

Sermon Discussion Questions

Stiff-Armed

Matthew 22:23-46

June 18, 2017

1. Jeremy mentioned that he played football in Junior High School. Did you play any sports as a kid, or were you involved in other activities? Which did you like the most and why?
2. Stiff-arming God through skepticism—that's what the Sadducees were doing (Matthew 22:23-28). Have you ever known anyone like this (people like this are all over the place)? What can be the danger of getting into arguments with people around different challenging subjects (like creation vs. evolution, or suffering and the goodness of God, or apparent contradictions in the Bible)?
 - Why do you think Jesus focused on God being the God of the living (Matthew 22:32)?
 - How has God revealed to you that He is alive?
3. The Pharisees, testing Jesus, asked about God's commandments (Matthew 22:34-36). What is so inviting about talking about do's and don'ts, or rules to abide by?
 - What is the difference between knowing Jesus by practicing religion (e.g., keeping and practicing the sacraments, obeying the rules), vs. knowing Jesus by love (Matthew 22:37-40)?
4. Stiff-arming God through avoidance—avoiding ever getting trapped into a life we don't want. Have you run into people who avoid Jesus or God, and you are pretty sure its because they want to live their life the way they want to live it and they do not want God to stop that?
 - What are some phrases we can hear that tell us people don't want God to control them?
 - Doesn't Jesus' response seem too broad (Matthew 22:37-40, he even seems to indicate that it is very broad, v.40)? How do you know you are growing in your love for God?
5. Even though the Pharisees asked for the single greatest commandment, Jesus gave them two. Why do you think that is? In what ways are the two inseparable (see 1 John 4:7-8)?
6. Agree or disagree with this statement, "Most Christians keep Jesus at an impersonal distance—they don't allow themselves to be too emotionally deep with Him." Explain & discuss why.
7. Like David gave Mephibosheth grace, Jesus wants to give us grace, and we are to give each other grace. Read 2 Samuel 9 and highlight how David showed grace to Mephibosheth. Then, how can we apply those insights into our own relationships?
8. How are we going to let Jesus into our lives in a deeper way starting today?