

The Wisdom of the King

by Ken Baird

Jesus teaches us to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's, and to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Duration: 37:04

Scripture: Exodus 3:6, Psalm 110:1, Matthew 22:41-45, Mark 12:30-33

Topics: "Loving God", "Ten Commandments"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the importance of loving God and loving our neighbors. He explains that the Ten Commandments were given by God to regulate the lives of the Israelites and to show them their sin, not to save them. The preacher emphasizes the perfection of the commandments and suggests that children should be taught them by heart. He also mentions a story from Mark chapter 12 where a man is deeply impressed by Jesus' answer about the greatest commandment. The preacher concludes by reminding the audience of the existence of God and the need to be prepared for the day of resurrection.

Transcript

One of the most exciting chapters in the book of Matthew. We're still looking at the King. We're not wired for sound here yet.

Are we going? I'm sorry. And that will be on the tape. One should be careful what he says, shouldn't he? I thought that that was not on the tape.

Well, whoever listens to this tape, our sincere apologies. We have three groups of people who are trying to trip up our Lord Jesus Christ. The title of the study today is The Wisdom of the King.

The great wisdom of our Lord Jesus. The amazing part of this study this morning, to me, is the fact that they tried to trip him up with their questions. They were seeking his apprehension.

They were seeking his death. And they were trying, by any means that they could, to get him into trouble. They tried to get him into trouble with the Roman authorities.

They tried to get him in trouble with the Sadducees. They tried to get him in trouble with the law, with Moses. And they couldn't do it.

He answers their questions perfectly. And then he does it in such a way that had they listened to his answers, they would have been unspeakably blessed. That's amazing.

They sought his hurt. They sought his ill. But he sought their good.

Now so is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let's look at the first group that tried to trip him up and get him into trouble with the authorities. Isn't it amazing that they had to work so hard to get him into trouble? Verse 15.

Then went the Pharisees and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with a Herodian, saying, Master, we know that thou art true and teachest the way of God in truth. Neither carest thou for any man, for thou regardest not the person of men.

Tell us, therefore, what thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not? For Jesus perceived their wickedness and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he said unto them, Whose is the image in the superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's.

He saith unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard these words, they marveled and left him and went their way. Now, the Pharisees and the Herodians were enemies.

The Herodians were those who favored Herod. The Pharisees were violently opposed to the Roman rule. But on this occasion, they could get together when it came to frustrating our Lord Jesus Christ and causing him harm, danger.

Now, their question was this. Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not? Now, I want you to see the subtlety of their question. If he said that it is lawful to give tribute to Caesar, if he had just answered the question in that way, he would have been in trouble with the Pharisees because they resented the Roman rule.

They were the orthodox of their day. And the Jewish people, the Jewish orthodox people, hated that Roman yoke. So if he said it is lawful to give tribute to Caesar, he would have been in trouble with the religious hierarchy of Israel.

They resented that Roman rule. Now, if, on the other hand, he said it is not lawful to give tribute to Caesar, then he would have been in trouble with the Roman government. They had him, so they thought, in such a way that he couldn't wiggle out of this.

The end of answer. Kind of like that question, have you stopped beating your wife? Answer yes or no. If you answer yes, that infers that you've been beating her.

If you answer no, you're in trouble. There's no answer to the question. There was no answer to this question.

So they thought we've got him. If he said it's not lawful to give tribute to Caesar, then he's in trouble with the Roman government. He's guilty of treason.

How can he get out of this dilemma? It was cleverly laid, this plot. But he asked for a penny, and they showed him one. And he says, whose is the image in the superscription? And they say unto him,

Caesar's.

Then saith he unto them, render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's. And unto God the things that are God's. When they heard these words, they marveled.

He'd given them the correct answer, and he not only gave them the correct answer, but he gave us the correct answer as regards our national, civic responsibilities. It's our responsibility to pay taxes and all that the government demands. We should have no qualms of conscience about paying our taxes.

Whether we like it or not, we're citizens of this world, of this nation. We're citizens of heaven too. But we'd better remember that we're citizens of this world.

And even the Apostle Paul, on occasion, was glad to make the announcement that he was a Roman citizen. He used it. These things are to be used.

I thank God for this country. I've got to be careful here. We've just paid our taxes, our income taxes.

And I could get in trouble with you. But I said on one occasion when I was speaking from this portion of Scripture that I was glad to pay my taxes. I've heard about that.

But I am, I'm glad that I live in this nation. Thank God I live in this nation. And taxes are the rent that we pay for living here.

And I'm glad to pay my taxes. Perhaps I'm glad that I've got the money to pay my taxes. That may be part of my happiness about the matter.

But we should never remember that we are citizens of this land and we have some responsibilities. And we should pay our taxes. All of them.

Now, he wasn't in trouble with the Herodians, was he? And he wasn't in trouble with the Pharisees because he said that we should render, therefore, under Caesar the things which are Caesar's and under God the things which are God's. Oh, do some things belong to God? Yes, they do. We read in Isaiah, no, I'm sorry, it's Ezekiel, where the Lord says, All souls are mine.

As the soul of the Father, so also is the soul of the Son. And the soul that sinneth, it shall die. Our souls belong to God.

We read in 1 Corinthians, chapter 6, I believe it is, I'd better check on that. I would not want to give you the wrong reference. But I'd like to look it up.

You need not turn to it. What know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price? Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. A striking language, isn't it? Your soul and your spirit, which are God's, they belong to Him.

Now, we are also interested in the case of the man who has defrauded the bank of so much money. I've forgotten his name at the moment. You know it in the news.

Excuse me for even mentioning it, I suppose. He defrauded that bank. He took money that was not his.

He took it away from the bank. Now, my soul and my spirit and your soul and your spirit belongs to God. Does he get it? Render unto God the things that are God's.

My love belongs to Him. My allegiance belongs to Him. Why? He says, you're not your own, you're bought with a price.

What was the price? The blood of Christ. He bought me. He ransomed me.

You will recall that in the tenth chapter of the book, the Gospel according to Mark, verse 45, the Lord Jesus says, For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many. Now, a ransom is the amount of money that is paid to release one that is being held captive. I was held captive by sin and by Satan.

Christ gave His blood to set me free, to ransom me. He paid the ransom. Now, it's wonderful to know that He loved me to that degree.

Now, when our Lord Jesus Christ says, Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's, He meant exactly what He said. Now, the question and the reason that I brought this up about this man a while ago that has defrauded the bank of over ten million dollars. Sorry, I can't think of his name.

He defrauded. He took money that was his. Now, if I don't give my allegiance to the Lord, my love to the Lord, I'm defrauding.

I'm defrauding. Now, it's His. My love should be His, because He bought me with His own precious blood.

Now, that wouldn't make you love somebody. I don't know what would. And He bought you.

That's the gospel. Are we His? How many reservations do we make for ourselves? You're not your own. You're bought with a price.

And that price was the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Render unto God the things that are God's. All right, now we're ready for another group.

They wanted to catch Him. Verse 23, The same day came to Him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked Him, saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren, I doubt it, I think this was a made-up story, but we're going to read it just as it's written.

Now there were with us seven brethren, and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased. And having no issue, he left his wife unto his brother, and that was Jewish law. That if a man married a woman, and he deceased before any progenitor, any descendant came along, rather, then his brother was to marry that woman.

Maybe you wouldn't have enjoyed living in Moses' day. But that was the way it was. His brother was to marry that woman, and the first child born was not considered his, but was to go on in the name of his brother, possessing his brother's land, possessing his brother's rights, possessing his brother's name.

That was Jewish law. Now these Sadducees, that didn't believe in the resurrection, and that was why they were sad, you see, they didn't believe in the resurrection. I suppose you've heard that play on words many

times before.

I would be sad, you see, if I didn't believe in the resurrection, too. But they didn't. They didn't believe it.

All right, they said, now, the first man died, and he left his wife to his brother, and he also died, verse 26, likewise the second also, and the third, and the seventh, and last of all, the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven? For they all had her. What a question.

Seven men in heaven contending for the same woman. That would spell trouble, wouldn't it? Who had the prior rights to this woman? Now, it is, I think, most agreeable that had any one of those seven brothers have had a child born to him of this woman, that he and the woman would have had the right to raise the child. I don't know what they would need to do that for in heaven, but it would give him a right to the woman by reason of the fact that she had raised, given him a child.

Now, but that was not the case. Now, they bring this ridiculous proposition to the Lord. All seven of these men were married to this woman.

They all were in exactly the same status. Whose wife is she going to be in heaven? How is he going to answer? Now, the answer is this. In verse 29, Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.

For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

Now, this was spoken to Moses at the burning bush. These words were spoken at the burning bush. Moses was in the backside of the desert keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro.

And he saw a bush burning one day and he was amazed at the fact that the bush was not consumed. So he went over. His curiosity was stirred to the point that he went over.

And out of that bush, God's voice came to him and said, Moses, take your shoes off your feet. You're standing on holy ground. And he tells him, at that time, he says, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob.

Now, he uses the present tense. He does not say, I was the God of Abraham, I was the God of Isaac, I was the God of Jacob. It is the present tense.

Now, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been dead for over 400 years. Or, in the neighborhood of 400 years. Jacob, of course, lived the longest.

But still he says, I am the God of Abraham. Well, now, if he speaks in the present tense, Abraham had to be living. He was living.

God is not the God of the dead. He is the God of the living. The Lord Jesus said, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine. Now, those Sadducees, if they had listened to what the Lord said, how blessed they would have been. He says, there is a resurrection,

and you'd better get ready for it.

Now, he doesn't say that in a verbatim quote. There is a resurrection. You are going to see God after you leave this world.

This was a warning of the sternest character. I've heard a lot of people in their philosophy say, yes, when we leave this world, this is the end of it. No, it isn't.

They'd like to think that it's the end of it, but it isn't. There is going to be a resurrection. They are going to live in either of one or two places, heaven or the lake of fire.

They tried to trip him. They tried to show him up as being absolutely stupid, ridiculous. What does he do? He warns them faithfully.

There is a resurrection. There is a God to whom you are responsible. You'd better get ready for it.

Isn't this wonderful of the Lord? To not lose his patience in regard to these people. How patient our blessed Lord really was. I've been enjoying the patience of the Lord of recent days.

Perhaps it's because I try it. I don't know it. But he is so wonderfully patient.

And here he speaks the words that would bring them untold blessing. Yes, you are going to meet God. Get ready for the day so that you can enjoy eternity with him.

Disbelief in God doesn't put him out of existence. It's like the atheist that says, thank God I'm an atheist. Why thank God that you're an atheist? There is a God and people know it.

Why don't they face it? Why don't they? He answers them in a wonderful, wonderful way. Now, the third group comes along. Verse 34.

But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Oh, yes, he can put the Sadducees to silence, but we are Pharisees. They heard.

And so they went into this thing with their eyes wide open. They knew what they were tackling. They said, we're ready.

We've got one ready for him. But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then one of them, there evidently was a committee, then one of them, which was a lawyer.

Be careful of lawyers. Ask him a question, and they can certainly ask questions. They can make you look like you're a criminal, whether you are or not, if they get you on the witness stand once.

A good lawyer with his innuendo and his searching questions. I've been on the witness stand, not because of my own crime, but I was there because of the crime of another. They can make you look very foolish.

All right, here's a lawyer. Now, I know, I recognize the fact that he was not a lawyer in a sense. Yes, he was.

He dealt with the only law that they had. But this lawyer asks him this question. He tempted him saying, now, this question was not sincere, I know that from the scripture.

Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question tempting him and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Now, there are ten commandments. Which is the great one? The subtlety of this question is this. If the Lord said that any one of those ten was the great commandment, he immediately, by the same token, relegates the other nine to a place of inferiority.

That can't be. But you know the Lord answered his question. He said, Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength.

This is the first and the great commandment. And the second is, is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Now, this is the summary of the Decalogue, the ten commandments.

Now, this was a perfect answer because the ten commandments is perfect love toward God and perfect love toward our neighbor. Now, the ten commandments were given to show us our sin. They were not given to save us.

Now, they were God's holy law. They were Israel's secular law, if I may use that term. Now, God gave those ten commandments to regulate the life of the children of Israel.

They are absolutely perfect. I think every child ought to be made to learn the ten commandments by heart. He should learn them to speak them by rote.

Learn them by rote. To speak them by memory. There's nothing wrong with the ten commandments.

But it's perfect love that is necessary to keep those ten commandments. And we do not have that perfect love toward God. Who has loved the Lord, his God with all his heart, soul, strength and mind? We make our reservations.

We have to face the fact that we don't love him. Who has loved his neighbor as himself? When you ladies go to the store, do you pick out the best carrots or the worst carrots? Well, you should pick out the worst carrots and leave the best for your neighbor. But do you do it that way? No, you don't.

We do not love our neighbor as ourselves. Now, perfect love was the answer. Now, one of these men was impressed.

I'm going to give him credit. I'm not going to take the Pharisees apart before your astounded gaze. I'm going to give him credit where credit is due.

There was one of them that was deeply impressed. Now, this is not recorded in Matthew, but I think, I hope that I'm right now, I think that it is recorded in Mark chapter 12. And I'm going to... Have you seen how this man was impressed, impressed, deeply impressed by the answer of the Lord.

Matthew chapter 12. Verse 30 of the 12th chapter of Mark. Mark chapter 12, verse 30.

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. The second is like, namely this.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, master, thou hast said the truth.

For there is one God, and there is none other but he. And to love him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all full burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

This man recognized that the Lord had given him a wonderful answer. He said to the Lord, he said, Lord, to love you? Well, that is to love God. I'm not saying that he recognized the Lord Jesus for what he was at this time.

But to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength, with all his mind, to love his neighbor as himself, amounted to more than all the offerings that they could possibly offer. The offerings showed their respect for God, their worship of God, but God wants more than respect. He wants love.

The Lord said, You are not far from the kingdom of God. I hope that man got saved. I hope that scribe really listened to what the Lord said.

Perfect love. Now, you and I are not capable of this love ourselves. But the fruit of the Spirit, as recorded in Galatians chapter 5 and verse 22, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, so forth.

The Spirit of God gives me the love that the law never gives. The law demands it, but it doesn't give it. Grace gives it.

So I can love others. Love is not natural to us. We're selfish.

But as the Spirit of God has his way in our lives, we do love the Lord. We do love our neighbor. And after this, we were told by Mark, they didn't dare ask him any more questions.

These were the most cleverly laid plans to trip up our Lord Jesus. He answers them every time in a way that had they only listened, they thought it was ill. But had they only listened to him, they would have been eternally blessed.

Isn't that like our Lord? Isn't that like his grace? His patience? Now lastly, the Lord says, I've got a question for you. It's my turn. And he asks it.

He says in verse 41 of Matthew chapter 22, while the Pharisees were gathered together, while they still had them as an audience, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ, whose Son is he? This was the Messiah. They say unto him, the Son of David. He saith unto them, How then, doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemy thy footstool.

If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? What a question. Now our Lord Jesus Christ was quoting the 110th Psalm. That was a very favorite psalm of the Jews.

I think probably the 110th Psalm is quoted more in the New Testament than possibly any other single psalm. I've never checked it out, as I remember at the moment. And the Lord said, Now if the Christ is the Messiah, is David's son, why does David call him Lord? In the 110th Psalm.

Do you know they had never thought of that before? Isn't it amazing how much you can read the Scriptures and something will jump out at you from the Bible, from the Holy Scriptures, that you never saw before? That's probably the first time that we had that happen to us was when we got saved. When we

come to know the Lord Jesus as our own Savior, we didn't realize that we could be saved. And we saw it from the Word of God.

They had never thought of that before. The answer was, He was not only David's son, He was David's God. He was the root and the offspring of David.

Now here's something very interesting. He was talking to Jewish people. He was talking to Pharisees.

Now he asked them that question. What think ye of Christ, whose son is he? And then he poses this question. You say that he's the son of David, why does David call him Lord? They didn't have the answer.

But amazingly enough, the answer stood right there before them. How many times have you, in your mathematic problems, have turned to the back of the book and got the answer and then looked forward to solve the problem? Here was the answer. Right before them.

God and man in the same person. Now here's something very interesting. The next time you go by a Jewish synagogue, I want you to look very carefully at the Star of David, the six-pointed star.

I want you to notice how those Jewish people put that star together. That six-pointed star is two equilateral triangles twisted until all six points are equal distance from each other. Two triangles.

Now look, when you look at that star, those two triangles are woven together in such a way that you can't separate them. What does the Star of David tell us? That the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit were linked together in a man with a body, a soul, and a spirit. Two triangles.

Their own Star of David tells them who Christ was, and there He stood immediately before them. He was the answer to his question. God and man in the same person.

I lived in the city of Boulder, Colorado for a number of times. I had a religion and life week there on the campus. They had a Jewish speaker, and as you might expect, he gave the Jewish viewpoint.

That's what universities are for. And he said, we Jews do not believe that any man can become God. I said, I'd like to get a hold of that rabbi for about five minutes.

I'd take him apart. It was not a matter of a man becoming God, it was a matter of God becoming man. And if God wants to become man, who's going to tell Him He can't do it? God became a man so that He could die for man, his creature's sin.

Oh, the wonder of this chapter. The wisdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in showing them up, but doing it in such a way that they would have been blessed had they listened to Him. But then revealing Himself to them, the Son of David, yes, but David's God as well, the One who inhabited eternity.

The wisdom of our Lord Jesus. I'm glad I've got Him on my side or shall I say I'm on His side. I'm glad we got together.

He died for me. He loved me and died for me. And I'll tell you, that makes Him very important to me.

Shall we pray? Father, we do thank You for the wisdom of our Lord Jesus. We thank You for His grace, His mercy, His patience. We think of how patient He was with us while we were learning our need of Him, that we were sinners, that we needed to be saved.

We thank You for His patience of waiting upon us until we really saw our true condition and saw that our all was in Him and we made Him our own and we received the life that He gave us because we put our trust in Him. We thank You for our Lord Jesus and give thanks for Him in His own fearless name. Amen.

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