

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Days of Inspection 1: Pharisees and Herodians

Last time...the 3rd day of the Final Week continued

After the departure of the chief priests, scribes, Pharisees, and elders, Jesus continued teaching in parable form:

The Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son...another prophetic parable...
aimed straight at the people

The parable was, like the Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen,

- a. Personal – Jesus the Son of the King and for the hearers
- b. Prophetic – speaking of things future then and things yet future

As we gather here this morning,

- the servants of the King are still on the highways inviting whosoever will come to the marriage of the King's Son
- the King is still handing out wedding garments (white linen of the righteousness of His Son)
- the Father has not sent His Son to bring His Bride home
The Bride was not mentioned in the parable because, at this point in the ministry of Jesus, the Bride is a mystery (Eph 5:25), to be revealed in approx 54 days (Feast of Pentecost in Acts 2)
- the Bride has not made herself ready yet, she is still being conformed into the image of the Bridegroom

The Bride's preparations include

- watching, looking
- enduring trials that refine and grow faith that we may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of the Bridegroom
- being diligent to be found by Christ in peace and without spot (Him living in/thru us)
- believing and learning the Scriptures, even the "hard parts"
- steadfast in detecting and rejecting doctrinal error by searching the Scriptures with a ready mind
- growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the eternal King of kings and only wise God

This time...the Final Week continues

There is not a demarcation between Day 3 and Day 4 of the Final Week

They are days of challenge (of God) and inspection (of God's Passover Lamb)

They are days of very heavy teaching by Jesus Christ, mostly in parables

Challenges behind us, the inspections begin

We will be in Luke 20, Mark 12, and Matt 22

Luke 20:20-26

v20 they watched...sent forth spies...power and authority of the governor:

Who is “they”?

v19 – the chief priests and scribes...the religious leaders, enemies of Jesus
But “they” will be further clarified in the Gospel of Matthew

watched: “inspected”

intensive surveillance

spies: bad guys “laying in wait”

undercover, “dark ops” operatives, secret police

All this Final Week, prophetic Scripture is being fulfilled

Deut 19:11-13 But if any man hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally that he die, and fleeth into one of these cities: Then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. Thine eye shall not pity him, but thou shalt put away *the guilt of* innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee.

Ps 59:1-4 Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me. Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men. For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not *for* my transgression, nor *for* my sin, O LORD. They run and prepare themselves without *my* fault: awake to help me, and behold

feign themselves just men: “pretend” to be “innocent, holy”
pious men seeking truth

take hold of His words: get Jesus to say something self-incriminating

might deliver Him to the governor: Pilate

The wicked religious leaders are trying to manipulate Jesus and the iron fist of the Roman Empire

v21-22 Master, we know...Is it lawful:
The lie-ers-in-wait bait their trap

Master: Really?! Those who sent them have just challenged Jesus' authority!
Hypocrites!!

we know that You:

1. speak and teach correctly (all truth, no lies)
2. don't "take anyone on face value"...not accept based on appearance
any person (ala 1 Sam 16:7)
3. teach the way of God truthfully (as God has said, not as man says)

They don't believe any of the words they just said
This is all...flattery

Prov 29:5 A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net
for his feet

Prov 26:27-28 Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that
rolleth a stone, it will return upon him. A lying
tongue hateth *those that are* afflicted by it; and a
flattering mouth worketh ruin

Ps 5:8-9 Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because
of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my
face. For *there is* no faithfulness in their mouth;
their inward part *is* very wickedness; their throat *is*
an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue

The purpose of their flattery is to

- hide their true intentions
- distract the victim
- cause the dropping of a guard for a sneak attack
- "bait" a trap

lawful for us: us, the Jews, who have a Law, the Law of God/Moses.
God is our King

to give tribute: taxes, tolls, customs collected by governments

unto Caesar: Tiberius/the Roman Empire, whose no-nonsense oppression and
occupation was a very touchy subject by all Jews

v23-24 But He perceived their craftiness:

“They” do not know who they are dealing with, because they do not believe what Jesus has said and done to establish His Identity

The wicked leaders have tried repeatedly to outwit Jesus
It hasn’t worked yet
It has only resulted in their humiliation
And so it will again

Jesus, as easily as He sees the noses on their faces, sees their craftiness,
“subtlety” and “cunning” of their father (John 8:44-47, Gen 3:1)

Mark 12:15 “knowing their hypocrisy”

“Why do you tempt/entice/test Me?

Show Me a penny.

Whose

- image...likeness
- superscription...inscription, markings, words and symbols

does it have?”

The answer is obvious and unavoidable – Caesar’s

That coin, issued by the Roman Empire

- declares the authority of Caesar
- obligates the holder to the authority of Caesar
- entitles the holder to the benefits of the Roman Empire
 - participate in the economy
 - use the Government’s road and water systems
 - peace/safety/security of the Roman Legions

v25-26 Render therefore unto Caesar...unto God:

Render

- pay
- give up
- give back

unto the rightful owner

- unto Caesar that which belongs to Caesar
- unto God that which belongs to God

The secret plot of v15...fail!!!

And all the people...again...see the failure of their leaders when they confront Jesus, whether with a frontal assault or with a sneak attack

All who heard Jesus' super simple and super wise answer marveled

And the spies, the "lie-ers-in-wait", held their peace

Prov 12:6 The words of the wicked *are* to lie in wait for blood: but
the mouth of the upright shall deliver them

Ps 12:3 The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue
that speaketh proud things

As a notable Southern philosopher, Bugs Bunny, once said:
"Well, shut my mouth!"

Now, to the parallel account in Matt 22

Matt 22:15-22

v15-16a Pharisees...their disciples...Herodians:

So now we get more clarity about who the "they" of Luke 20:20 are

1. Pharisees

- Religion
- feverishly plotting and scheming
- to entangle/ensnare Jesus with His own words
 - ensnare: to catch an animal in a trap or a net
 - to catch Him saying something they can use against Him "in (Roman) court of law"
- not interested in truth, interested only in "winning"
- in the persons of their disciples/learners/students
 - Jesus knows their faces
 - the root of the evil stays behind the scenes, faceless
 - use fresh faces so Jesus won't see what is coming

2. Herodians

- Government
- The State
- politicians

Pharisees and Herodians are enemies but now are in cahoots, united in their desire
to kill Jesus...ganging up together and going "Big Game hunting"

v16b-17 Master, we know that:

The words spoken in v16b

- regarding Jesus: all true (but they don't believe it)
- regarding them: not true of them (but they believe it is)

Not understanding the nature of

- the King they are attempting to trap
- the Kingdom of God being preached by Jesus – spiritual, within they come in a sneak attack with the club of the Kingdom of Rome behind their back...hoping to get the Roman Empire to do their dirty work

They are asking a political question, intending to make Jesus a political enemy of either the Jewish people or the Roman Empire

The answer they expect: “Yes” or “No”, knowing somebody is going to get all riled up either way

And Rome did not tolerate either political enemies or occupied people getting “riled up”

v18-21 Jesus perceived their wickedness:

In Luke, Jesus saw their craftiness

In Mark, their hypocrisy

In Matt, their wickedness/depravity

The whole picture is in the sum of the parts

These are indeed children of the devil!

Jesus knows their character, hearts, thoughts and plots, motives...

and He calls them out for what they are – hypocrites/actors

Prov 11:9a An hypocrite with *his* mouth destroyeth his neighbour

But man cannot trap God, Who searches the hearts of men

- they are fooling only themselves
- they did not catch Him, He caught them...again
- the trappers are trapped, the diggers of the pit fell into their own pit
- Jesus rips off their actor's masks and exposes them before all the people

v22 left Him and went their way:

The Pharisees and Herodians – foiled again!

- are left dumbfounded and speechless by the wisdom of Jesus
- leave empty-handed and humiliated

Days of Inspection: Pharisees (Religion) and Herodians (Gov't)

Strike 1!

In the Big Picture of what is happening, The Lamb of God is being inspected and is spotless, blameless, without a blemish

Let's look forward in time

In just a few days, Religion will proclaim a bold-faced lie to the Gov't

Luke 23:1-2 And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King

More than twisting Jesus words, they put false words in His mouth!

In about 30 years (in 64 AD), Gov't (Nero) will demand that all Caesars to be worshipped as God and will violently persecute Christians who refuse.

The Roman Empire will outlaw the worship of Jesus Christ

True believers will steadfastly render unto God the things that are God's... and will pay a terrible price as they enter into glory

Note: Why the Holy Spirit inspired Peter to record 1 Peter

In who knows how many years in the future, a counterfeit christ will demand to be worshipped as God and will violently persecute

- all Jews
- whosoever worships Jesus Christ

(Not the Church, the Bride of Christ, for the Bride will be in heaven with the Bridegroom)

True believers will steadfastly render unto God the things that are God's... and will pay a terrible price as they enter into glory

As another notable Southern philosopher, Johnny Cash, once said, "Being a Christian isn't for sissies. It takes a real man to live for God – a lot more man than to live for the devil."

But for us today...

Application:

1. No actors will be allowed in the kingdom of God

Heb 4:12-13 For the Word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Rev 22:12-15 **And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.** Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

2. Beware of crafty, wicked hunters of men hunting followers of Jesus Christ

Eph 4:11-14...the Bride is to be busy getting ready

The motives of the Pharisees then is the same motive of false teachers today

2 Peter 2:1-3

1 Tim 6:3-5

Phil 3:17-19

The danger of Divine destruction to the Pharisees and those who follow them

- their disciples/learners/students
- the Herodians
- the people (by week's end)

is the same danger faced today by false teachers and those who follow them

- their disciples/learners/students
- the people

Such is a contemporary lesson from

- the Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen
- the Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son
- this political trap baited with flattery

3. Render unto Caesar/Gov't the things which are Caesar's and render unto God the things which are God's

Caesar's...Rom 13:1-7

1 Peter 2:13-17

- taxes...the money bears the image and the inscription of the Gov't
 - roads
 - security: police, fire, military
 - social programs (the strong to help the weak)
- law-abiding citizenship...order vs lawlessness/chaos
 - laws are expressions of the Ten Commandments
 - as long as those laws do not break God's Law
 - abortion is the law of the land, but the law is evil
 - homosexual marriage is the law of the land, but...

God's...Rom 12

We are to bear

- the image (Gen 1:27, Rom 8:29)...likeness/Christ-likeness
- the inscription (Jer 31:33)

of God

Matt 4:4, 7, 10

- 1 Tim 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen
- Eccl 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man
- Rev 4:10-11 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created
- Heb 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him
- 1 John 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son

Col 3:1-4

Everything here on earth in our journey is to be used for God's glory

- money
- possessions, things of this world that is not our home
- talent/gifts
- our very lives (1 Cor 6:19-20)

Gal 1:10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ