

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

- Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)
- Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.
- Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)
- Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)
- Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)
- Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.
- Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.
- Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.
- Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.**
- Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.
- Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.
- Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.
- Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

The context of our study in Matthew 17 is this. In Matthew 16 Peter under inspiration declared Jesus to be **“the Christ, the Son of the living God”** (Matt. 16:16). This was followed by Jesus declaring that He must go to Jerusalem where He would be killed and then raised the third day (Mt. 16:21). This was then followed by the mount of transfiguration experience in which the Father said of Jesus, **“This is My beloved Son...hear Him!”** (Matt. 17:5). Which in turn was followed by Jesus saying He is about to suffer in Matt. 17:12.

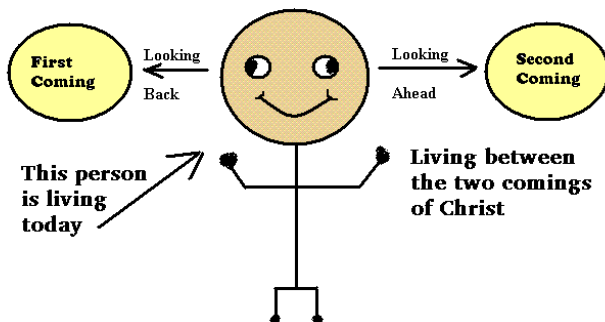
So we see this consistent interwoven theme of Who Jesus is as the Son and His impending death and resurrection, and we see it once again brought out at the end of Matthew 17 in our study this morning.

We are now coming down the last stretch of Jesus’ earthly ministry with perhaps it being about 6 months before the crucifixion.

As we do so we find Jesus spending less time with the public and more time in private teaching His disciples/apostles (Mk. 9:30-32). And in particular Jesus stresses two themes with them – Who He is as the Son of God Who is also the Son of Man; and the fact that He is about to die and be resurrected. None of the disciples understood how this all fit together yet at this point. After the resurrection it would all make sense, but not now.

We now have far greater insight than the apostles did prior to the cross. We look back and with 20/20 hindsight and we now as believers clearly see Who Jesus is as the God-Man and how this harmonizes perfectly with His cross-mission and resurrection. We now see clearly Who Jesus is and the reality that He would have two comings.

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In chapter 16 we see they had been way up north in the area of Caesarea Philippi where Peter made his great confession. Then, evidently, in that same general area on a high mountain came the mount of transfiguration event. As they came down from the mount Jesus healed a man's son of a demon induced affliction informing the disciples that they could not cast it out because of their lack of proper faith in combination with a lack of prayer. Thus we see that faith and prayer often go together. Faith expresses itself in prayerful dependence upon God.

And that brings us in our study to Matthew 17:22. There is some lapse of time between verse 21 and verse 22 as the apostolic band made their way towards Capernaum where we will find them in Matt. 17:24.

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Matthew 17:22–27 (NKJV)

22 Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men,

At this point they had made their way back to somewhere in Galilee and Jesus said to them, “***The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men***”. The phrase “***Son of Man***” is a Messianic designation going back to Dan. 7:13-14. It is used 81 times in the gospels and was Christ’s most often recorded designation of Himself.

Again, we see this interweaving of Jesus being the Son of God and at the same time Son of Man throughout this whole context. Son of God emphasizes He is of the very nature of God; while Son of Man emphasizes He shares in the very nature of Man. And of course, He was both in one person – being both God and at the same time Man. Jesus is uniquely the God-Man making Him the most unique person in the universe.

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The emphasis here is on Him being the Son of Man because in order to die He had to be human. Heavy on Jesus’ mind at this point is the looming of the cross which would be followed by the resurrection. He is now mentioning it much more frequently and adding little details along the way (cf. 9:15; 10:38; 12:40).

Slide # 5**Matthew 16:21 (NKJV)**

21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and **suffer many things** from the **elders and chief priests and scribes**, and be **killed**, and **be raised** the third day.

Matthew 17:12 (NKJV)

12.... Likewise the Son of Man is also **about to suffer at their hands.**”

Matthew 17:22–23 (NKJV)

22 Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be **betrayed** into the hands of men,

23 and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

This mention of Christ about to be “**betrayed**” is a new detail that had to be shocking to the disciples, which they did not really understand until after the fact (Lk. 9:45).

The word betrayed can simply mean “**to hand over**” or it can have the strong sense as translated here of being handed over through betrayal.

In His willingness to give His life a ransom for many, Jesus submitted Himself both to the evil plans of men and to the gracious and righteous plan of His heavenly Father (see Acts 2:22-23).

– **John MacArthur**

Properly understood, both are true, so there is discussion about whether the meaning is that of God the Father handing Him over, or of Judas Iscariot betraying Him. I tend to think the context here speaks to the latter. In Matthew 26 this word translated here as “**betrayed**” is the word that is consistently used for Judas’s betrayal of Christ (Matt. 26:15, 16, 21, 23, 24, 25, 45, 46, 48).

23 and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

You can’t say Jesus didn’t see it coming. Repeatedly, with detail, Jesus prophesied of His coming death and resurrection. He knew exactly what was going to happen.

To accurately predict the future is a God-thing. In Isaiah 41:21-23 God challenges the false gods to prove their godhood saying, “**Let them bring forth and show us what will happen**” and again, “**Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know you are gods**”. This is proof of Godship! Only a God that controls the future can accurately predict it.

That is why God in Isaiah goes on to share that prophesying and then bringing about the fulfillment of it is His glory ALONE.

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Isaiah 42:8–9 (NKJV)

8 I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.

9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them.”

God has fulfilled prophecy, “***the former things have come to pass***” and He declares new things “***before they spring forth***” He says, “***I tell you of them***”. This is God’s GLORY and His alone. And these “new things” in context are Messianic truths.

The whole surrounding context of Isaiah 42 is what is known as the first of Isaiah’s Messianic “***Servant Songs***” meaning they are prophesies of the coming Messiah.

Not only is it uniquely God’s glory to prophesy the future and to bring it to pass, but in particular He prophesies of a special coming One (the Messiah) Who would fulfill very specific prophecies as predicted in Isaiah 42 and throughout the OT as seen in the prophets.

Add to this that when the Messiah showed up He added further prophetic detail building on what was already in place. He added that it would specifically be the religious leaders who would be the catalyst behind His suffering and death. He specifically said He would be raised the third day (Mt. 16:21). He specifically prophesied that He would be betrayed (Mt. 17:22). These are very precise prophecies.

And it is God’s GLORY alone that brings about their exact fulfillment! This is one of the greatest evidences that indeed the Bible is the inspired Word of God and that Jesus is indeed the fulfillment of all the Messianic prophecies to the very letter.

This is now the second time in a very short period of time that Jesus has laid out the formula that He would die and then be raised up again on the third day. Very specifically He said the resurrection would happen on the third day, not the second day, not the fourth day, or any other day – but specifically the THIRD day! His whole credibility was put on the line with this very specific detail!

According to Jesus, death would not be the final word on Him. A resurrection would follow on the third day. With Jesus, death is never the final word – rather resurrection life is the final word. And so, we celebrate a risen Lord as the One Who has power over the grave.

But it was like the disciples never heard that last part about being “***raised up***” on the third day. All they seemed to get was that Jesus (the Messiah) was going to die! And “***they were exceedingly sorrowful.***”

And from where they were coming from at this point, humanly speaking, that is understandable.

Both the parallel passages in Mark and Luke both say that at this point the disciples did not understand (cf. Mk. 9:32; Lk. 9:45). They had left all to follow Jesus in hopes that He was the Messiah. They did not expect Him to die, but to reign. For Him to die would mean the collapse of all their hopes and dreams. Indeed, they had preached far and wide that the kingdom was at hand. So, they just did not understand.

They did not understand that because of Israel's rejection the kingdom had now been put on hold (Mt. 13) and that now the Christ was headed to the cross to pay for the sin of the world. They did not yet understand that He would then be resurrected and would then build His Church, and then He would come again in power and glory to reign supreme over the world. All of this was hidden from them at this point (cf. Lk. 9:45).

In addition to being sorrowful as recorded by Matthew, both Mark and Luke record that the disciples "***were afraid to ask Him about this saying***" (Mk. 9:32; Lk. 9:45).

The last time Jesus said He was going to die and be raised, Peter rebuked Him and Jesus responded with a sizzling rebuke of His own saying to Peter, "***Get behind Me Satan!***" (Mt. 16:23). That has a tendency to put a chill on the conversation. That has a way of giving a person pause the next time He brings it up. And so they didn't ask any further questions.

They didn't understand, they were sorrowful, but they were afraid to ask Jesus further about it. They obviously saw Jesus was passionate about it but they just didn't get it. They didn't understand the bigger picture.

So, the disciples at this point were "exceedingly sorrowful" over the news that Jesus would be killed and raised up the third day. Is this a message to be sorrowful about? Well, not if you UNDERSTAND God's sovereign purpose behind it. What they failed to realize at this point was that Jesus' death would have special purpose in that He would die for our sins and then in total vindication He would be raised the third day.

The disciples went from great sorrow over this message to calling it the GOSPEL which means "good news". The good news of the gospel is that Christ died for our sins in fulfillment of the OT Scriptures and that He rose again the third day according to the OT Scriptures as Paul says in 1 Cor. 15:1-4. This is above all GOOD NEWS for sinners because we all need a SAVIOR!

Yes, it was terrible what Christ had to endure and go through during passion week, but if He hadn't done it we would have no salvation – no forgiveness – no eternal life. Jesus paid it all – all to Him we owe! This is the BEST news ever!

It's the gospel of grace which means it is unmerited favor. We don't earn it, we don't deserve it. We didn't do it! Jesus alone died on the cross and He alone is Savior!

A Church can't save you! A ritual can't save you. Good works can't save you. Praying can't save you. Only Jesus can save you and He did it ALL by dying for all our sins and then rising again as Lord overall. All that God demands of us is that we BELIEVE on Christ as personal Savior and Lord!

Romans 1:16 (NKJV)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

24 When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, “Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?”

Capernaum was Christ's home base for His Galilean ministry (cf. Mt. 4:13). This would be the last time Jesus would be there. From here on out He would gradually make His way towards Jerusalem where He would be killed.

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When they got to Capernaum the temple tax collectors came calling on Peter. Curiously, they did not go directly to Jesus, but rather went to Peter and asked Peter about whether or not Jesus paid the temple tax.

Perhaps this was because Jesus had repeatedly shut down the religious leaders whenever they tried to challenge Him. Perhaps they are now taking a little different approach trying to get something on Jesus through Peter instead of directly taking on Jesus. We are not told – but it is curious that the question which really applies to Jesus is put to Peter.

The phrasing of the question suggests that the collectors, perhaps under instruction from the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, intended to challenge Jesus on the issue of paying the tax. – **John MacArthur**

We do know from Mark 12:13-17 that the religious leaders were trying to trip up Jesus in regard to paying taxes – in that case to Caesar.

The Greek word translated here as “temple tax” is **didrachmon** which literally means “**two drachmas**” which the amount of the tax annually applied to every male Jew age 20 and over for the maintenance of the temple in Jerusalem. It amounted to about 2 days’ worth of wages. The principle for collecting this tax went back to the OT (cf. Neh. 10:32; 2 Kg. 12:4; 2 Chron. 24:6).

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Exodus 30:13–14 (NKJV)

13 This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give: **half a shekel** according to the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel is twenty gerahs). The half-shekel shall be an offering to the LORD.

14 Everyone included among those who are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering to the LORD.

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Originally half a shekel was levied on each Jew at every census (Exod 30:11-16), the money going to support the tabernacle; after the Exile one-third of a shekel was gathered annually [Neh. 10:32]. In Jesus’ day the amount was two drachmas (half a shekel) annually.

– **D.A. Carson**

For a Jew to not pay the temple tax was seen as an act of desecration in not showing reverence for the temple. It was regarded as an act of apostasy and implied that one had no regard for the law of God. So, if Jesus did not pay this tax they would have thought they really had a serious charge against Him.

This tax had nothing to do with the Roman government, but rather was a special “religious tax” that the Romans allowed the Jews to self-regulate to maintain their temple. This annual temple tax was to be paid during the month of Adar corresponding to our February/March time frame.

It is interesting that Matthew alone records this event which may have been of special interest to him since by background he had been a tax-collector before becoming a follower of Christ.

25 He said, “Yes.” And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?”

Instead of responding in an impulsive manner perhaps Peter should have remembered what God the Father told him on the mount of transfiguration when He said, ***“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”*** (Mt. 17:5) Now GRACE ends up covering for Peter, but he was about to find out that technically Jesus was not obligated to pay this tax.

Before answering for Jesus, it is always good to hear what Jesus has to say for Himself. As the Father said, **“Hear Him!”**

Apparently, Peter could not imagine Jesus not paying the temple tax. That would be like profaning the temple which was unthinkable in Peter’s mind. So, he automatically assumed the answer was **“Yes”** and answered accordingly.

But then in the aftermath on the way to the house he evidently was thinking about it. Maybe he was musing about how to bring it up with Jesus since he was now on the radar of the temple tax police. Maybe he was musing about where they would come up with this extra spare cash so quickly. We don’t know specifically what he was thinking but the context of what transpires would indicate he was probably thinking about this issue of Jesus paying the temple tax.

As soon as Peter entered the house Jesus anticipated Peter initiating conversation about this and therefore preemptively asked a thought question of His own.

This sets in motion a series of things that show that Jesus is God – that indeed He is the Son which served to reinforce in Peter’s mind his earlier confession that indeed Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

To start with it is clear that Jesus read Peter’s mind knowing exactly what he was thinking about and what was happening. Before Peter could even broach the subject, Christ beat him to the punch with this question.

Jesus asked Peter a rhetorical question about what He thought saying, ***“From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?”***

In the world of Christ’s time the members of the royal family were consistently exempt from paying taxes. Now it is different in the context in which we live as all people are supposed to pay taxes – all equally according to the law – at least that is the way it is supposed to work.

But as I say in the day of Christ it was different. Commonly the royal family did not have to pay these taxes simply by virtue of their relationship to the king or the Caesar. Kings at this time did not collect taxes from their own sons but rather from the citizenry and those outside the family. That is the principle Christ is laying out.

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The point is that, just as royal sons are exempt from the taxes imposed by their fathers, so too Jesus is exempt from the “tax” imposed by His Father. – **D.A. Carson**

The logic goes like this: Jesus spoke of the temple as ***“My Father’s house”*** (Jn. 2:16). The Father had declared Jesus to be ***“My Son”***. Therefore, why would He as God’s son be obligated to have to pay taxes towards it? This is all about properly understanding **WHO** Jesus is as God’s Son.

In Matthew 12:6 Jesus claimed to be someone ***“greater than the temple”***. This was really a LORDSHIP issue. Just as the Son of Man is Lord over the Sabbath (Mt. 12:8) He is also Lord over the temple. Goodness, the temple actually belongs to Him. He had every right to refuse to pay the temple tax because He is Lord over it all!

Slide # 11

Malachi 3:1 (NKJV)

1 “Behold, I send My messenger, [the forerunner] And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, [the Messiah] whom you seek, Will suddenly come **to His temple**, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.

Thus, Jesus, the Son of God, was not personally obligated to pay for the support of God’s house because, being God, it was His Temple (Mal. 3:1). – **Charles Ryrie**

Slide # 12**ISRAEL'S FOUR TEMPLES**

- A. Solomon's pre exilic temple (Kings and Chronicles)
- B. Zerubbabel's post exilic temple (Ezra 1-6; John 2:20)
- C. Antichrist's temple (Dan 9:27; Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:4; Rev 11:1-2)
- D. Millennial temple (Ezek 40-48)

God's shekinah glory was present in the first temple. The second temple was built under the leadership of Zerubbabel but later extensively remodeled and added onto by Herod. God's glory did not reside there. In the future Israel will rebuild another temple on the temple mount which they are preparing to do right now. The antichrist will go into this rebuilt temple in the middle of the Tribulation Period and declare himself to be God (Dan. 9:27; 2 Thess. 2:4).

At the second coming the Messiah will personally oversee the construction of a Millennial Temple which will be the worship center of the entire world in the kingdom.

Slide # 13**Zechariah 6:12–13 (NKJV)**

12 Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: "Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And **He shall build the temple of the LORD;**

13 Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both." '

But what about today during the interim of the Church Age? Is there no temple for God to dwell in? The answer is YES there is. Today God's people are His temple. We are the house of God. God Himself lives within us in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Slide # 14**1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV)**

16 Do you not know that **you are the temple of God** and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Ephesians 2:21–22 (NKJV)

21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

It really was a softball question: From whom do kings commonly collect taxes – from their family or from those outside the family?

26 Peter said to Him, “From strangers.” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are free.

Peter got it right! “From strangers” meaning those outside the royal family. This being the case, Jesus said, “***Then the sons are free***”. The deduction is clear: Jesus being the Son of God and having God as His Father would logically mean He is not obligated to pay the temple tax.

The fact that Jesus spoke of “***sons***” (plural) further indicates that not only was He as the Son of God not under obligation, but neither were His disciples who were also part of God’s family. They too were now in a privileged position.

Because the temple is God the Father’s house, the Son and those He has brought into the Father’s family (12:48-50) are exempt from the temple tax. – ***ESV Study Bible***

The implication is that Peter and the rest of the disciples belonged to God’s royal household, but unbelieving Jews did not (see 21:43).

– ***NIV Study Bible***

27 Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.”

This is an interesting twist. We might expect that since Jesus has made the case that He and His disciples are not under obligation to pay the temple tax that the conclusion would then be that they should not pay it. But that is not what Jesus said.

There were many situations where Jesus clearly was not concerned about NOT offending the legalistic Jews. In those cases, Jesus' concern was the TRUTH over their obvious legalistic and hypocritical error.

But here Jesus gives space and bypasses His rights (as it were) so as not to give a reason for offense – which is to say so that His actions would be a stumbling block.

So we see that there were times when Jesus refused to make any concession on an issue, but here is an example in which He did make a concession even though technically He was not obligated to do so.

This shows that sometimes it is proper to concede and give space for people's scruples simply because they don't understand. At other times it would be wrong to go along with their errant thinking. This requires discernment. Not all error is of the same magnitude. Some involves fundamental gospel truth (which cannot be compromised) and some involves lesser issues of personal rights or liberty where we don't force the issue, but rather give space, because to force the issue would be spiritually counterproductive.

Paul addressed this same issue in 1 Corinthians 8-9 (8:9-13) and also Romans 14-15 (14:13-5:2) where he taught that a mature brother should not press his rights in areas where the weaker brother does not yet have mature understanding. To force it is not right!

Understand, that the temple tax was not strictly according to the Mosaic Law. The law of Exodus 30 related to whenever a census was taken and related to the time of the tabernacle. There is no specific law that carried over to the temple in this exact same way (cf. Ex. 30:11-16).

The Jews carried it forward and made application, but strictly speaking this was not a LEGAL matter of obeying or disobeying the letter of the Mosaic law. It was expected but it was not strictly speaking according to the letter of the law.

So we see a difference in Jesus' ministry between His stand on traditions that clearly violated the law of God and those that were not a violation of some moral principle. In the case of the latter, He was willing to set aside His personal "rights" in order to prevent others from stumbling. But in the case where a fundamental truth or moral principle was in view Christ did not make any concessions (cf. Mt. 15:10-14; 16:1-4; 23:13-33).

Slide # 15**Romans 15:1 (NKJV)**

1 We then who are strong ought to **bear with the scruples of the weak**, and not to please ourselves.

1 Corinthians 8:9 (NKJV)

9 But beware lest somehow this **liberty** of yours **become a stumbling block to those who are weak**.

Just because you have the right to do or not do something does not mean it is necessarily the right thing to do (cf. Rom. 12:17-18; 13:1-7; 14:13-15:2; 1 Cor. 8:13; 9:12, 22). Sometimes the most spiritual and beneficial thing to do is to waive your "rights" for the spiritual good of others who may not understand. That was the case here with Jesus.

Jesus was not saying that every issue should be compromised in order to keep peace but that some issues should not be a cause of conflict. Jesus willingly entered into conflict to protect the people from religious heresy and to defend the truth. But He was unwilling to cause stumbling over matters of personal "rights." – ***Ed Glasscock***

There was a consideration for their testimony in regard to the temple which all considered to be holy as did Christ (Mt. 21:12-13). It was not worth being misunderstood in respect to the temple. Even though Christ had the right not to pay the temple tax it would have come off as disrespect for the temple, which was not the point, but it would have been misunderstood.

Christ in perfect wisdom chose His battles well. We would be wise to do the same. Perhaps a lingering question in Peter's mind was where are we going to find almost a week's wages to pay for this temple tax. The temple tax was 2 days wages – so for Jesus and Peter this would amount to about 4 days worth of wages.

No problem for Jesus. He told Peter to ***"go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you."***

The expectation is that Peter went and did exactly what the Lord had instructed.

This has Lordship and providence written all over it – showing emphatically that indeed Jesus is the Son of God with all the prerogatives of God just as the entire context repeatedly emphasizes.

This is the only place a fishing **“hook”** is mentioned in the NT. Professional fishermen like Peter used nets and not hooks. But here the instruction called for a hook.

Note the tremendous emphasis on omniscience (all knowing) here which is an attribute of God. First Christ’s omniscience is seen in reading Peter’s thoughts when he came through the door. He then shows omniscience in knowing exactly which fish would have the coin with the exact right value. This is a God-thing!

Miracles are when God suspends the normal laws of nature in a way that causes awe and wonder. Providence is when God sovereignly controls the normal laws of nature in perfect timing to a specific outcome. What we have here is providence.

Peter went to just the right place at just the right time and caught the right fish (the first one) with just the right coin with just the right amount of value to pay the temple tax for both of them. Was that just a coincidence? Of course not!

When we consider the complexity of this miracle [of providence], it amazes us. First, someone had to lose a coin in the water. Then a fish had to take that coin in its mouth and retain it. That same fish then had to bite on Peter’s hook – with an impediment in its mouth – and be caught. You cannot explain all of this in a natural way. It is too complex for an accident, and too difficult for human management.

– **Warren Wiersbe**

This was a display of Christ’s Lordship that provided further evidence that He indeed was the Son of God. Peter at this point was getting personal further training as going forward he would be a key leader in God’s program after the resurrection.

Peter (slow as he could be sometimes) did eventually get the message. Jesus did a good number of personal miracles for Peter. He healed Peter’s mother-in-law (Mk. 1:29-34). He helped Peter catch fish in an overabundant fashion after Peter had fished all night and caught nothing (Lk. 5:1-11). Jesus enabled Peter to walk on the water (Mt. 14:22-33).

Jesus healed the ear of Malchus that Peter chopped off (Mt. 26:47-56). And here in our text today he providentially provided the needed temple tax in a most unusual way (Mt. 17:27). And then later Jesus would deliver Peter from prison (Acts 12:1).

No wonder Peter later wrote...

Slide # 16

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV)

7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

It is pointed out that most of the non-healing miracles were done for the sake of the disciples – who in turn gave us the NT Scriptures. They were taught so they could pass the truth along to us.

Peter had been personally taught and learned that the Lord is sovereignly in charge simply because He is the Son of God. Therefore, we can trust Him. We can cast all our cares upon Him because He cares for us even when there are many things we can't make sense of at the present time.

That was the case for Peter in our study today. There were many things Peter couldn't understand, and he was even afraid to ask the Lord about. But one thing became very clear and that was that Jesus was indeed the sovereign Lord Who was in charge and that He was taking care of Peter. Peter learned this lesson well.

Here are some key lessons from our study today.

There are times when you may have the "right" to do or not do something but there may be other overriding considerations regarding your testimony. The question then becomes what is wisest – what is best spiritually for all involved.

Simply having the right to do it does not necessarily mean it is the proper or best thing to do. True love thinks of others and is willing to set aside personal "rights" when it doesn't involve compromise of God's truth.

Jesus is the Son of God Who is Lord over all and as Lord over all He providentially takes care of His own. Therefore, we can trust Him.

Here is the BIG IDEA lesson in our text today. Maturity is about discernment and proper discernment aligns with the truth of Jesus Christ.

It aligns with what is right. It aligns with what is wise. Proper discernment always properly aligns with the truth of Christ. It does so in relation to non-negotiable truth; it does so in reference to yielding over secondary things because of our testimony. It is willing to yield for the sake of not being a stumbling block when no violation of God's truth is involved.

- ***In a host of ways, the issue of discernment is always about how this aligns with the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ.***

The word **hieroglyphics** refers to an Egyptian writing system that was unintelligible to later civilizations until an inscribed stone about the size of a coffee table was discovered over 200 years ago in an Egyptian town called Rosetta ("Rashid" in Arabic). The Rosetta stone, as it came to be called, held a key to the ancient writing system. Probably written by Egyptian priests in the 2nd century B.C., its hieroglyphic text repeated a text written in familiar Greek. As a result, scholars were able to decipher the symbols.

Today the phrase "Rosetta stone" is used figuratively to describe things that unlock the understanding to what would otherwise be undecipherable.

I submit to you the "*Rosetta Stone*" (figuratively speaking) by which we can discern all matters of faith and practice is the truth as found in Jesus Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of spiritual wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3).

The more we know Christ and the things of Christ the more discerning we will be. It all comes down to knowing Christ and what is most profitable for the promotion of Him and His truth.

Biblical wisdom knows which truth hills to die on in contrast to the wisdom of waving one's personal rights for the greater good of others. This is all about proper biblical discernment. It's all about being Christ-like in our thinking and in our practice.

There is an old saying in Christian circles that says: "***In Essentials Unity, In Non-essentials Liberty, in all Things Love.***"

God help us to live accordingly!