

Holy Week and God's Plan of Salvation

Tuesday: The Jews Challenge and Test Jesus

We focus on Holy Week to see that Jesus is the Savior. Holy Week is all about God's plan of salvation for us through Jesus' death and resurrection. During Holy Week, the Jews challenged Jesus. Is He really the Savior? Are His teachings true? Here are some questions to think about while we study this:

1. Why did the Jews test Jesus? What was in their hearts?
2. Do people today (including us) test Jesus? How?
3. How did Jesus challenge the Jews?

The Test of Following God's Way: Jesus is God's Wisdom

Does God think like us? Or does God want us to think like Him? That is the challenge in this test from the Jews. Read Mark 12:13-17 (1275).

Why did the Jews ask Jesus a question about paying taxes? What was their goal?

The Jews thought Jesus could give one of only two answers.

1. Pay taxes to the emperor. Then what will the Jews say about Jesus?
2. Don't pay taxes to the emperor. What will the Jews say about Jesus?

Jesus gave God's answer, not a human answer. What did He say?

The Pharisees themselves explained why Jesus can give this kind of answer. Read verse 14 again. When we have questions about what is right and wrong, where should we look for wisdom and answers?

The Test of God's Power: Jesus is the Resurrection

Read Mark 12:18-27 (1275). Some Jews use false teaching to try to trick Jesus.

The Sadducees were a Jewish group, like the Pharisees. The Sadducees rejected Jesus, partly because they believed their own false teaching. What did the Sadducees believe about resurrection?

The Sadducees wanted to support their own false teaching, and they wanted to trick Jesus. Their story mocked the idea of resurrection. What did Jesus answer? “When the dead come back to life, they don’t _____. Rather, they are like the _____ in _____.”

Does that mean when we die, we will become angels? How are we “like the angels” after we rise from the dead?

What did God say about Himself that shows He is the God of the living, and His people are alive even after their bodies die?

Why couldn’t the Sadducees believe in the resurrection? Jesus gave the answer in verse 24. Who is God’s power for our resurrection?

The Test of the Law: Jesus is God’s Love for Us

The Pharisees tried very carefully to follow all of God’s laws. They had 613 laws they must follow. They had a problem – which law is most important? A law teacher asked Jesus for His opinion, and to trick Jesus. If Jesus answered one specific law, the Jews will accuse Him of not fully understanding God’s law. Read Mark 12:28-34 (1275).

What did Jesus say is the first and most important commandment? To _____ the Lord your God with all your _____, _____, _____, and _____.

What is the second most important commandment? To _____ your neighbor the same as you _____ yourself.

How important is that? Look at the law teacher’s answer in verse 33. Loving God and others is more important than what?

Can we or do we love like that? Do we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength? Do we love others the same as we love ourselves? Who is the only one who loves like that?

The law teacher asked Jesus this question to test Jesus. The Jews wanted to judge Jesus and His answer. But Jesus answered and showed He is the Judge and Lord over the Law. Jesus showed that if we try to carefully follow every detail of the law, we miss the main point. The true meaning of the law is for us to _____.

Jesus Challenges the Jews: Jesus is Lord of All

The Jews are finished testing Jesus. Jesus has proved they are concerned about human things, and they see things only from human perspective. Now Jesus will test them to show them what they should be asking. Read Matthew 22:41-46 (1242).

Jesus started with a simple question. All the Jews knew the answer to this question: The Messiah is the son of who?

In their minds, if David is the father (or great-great-great...grandfather), then David is greater and the son (the Messiah) is less important than David. Is that what verse 44 says? Who is greater, David or his son?

Applying These Lessons to Ourselves

We know the Jews were trying to trick Jesus. They didn't believe in Jesus and were trying to make Jesus look like a false teacher. But suppose the Jews were asking honest questions. Are they bad topics? They asked about our relationship with the government, marriage, resurrection, and God's law. Should we not wonder about those things or ask questions? Or can we?

What question should we be most concerned about? What answer should we know best?