the word. Originally it referred to actors who were pretending on the stage to be someone else. So it comes to mean anyone who is putting on a facade, who is pretending something they are not. They pretended to believe Him; they have pretended they believe He teaches the truth. That's all a lie. They're pretending that they're interested in solving a difficulty about taxes. They're not interested in that. They're interested in trapping Him.

Look back in Matthew 15. The strongest section on hypocrisy is yet to come in the Gospel of Matthew, in chapter 23. But back in Matthew 15 Christ spoke to the issue of hypocrisy, again in addressing religious leaders--Pharisees and scribes. And note what He says, verse 7: "You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.'" You see, they are pretending something with what they say, but it's not true on the inside. "In vain do they worship Me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." And you ought to note that. God says it's empty hypocrisy when you worship Him or attempt to worship Him on the basis of what men say! When people try to worship God on the basis of instructions men have given, God says it's hypocrisy! Because He must be worshiped on the basis of what He has revealed in His Word. When men profess to know and love Him but have not come to believe in His Son Jesus Christ, that's hypocrisy. That's professing something that's not true. That's the character of these religious leaders.

Come back to Matthew 22. The response of Christ in verse 19 after revealing what their true character and intent is to say: "Show me the coin used for the poll-tax." Now this poll tax was a tax imposed by Rome on every Jewish male in Judea, and it wasn't the amount of the tax as it was the idea of it. It was a way of admitting and acknowledging submission to Rome and support of the government. And the tax went into the imperial treasury.

"Bring me the coin used..." And they bring Him a denarii's. And He asks them a question, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" Whose picture is impressed upon this coin? And the picture was that of Caesar. Verse 21, "They said to Him, 'Caesar's.'" Then He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." He establishes an important principle here that the Jews had not come to recognize and many today have not come to recognize and many believers have not come to recognize, and that is, there is no inconsistency with being a child of God, a citizen of heaven, submissive to God and also a citizen of an earthly kingdom submissive to an earthly government. There is no contradiction there. Now Christ's question, "Whose image is it on this coin?" has an important point. The image on the coin indicated the Roman government had minted it, and its very existence indicated the presence of the Roman government, so did all the privileges and benefits that came from Caesar's government. Here is a coin that represents Caesar's government. By the very fact we're using this coin, we're indicating we have certain benefits and privileges that come from this government. Therefore, there are certain obligations to this government. Now, we ought to note something here. The issue of taxes is viewed as a debt, not as a gift. So it is not my privilege to decide to withhold my taxes because I think it's a gift I give to the government. He says, "Render unto Caesar

the things that are Caesar's." And that is in the context of taxation. Taxes are something that I owe to Caesar, or I owe the government. It's a debt. It's something I owe. It's an obligation incurred by the fact that I live under this government. You say "Wait a minute, I don't choose to live under this government." Well, you can go elsewhere. "No, I can't." Well then, you're under it. We need to be careful because, keep in mind the point here is the Jews disagreed with the right of Rome to rule over them. And they thought they had the support of Old Testament Scripture that gave guidelines for the King of Israel. Rome was a politically corrupt government. Rome was a spiritually corrupt government. So this has nothing to do with agreeing with everything the government does or everything the government represents. Rome represented much that was contrary to what God had revealed in His Word, politically and spiritually.

Let me tell you something about this coin that may have been used. We don't know if this was a coin minted by Augustus Caesar or by Tiberius Caesar, but we have a coin from the reign of Tiberius. It'll give you an idea of what the coins were like in those days, which Jesus would have looked at, the denarii. On the one side of the coin, the head of Tiberius is pictured. On the other side, he is pictured as sitting on a throne with a diadem, the crown of a ruler, and the gardens of a high priest. Now let me tell you what is inscribed on that coin. On one side the inscription is, "Tiberius Caesar Augustus, Son of the Divine Augustus." You see what that Roman Emperor is claiming? 'I am Tiberius, Son of the Divine Augustus.' Now just that lone created tremendous problems for the Jews or anyone who believed in the true and living God. Here is a man ruling this government who claims to be divine because he is born of a divine father. Then you turn the coin over and they have a title that has come down to today, "Pontiff Maxim," which translated means high priest. So here is one, who is claiming for himself the prerogatives of deity and of priest, and Jesus is taking that coin and saying, "It represents this government, you owe them your taxes." You say, "Wait a minute, there's a spiritual problem here. You've got a man on the throne that claims to be divine. Can I as a believer submit and support that?" The fact that I pay my taxes does not mean I support everything the government does or stands for. The fact that I pay my taxes does not mean that I agree with everything. That simply acknowledges that I am a citizen living under this government. As such, as corrupt as it is, I have certain benefits and privileges and obligations to it. The very fact that was that coin there indicated that that government had provided a currency that enabled exchange to go on. The government there, as corrupt as it was, had provided a certain manner of safety that people enjoyed. We see that in our country today. We can gather here with relative security. But if there were no laws and no government, we'd be reduced to anarchy as we see it in certain parts of the world where people bomb things, kill people, they don't like what someone says, they *may* blow them up tomorrow, and there are no consequences because there is no government in control and recognized. So whether we like the government or not, there are certain benefits that we reap from the government. And as a citizen of it, I am obligated to it.

Note a couple of passages that carry this idea on. Paul elaborates it most fully in Romans 13, and he says basically the same thing Christ does with a little bit of elaboration. Sometimes in our logic and our reasoning, we as Christians today get into the same kind of box and dilemma that the Jews were. By certain reasoning of their relationship with God and their responsibility

to Him and the corruptness of Rome and all these things, they came to a position of saying 'We cannot submit to Rome; we cannot acknowledge Rome's authority.' Some believers have that problem. We're citizens of heaven; we're children of the king; our submissiveness is to Him, and a submission to government is a recognition of its wrong and a support of those wrongs. But it has nothing to do with that.

Note verse 1 of chapter 13 of Romans: "Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God." Human government is divinely ordained. That does not mean that every government, obviously, and every ruler is doing what God wants them to do. But human government and the authority that goes with it is established by God. "Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God." You see that? When I rebel against government and the laws of the government under which I live, I am rebelling against God. It goes on to talk about the matter that rulers preserve the peace, in verse 3, where they're not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil," and we think of this even in countries like Communist countries with Communist governments. There are many things that we would oppose there, but nevertheless they do maintain a certain order that enables life to go on. In distinction to places like Northern Ireland and Lebanon where no government is functioning and life is unlivable.

Down to verse 5, "Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience sake." Keep in mind that the man who is writing this will die at the hand of the government that he is supporting.

Verse 6, "For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them; tax to whom tax, custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." That resolves the question I have about government--what is my relationship to government? First Timothy 2:2 says that we are to pray for kings and those in authority. Why? So that we might lead peaceable lives. God's means for maintaining peace in this sinful world is human government.

In 1 Peter 2:17 Peter writes, "Honor the king." Now you know who the miserable wretch was on the throne when Peter would write that? Caesar Nero! Now he is one of the most despicable men that ever ruled anywhere! He was such a filthy wretch that his own people eventually rejected him and drove him to suicide. And Peter doesn't write to point out all the flaws and horrible things that are true about Caesar Nero. He just says, "Honor the king." He is the Caesar who had an empire wedding for himself with another man, a youth that he had castrated for the purposes. Now how can you respect a person like that? What does Peter say? "Honor the king." That takes a lot of pressure off of me. He doesn't call on me to evaluate everything the government does. He doesn't call on me to register my approval or disapproval. He calls on me to function as a godly person within the framework of the government in which he has placed me. And part of that godliness is submissiveness. We always want to run on about government when it opposes God. When those areas, the Scripture is clear like Acts 4, although Acts 4 isn't dealing with the Roman government, it was dealing with religious authorities in Israel, but in Acts 4 we are told we must obey God rather than men. And that is true. If the government says, "Gil, you can no longer read the Bible." Then I must obey God rather than men.

Those clear-cut issues, but we'd better be very, very, very, very . . . careful that we are on solid, unshakeable, clear, biblical grounds. That what government is saying to do the Bible says very clearly 'You must do', otherwise I'm in danger in the name of God of opposing God. Romans 13 has told me that he who opposes authority is opposing God. That's where the Jews had boxed themselves in by the logic of their thinking. That to be what God wanted them, to be, they had to oppose the government, and in doing it they were opposing God and the will of God for them. So we need to be very, very careful. There may be things the government requires that are not my preference that I do not like, that I do not approve of. But the issue is, Does it directly and clearly conflict with the Word of God. If not, then I'd better do it.

(Some missing from tape.) come a clear area and people think they withhold a portion of their taxes that would go to something they don't agree with. Well how much of what Rome did do you think the Jews agreed with? They didn't agree with anything because they didn't even think Rome had a right to be. Jesus said, Pay the taxes anyway, because that's the responsibility of a citizen. Now the proper use of that is the responsibility of the government. I get in trouble when I start worrying about other people's responsibility. So at least we know one thing for sure for us as believers. As much as I disagree with the taxes, and as much as I think that I'm taxed too much, as much as I think they waste a lot of my tax money, much as I may think my tax money goes to support a lot of things that I am unalterably opposed to, the Bible says "Gil, pay your taxes anyway." And since I want to do what God says, I pay my taxes. And I should do it without grumbling, and I'm working on it!

Back in Matthew 22. The other side of that, which we're not going to elaborate on, is rendering to God the things that are God's. So Christ sees no conflicts. You give to Caesar what is owed to Caesar; you give to God what is God's. Now when I'm paying taxes to government, I'm not taking what is God's and giving it to Caesar. I'm taking what is Caesar's and giving it to Caesar. I still have responsibilities to God. I can be a citizen submissive in both realms because ultimately the Scripture says the government is under the overall sovereign authority of God. So I render my obligation to God, and I render my obligation to government.

"Hearing this, they marveled..." Would you think, hearing this "they marveled and they ask Him, Teach me more." No, you know what they do? "Leaving Him, they went away." They are amazed at His teaching. It penetrates. They see its truthfulness, but they are unwilling to submit. They are leaving Him and going away. We'll see later in the chapter that they're back again--back again to attack Him on another area. You see they're unalterably opposed to the truth no matter how clear it is.

Now the Sadducees take over. Verse 23, "On that day some Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to Him and questioned Him." Now that reminder that the Sadducees don't believe in the resurrection is crucial to their question. They have a line of logic they think that makes any idea of a bodily resurrection seem really stupid and ridiculous. And in Acts 23 we're told that the Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection, they didn't believe in spirit life, and they didn't believe in angels. Basically the Sadducees are the religious liberals of the day--they are materialists--and they don't believe in life after death and the spirit world. Now, you see how low Israel has sunk! The Sadducees are the body from which the high priests come. They are smaller

than the Pharisees, but the Sadducees who do not believe in the supernatural are the high priestly family in Israel. What a decadent! Much like some of the major denominations in our day, led by men who don't believe the Word of God and the supernatural things revealed in the Word of God.

The Sadducees want to talk to Him about resurrection. Verse 24, "They came saying, 'Teacher, Moses said Now note that they're going to use the Scripture, and of course Christ knows what Moses said because He inspired Him. "If a man dies, having no children, his brother as next of kin shall marry his wife, and raise up an offspring to his brother." This is the Levirate marriage referred to in Deuteronomy 25, around verses 5,6. Levirate comes from the Latin word that means "brother-in-law." The Levirate marriage in Israel said if you got married and you died before you had a son, your brother was to take your wife as his wife. Now he may already be married, but he still took your wife as his wife. And the first son born in that relationship was counted as the son of the dead brother. So all the inheritance went to him just like he had been the son of his father who had died. The land is kept in the family that way. So it was a way of guaranteeing the family in Israel and maintaining the property, etc. within the family line. Now, the Sadducees have taken and developed this. In light of a resurrection, they perceive a problem. You know, the Sadducees weren't any different from people today. How many people want to talk about how many angels can stand on the head of a pin? Can God make a rock too heavy for Himself to pick up if God can do anything? Well, they've got one going here on the Levirate marriage.

"Now there were seven brothers with us, and the first married and died, and having no offspring left his wife to his brother; so also the second, and the third, down to the seventh." You see the picture here? Woman gets married to the brother, the brother dies; the next brother takes her, but he dies. Seven of them! I imagine the seventh was a little nervous! No children. "And last of all, the woman died." Relief to the 8<sup>th</sup> brother, he probably killed her. "Last of all, the woman died. In the resurrection therefore whose wife of the seven shall she be? For they all had her." They were all married to her, none of them had children by her, now think about this--here comes the resurrection; everybody's resurrected, and here come seven men, one woman. Little bit of a crowd. What now? You know what the point of that is? "Isn't the idea of resurrection rather stupid? It would create so many problems and so many difficulties. Isn't God logical? Isn't God a God of order? What kind of mess would resurrection be. It's 'ridiculous to even believe in such an idea." The answer is simple. You know what Jesus says to the Sadducees, and I love the way He's so blunt. He says, "You have two problems. #1, you don't know anything about the Bible! #2, you don't know anything about the power of God." Now here are the religious leaders, they are the ones from whom the high priestly family comes and He says to them, "You don't know anything about the Scripture, and you don't know anything about the power of God." Now tell me that nation wasn't ill trouble when the religious leaders don't know anything about God's Word, and don't know anything about the power of God! Is it any wonder they're confused and don't have anything better to do with their time than to come up with riddles about whose wife will this be in the resurrection. First of all, let's resolve the problem of marriage in the resurrection. This is good for us as believers because some believers today still don't have it sorted out, and many of the cults don't have it sorted out. 'Verse



29, "Jesus answered and said to them, 'you are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels in heaven.'" Know what He's saying? There is no marriage in the resurrection. When I get my glorified body, I'm not going to be married. Now for some of you, that may come as a relief, for some of you that may come as a cause of grief. But whatever, it does say when we are resurrected with our glorified bodies, there's not going to be any such thing as a marriage relationship. Now that was the flaw. They were projecting in the resurrection in the future life, conditions exactly as they are today. They did not take into account the power of God to bring about such a change in the life that conditions would be different also. That's a major error. You don't consider the power of God. The power of God is going to bring about the transformation that will change relationships. Now it is difficult for us to understand life apart from our families, life apart from our husband or wife, that's all we relate to. I have never lived in eternity. I have never lived in the glorified body. I relate to what I have and what I enjoy now--a relationship with my wife and my family. And many Christians find it disconcerting to think "You mean I'm not going to have my family like I have them now?" "I know I'll be jealous if my wife pays more attention to someone else than me!" What will it be like then? I know I'll look over there and see that real short, gray haired saint and know that it's Marilyn. I love her gray hair! I'm glad I married an older woman who has gray hair! I'm sure in the glorified body it will be gray! It's great!

What will it be like and how will I relate? We project into the future our same conditions. What Christ is saying here is, it will be different. Now what and how I don't know. There will be no sexual relationship in the glorified body. There will be no need for procreation, for children to be produced. You remember in Genesis 1 when God made them male and female, He told them to fill the earth. It was intended that they have children, that they fill the earth. That won't be part of it. They'll be like the angels. There are no more angels being produced. So in that sense, there'll be no need for the marriage relationship. That is the one thing that Scripture forbids outside of the marriage relationship, the sexual relationship. We think of a lot of the other things--the companionship, the closeness--some of those things that marriage is necessary for and does meet a need. But the only one Scripture forbids is the sexual relationship. I can have a close friend, a close companion, someone I share with, but I cannot have a sexual relationship outside of marriage. So there'll be no sexual relationships. I assume in those relationships in eternity there'll be a deepening in our glorified body of the relationship we enjoy with all believers. That kind of closeness and intimacy, sex apart that we can only enjoy in the family now. Rather than thinking there'll be less closeness, it'll be intensified. But we're not told. So one thing I do know, the Bible says there'll be no marriage in the resurrection.

There are some cults today that are saying that if a man is married to a woman and she changes her beliefs and no longer follows the teaching of this cult, he ought to get another wife because they believe that wife is going to belong to him in that future life. Didn't they ever read Matthew 22:30? It just isn't going to be so. Now I think it's good that you pick your wife and pick your husband thinking you'll be with them forever; but for ever in that sense is limited to this life. And that helps. Some of you have been widows or widowers and have married a second or third mate. What will happen in the resurrection? Whose wife or

whose husband? Well, it's really not a problem.

A reminder here. The first thing I do is come see what the Bible says. Now I know what's true. Now whether I can work out all the details as I logically try to develop it is not important. Some of that is in God's hands, but I know something of marriage in the future life. But the real problem with the Sadducees is, not marriage in the resurrection. The real problem for the Sadducees is they don't believe in the resurrection, so Christ says, 'Let's deal with the real problem here.' Look at verse 31, "But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God?" Now I want to say something here about the inspiration of Scripture. Christ is going to quote from the Book of Exodus, and you note what He says--"Have you not read what was spoken to you by God?" Christ places His seal and stamp of authority on the Old Testament as a message from, God that is spoken to them and that they ought to be taking heed to. And He quotes from Exodus 3:6. The context there is Moses confronts God in the burning bush and God speaks to him out of that burning bush. And He says, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Now there is a major thing to be understood there. "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Now Moses is to be sent on a mission. What good is a God of the dead? Moses could be thinking as he's standing there, Well, that's fine. Where's Abraham? He's dead. Where's Isaac? He's dead. Where's Jacob? He's dead. What's going to happen to Moses? He'll be dead. The point is He's not the God of the dead but the God of the living. So even though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have been dead for centuries when God spoken to Moses in Exodus chapter 3, He said "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Because they continued to live and thus anticipate the coming resurrection. It's also an indication that the covenant that God had established with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be fulfilled, which necessitated the resurrection of Old Testament saints so that they might enjoy the promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Now why did Christ use that passage in Exodus? Even though the Old Testament doesn't fully develop the doctrine of life after death and the resurrection, there are other passages that seem more direct and even clearer. But the Sadducees only believed the first five books of Moses. They are like some people today, like a preacher I talked to here in Lincoln. He told me he only believed the Gospels. And then when we got into the Gospels, he only believed part of the Gospel and the part he thought he believed, he didn't understand. So he didn't have anything. Well, that's the way with the Sadducees. They only believed what Moses wrote, and now we find out they deny the resurrection. And if they understood Exodus 3:6, they'd have to believe the resurrection. You know the pitiful part about this? Even though Christ shows them clearly from their own Scripture that they claim to believe that there must be a resurrection because God is the God of the living, not the God of the dead, the Sadducees don't change their doctrine. When we get over into Acts 23:8, we will be reminded by Luke that the Sadducees do not believe in the resurrection of the dead. You see the unbeliever is not looking to the Scripture to learn about God. He's not open to what God has to say. He simply uses the Word of God to serve his own purposes.

The multitude is astonished at the teaching of Christ, but being astonished and being believing are two different things. The tragedy in all of this, that Christ clearly reveals what God intends in the matter of taxation and our responsibility to

government, showing His insight and understanding to the things of God. He clearly unfolds what the Bible says about resurrection and the coming resurrection. Yet all the people simply sit back and say, "Oh, isn't that amazing. Isn't He wonderful." But they fail to grasp that the reason this is presented to them, the reason that the greatness of His person is being revealed is so they might believe in Him. How many people today think Jesus Christ is such a wonderful person? Or such a great leader? Such a moral example, yet they fail to understand the purpose of it all. It's so that you might believe in Him.

We have proof and evidence. Christ speaks to the Sadducees regarding the resurrection from Exodus chapter 3, but you know now we have the very example of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead as a testimony that we will be resurrected. In 1 Corinthians chapter 15 Paul spends the whole chapter on resurrection, and he says, If Christ has not been raised from the dead, then we are foolish in believing Him. We have no hope; life is without meaning and purpose. Then he goes on to assure us that Christ has been raised from the dead. And that's God's testimony and guarantee that we too shall be raised from the dead. So if the Sadducees were pitiful for their lack of belief in the resurrection, what do we say about religious leaders today who do not believe in the resurrection? But multitudes of religious leaders deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in doing that, deny the bodily resurrection of the believer. They want to talk about a spiritual resurrection, which, in effect, denies the reality of the Word of God and the finished work of Jesus Christ. Because if Christ has not been raised from the dead, we are of all men most to be pitied, Paul says, because there's no validity in what we're believing in. There is no hope for us. But we know Christ has been raised, and we too shall be raised. So these issues are clearer for us than they were in Jesus' day. And able says they were so clear there was no excuse for unbelief.

Where are you in your relationship to Jesus Christ? You're in the same situation as far as exposure that the Pharisees, the Herodians, and the Sadducees were. You have heard what God has to say. The revelation that He has given has been presented that life centers in His Son. His Son, Jesus Christ, came. He died on a cross to pay the penalty for sin. He was raised from the dead because the penalty had been paid. Where are you in your relationship to Him? Are you amazed? Are you astonished? Are you bored? Have you come to recognize and believe that He is your Savior personally? That is the issue that will matter for all eternity.