

Three hostile questions

- 22:15-22 Paying taxes to Caesar?
- give to God what you owe him
- 22:23-33 Marriage at the resurrection?
- you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God
- 22:34-40 The greatest commandment?
- love for God and man is the heart of obedience

- 22:41-45 The authority of the Christ – rooted in his identity
- whose son is he?
- even David calls him Lord
- how then can he merely be David's Son?
(a question 'they' *cannot* answer)
- he is more – he is the *owner's* son – God's Son

Will they recognise his authority as David did, and submit to him?

The debate ends... the trial is over...

- 23:1-39 The authority of the Christ exercised in pronouncing judgment
v1-12 A warning to the crowds and to his disciples
v3 – *do not do what they do, for they do not practise what they preach*
v5 – *everything they do is done for men to see*
v13-32 Summing up - the evidence of their hypocrisy (7 woes)
v33-39 The verdict and the painful judgement

The great conflict and confrontation is between Jesus and human religion...

... shows us why Jesus must die on the cross

- human religion cannot save us – it only leads to condemnation (23:15)
- Jesus must die for the forgiveness of sins (26:28)

...shows us our greatest danger

- our Christian lives become an empty sham
 - the word of Jesus must keep on penetrating and convicting
 - the whole of the Christian life must be one of repentance
 - we urgently need the grace of God operative in our lives

Matthew's Gospel

(3) TRAINING THE NEW; CHALLENGING THE OLD – chs 18-23

17:24-27 – The curious incident of the temple tax, the fish and the four-drachma coin

Disciples are 'sons of the heavenly king'

- Royal status as members of the New Community
- Called to submit to the old order, to avoid offence
- Jesus provides for the obedience he commands

18:1-35 – The life of the New Community

[4TH MAJOR TEACHING UNIT]

18:1-4 *Entry into and greatness in the kingdom community both require us to humble ourselves*

18:5-35 *That same humbling must continually shape our attitudes to ourselves and one another in the kingdom community*

1. We will welcome all little ones who humbly trust Jesus (v5)
2. We will take the greatest care not to cause other little ones to stumble (v6-7)
3. We will deal ruthlessly with anything in us that causes us to stumble (v8-9)
4. We will not despise those that the Father cherishes (v10-14)
5. We will want to win over the brother (or sister) who sins against us, whilst not compromising on truth or behaviour (v15-20)
6. We will forgive without limit the brother (or sister) who sins against us (v21-35)

Chs 19-23 – Climaxing Confrontation

(1) DISCIPLESHIP – UNDERSTANDING THE KING'S GRACE AND HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS (19:1-20:34)

19:1-2 From Galilee to Judea – popularity and healings continue

Three dialogues about money, sex and power

A¹ 19:3-9 Dialogue with Pharisees – marriage and divorce
'what God has joined together, let man not separate'

B¹ 19:10-12 Disciples cynical (worldly) about marriage
'if this is the situation...it is better not to marry'
Jesus teaches them...(about singleness)
'not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given'

C¹ 19:13-15 Children being brought to Jesus
Jesus teaches his disciples: **the kingdom belongs to such as these**

A² 19:16-22 Dialogue with a rich young man – wealth and possessions
'it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven'

B² 19:23-30 Disciples confused (worldly) about riches/entry into the kingdom
'Who then can be saved?'
Jesus teaches them...
'what is impossible with man is possible with God'

D 20:1-36 A parable: **the rewards God gives are a matter of grace**
'the first shall be last and the last shall be first'

"A way of setting God's grace against all human notions of what constitutes firstness". R.T. France, Tyndale Commentary

C² 20:17-19 Jesus going up to Jerusalem
Jesus teaches his disciples: **he must suffer and die on the cross**

A³ 20:1-23 Dialogue with Mrs Zebedee and her sons – status and power
'can you drink the cup I am going to drink?'

B³ 20:24-26 Disciples indignant (worldly) over this power-play
Jesus teaches them...
'whoever wants to be first must become your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many'

C³ 20:29-34 Jesus and his disciples leaving Jericho; two blind men want to see
Jesus has compassion on them and gives them sight

What do the disciples need to see?

(2) FULFILMENT – THREE SIGNS OF THE KING'S IDENTITY (21:1-22)

- The king comes to Jerusalem not to be served but to serve (21:1-6)
- His identity is hotly debated (21:10-11)
- Children praise and declare his true identity (21:15)
- The religious leaders are indignant (21:15) ...*the first shall be last and the last shall be first*

Sign 1 – he comes to his city riding a donkey (21:1-11)

Zechariah 9:9-10; Psalm 118:24-26

Sign 2 – he comes to his temple to refine and purify (21:12-17)

Malachi 3:1-3; Jeremiah 7:4-11 ; Psalm 8:2

Sign 3 – he judges the fig tree for its fruitlessness (21:18-22)

Micah 7:1-; Jeremiah 8:8-13

The King has come to his city and his temple, but they are characterized by barren religion and ritual – they are ripe for destruction because the fruit he looks for in his people is missing

(3) CONFRONTATION – THE KING'S AUTHORITY TO JUDGE (21:23-23:39)

21:23-27 The authority of Jesus questioned
In reply - a question they *will not* answer
- not concerned with the truth but the consequences of their answer

Three condemnatory parables

21:28-32 Parable of the two sons
- profession without obedience

21:33-46 Parable of the tenants
- rejection and murder of the son
- judgement: the kingdom taken away and given to others

22:1-24 Parable of the wedding banquet
- refusal of the invitation; murder of the servants
- judgement: the city destroyed
- warning: the newly-invited, but inappropriately-dressed guest is thrown out

"The claim to belong to the Kingdom without an appropriate change of life characterised the old Israel, and brought about its rejection. The new people of God must not fall into the same error." R.T. France