



Lectionary Bible Study Our Savior Lutheran Church

Lectionary 30, 2020
Readings Readings and Psalm
Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18, Psalm 1
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46

[Click here](#) to join Pastor Mark for a Live Zoom conversation each Wednesday at 10am.
Meeting ID: 868 8793 0554, Password: 654321
Or dial in for audio only: 1-301-715-8592

Matthew 22:34-46 (NRSV)

³⁴When the Pharisees heard that [Jesus] had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” ³⁷He said to him, ““You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

⁴¹Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: ⁴²“What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” ⁴³He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,

⁴⁴“The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies under your feet”?”

⁴⁵If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” ⁴⁶No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Matthew 22:34-46 (The Message)

³⁴⁻³⁶ When the Pharisees heard how he had bested the Sadducees, they gathered their forces for an assault. One of their religion scholars spoke for them, posing a question they hoped would show him up: “Teacher, which command in God’s Law is the most important?” ³⁷⁻⁴⁰ Jesus said, ““Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence.’ This is the most important, the first on any list. But there is a second to set alongside it: ‘Love others as well as you love yourself.’ These two commands are pegs; everything in God’s Law and the Prophets hangs from them.”

⁴¹⁻⁴² As the Pharisees were regrouping, Jesus caught them off balance with his own test question: “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said, “David’s son.” ⁴³⁻⁴⁵ Jesus replied, “Well, if the Christ is David’s son, how do you explain that David, under inspiration, named Christ his ‘Master’?”

God said to my Master,

“Sit here at my right hand

until I make your enemies your footstool.”

“Now if David calls him ‘Master,’ how can he at the same time be his son?” ⁴⁶ That stumped them, literalists that they were. Unwilling to risk losing face again in one of these public verbal exchanges, they quit asking questions for good.

The two stories that we have here conclude an entire narrative section focused on the Jerusalem leadership in confrontation with Jesus. Jesus has recently had his triumphal (Palm Sunday) entry into Jerusalem. Now that Jesus is at the Temple we see lots of confrontations and attempts to trap Jesus by those who are in the religious leadership (think church council “trapping” you in the courtyard to answer theological questions after worship).

1. *Why are the religious leaders trying to trap or trick Jesus?*

The confrontations begin with the Jewish chief priests and elders questioning Jesus' authority (21:23-27). After questions brought to Jesus by Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees, a lawyer from the sect of the Pharisees asks a final question: "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" (22:36). Jesus' answer to this question is neither surprising nor “out of bounds.” Other Jewish writings of the same time period speak of a central Torah passage summing up the other commandments, and this teaching is in line with the other things Jesus has taught. Of course, and most importantly, Jesus' teaching is in line with the Torah. We see this as Jesus says “on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

2. *For Jesus, what is the role of the Torah?*

3. *For us, what is the role of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament).*

Now Jesus turns the tables. Finally we see the questions come to an end: Jesus stumps the religious leaders with a riddle. “Whose son is the Messiah?” It seems simple enough. The Pharisees get it right... almost. They answer that the Messiah (Hebrew for anointed one) is David. Indeed, David was the anointed one – he was anointed 3 times! (see 1 Samuel 16, 2 Samuel 2:4 and 2 Samuel 5:3)

4. *Why is the Messiah the son of David?*

Of course, the correct answer to Jesus' riddle is a both/and. The Messiah is the son of David, and more. We see Jesus given the title of Son of David in Matthew's genealogy as well as in Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The author of Matthew's gospel wants us to see that the Messiah is more than that: Jesus as healer, teacher, Lord, Wisdom, etc.

5. *Is there one facet of God that you find most attractive?*

6. *Why is it important to Matthew to show more than one side to the Messiah?*

Ultimately, this passage is a passage about love as the compelling force for all that we do. This weekend we will also be commemorating Reformation Sunday. Over 500 years ago Martin Luther was so compelled by the love of God as he encountered it – both in life and in the scriptures – that he was led to nail 95 theses to the church door, launching a movement.

7. *How has the power of God's love compelled you?*

The Pharisees tried to use their traditions and theology to trap Jesus.

8. *How have you seen traditions and theology as a “trap” in recent years?*

9. *How is the love of God calling us to be reformed?*

10. *How is the love of neighbor calling us to be reformed?*