

# JESUS ON TAXES, WEALTH, AND GOD'S GENEROUS KINGDOM

JESUS SAID WHAT?! :THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, PART 8 · MATTHEW 17:24-27; 19:16-30; 20:1-16; 22:15-22 · FEBRUARY 27, 2022 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

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*"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard." (Matthew 20:1)*

## **Two Taxes** (Matthew 17:24-27; 22:15-22)

The Temple Tax (17:24-27)

The Poll Tax (22:15-22)

*Lord, we open our hands before You to use our money for the good of Your kingdom and responsibly on earth.*

## **The Upstanding, Rich, Young Man** (Matthew 19:16-30)

An honest question, a spiritual hunger, and a sad departure (19:16-22)

Jesus' general statement on wealth (19:23-24)

The shock of the disciples and the promise of Jesus (19:25-30)

*Lord, we open our hands before You that You would set us free from idolatry of money.*

## **A Story about God's Generous Kingdom** (Matthew 20:1-16)

A parable about the kingdom of heaven (20:1-12)

The unfair, but lavish generosity of God's kingdom (20:13-16)

*Lord, we open our hands before You that You would generously fill us and send us out with Your generosity.*

## **Living Open-Handed with Jesus**

Using our money for the good of God's kingdom and responsibly on earth

Set free from the idolatry of money

Filled up with God's generosity and sent out with God's generosity

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Do you think our Christian faith has anything to do with our money? Why or why not?
2. This week we conclude our series "Jesus Said What?!" by looking at several passages related to taxes, wealth, and generosity. Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you and grow you with Him.
3. Begin by reading Matthew 17:24-27 and 22:15-22 aloud. These two stories explore Jesus' response to questions about two different taxes, the Jewish Temple tax (17:24-27) and

the Roman poll tax (22:15-22). The Temple tax was viewed as a patriotic duty while the poll tax was viewed as an unpatriotic acquiescence to Roman rule. What is one thing that stands out to you from each of these exchanges?

4. How might Jesus' responses here speak to our relationship to imposed taxes, fees, or the like today?
5. Now read Matthew 19:16-30 aloud. What is this young, wealthy man seeking from Jesus?
6. Jesus meets the young man in his question, directing his attention to God and God's commandments, particularly the Ten Commandments. How do you read the young man's response in verse 20? Is he justifying himself or is he searching deeper?
7. Jesus' response in verse 21 – "If you want to be perfect" – is not about moral flawlessness but about moving toward full maturity or completion. Why would selling his possessions and following Jesus lead the man into this new territory?
8. The disciples' exchange afterwards reveals their shock at Jesus' words to this upstanding, wealthy, young man. Why were they shocked?
9. From this exchange, what do we learn about true treasure in God's kingdom and what that means for our own wealth?
10. Now turn to Matthew 20:1-16 and read that passage aloud. How would you summarize the parable in your own words?
11. Do you sympathize with the complaints of the workers in 20:10-12? Why or why not?
12. How do you think the words of the landowners in verses 13-15 connect with Jesus' summary in verse 16?
13. What does this speak to you about God's generous kingdom?
14. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study? If you're on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

## **DIG DEEPER:**

This week dig deeper in one or more of the following ways:

- Memorize Matthew 19:21 or 20:16
- Select one of the segments of Scripture we explored this week for further study and reflection. As you take time alone with God, ponder what God is telling you about Him, about you, and about your discipleship. As God prompts you, respond in tangible action.
- If you haven't already, make a budget of your income and spending. Consider how your budget reflects or prioritizes God's kingdom. Ask God to help you wisely steward your resources.