

Understanding Jesus and the Coin in the Temple Tax Story



Explore Jesus' teaching on the temple tax, His identity, and our responsibility through a 7-day Bible study.

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Introduction

Welcome to this 7-day Bible study plan focusing on the profound story of Jesus and the coin in the temple tax, found in Matthew 17:24-27.

This passage may seem simple on the surface, but it opens a window to understanding Jesus' perspective on civic duty, divine identity, and the kingdom of God. In this story, Jesus addresses the question about paying the temple tax and uses a surprising method to provide for it—a coin found in a fish's mouth. This miraculous provision challenges us to consider not only Jesus' authority but also how believers navigate earthly responsibilities while living under heaven's rule.

Over the next seven days, we will dive deeply into this passage, examining the cultural and spiritual context, the significance of Jesus' words, and the lessons we can apply in our walk of faith today.

As we study, keep an open heart to what the Holy Spirit teaches about honoring God and earthly governments, discerning Jesus' identity, and trusting in His provision. Let this story transform how you view your role as a citizen of God's kingdom and the world around you.

Get your Bible ready, and let's journey together toward greater understanding and faith!





Day 1: ✕ The Setting: Temple Tax Question



Day 1: ☒ The Setting: Temple Tax Question

Your Verse

Matthew 17:24-26 NIV - "After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma temple tax came to Peter and asked, 'Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?'"

Supporting Scriptures

- *Exodus 30:13 - 'You will collect the atonement money from the Israelites and give it to the Lord as a ransom for your lives.'*
- *2 Chronicles 24:8 - 'Every year, King Joash gave the priests seventy-five pounds of silver for the temple of the Lord.'*



Day 1: ☒ The Setting: Temple Tax Question

Devotional: Understanding the Context and Cultural Expectation

To fully grasp this story, we first need to understand the setting and significance of the temple tax. The Jewish temple tax was an annual half-shekel payment required of all Jewish males to support the temple's maintenance and religious activities. This tax was deeply ingrained in Jewish culture and religious practice, echoing back to God's instruction through Moses as recorded in *Exodus 30:13*.

When the temple tax collectors ask Peter whether Jesus pays this tax, it raises a poignant question: how does Jesus, the Messiah and son of God, relate to this human institution? Is He subject to it? The question hints at tension between Jesus' heavenly identity and earthly obligations.

Reflecting on this cultural backdrop helps us appreciate the challenges Jesus and His followers faced and prepares us to understand what He does next in the story.



Reflect and Apply

1. Why do you think the tax collectors approached Peter instead of Jesus directly?

2. What does the temple tax represent in Jewish society and faith?

3. How might Jesus' response to this question reveal deeper truths about His identity?



Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a time when your beliefs or identity felt at odds with societal expectations.

2. How do you personally relate to earthly responsibilities versus spiritual commitments?

3. What questions do you have about the relationship between faith and civic duties?



Day 1: ☒ The Setting: Temple Tax Question

Prayer for Today

Lord, help me understand the complexities of living as Your follower in a world with many rules and expectations. Give me wisdom to discern how to honor both You and earthly authorities. Open my heart to learn from Jesus' example and strengthen my trust in Your provision. *Guide me in balancing faith with responsibility.* Amen. 🙏✍️📖





Day 2: 🗨️ The Miracle: The Coin in the Fish's Mouth



Day 2: 🐟 The Miracle: The Coin in the Fish's Mouth

Your Verse

Matthew 17:27 NIV - "...go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth, and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Exodus 9:3 - 'Behold, the hand of the Lord will come upon your livestock in the field, upon the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the cattle, and sheep.'*
- *Jonah 1:17 - 'Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah.'*



Day 2: 🐟 The Miracle: The Coin in the Fish's Mouth

Devotional: God's Providential Care Displayed

Jesus' instruction to Peter to catch a fish and find a coin inside is a beautiful depiction of God's providence. While this miracle is subtle compared to others, it displays God's control over creation and His ability to provide for needs in unexpected ways.

In the Old Testament, God's sovereign hand is shown over livestock and nature, such as in *Exodus 9:3*, and He uses a great fish to deliver Jonah. Here, Jesus uses a similar motif to fulfill a worldly obligation, demonstrating that all things—including nature—are under God's authority.

This teaches us to trust God in daily provisions and to recognize His sovereignty over every aspect of our lives, even in small, practical matters.



Reflect and Apply

1. How does this miracle impact your view of God's provision in daily life?

2. Are there areas where you struggle to trust God for practical needs?

3. What does this story teach about Jesus' authority over creation?



Journaling Prompts

1. Describe a time when God provided unexpectedly for you.

2. Write a prayer trusting God for your needs this week.

3. Reflect on how you see God's hand in the natural world around you.



Day 2: 🐟 The Miracle: The Coin in the Fish's Mouth

Prayer for Today

Father God, thank You for Your faithful provision in my life. Help me to trust You even when I cannot see the source of my needs. Let me recognize Your hand at work in small and big ways. Teach me to depend wholly on Your care, just as Jesus showed. *Fill me with peace and faith as I walk each day with You.*

Amen. 🙏 🐟 🌿





Day 3: 🐦 Jesus' Identity Revealed



Day 3: 🕊️ Jesus' Identity Revealed

Your Verse

Matthew 17:25 NIV – “Yes,” he said, “but so that we may not cause offense, go to the lake and throw out your line.”

Supporting Scriptures

- *John 10:30 – ‘I and the Father are one.’*
- *Colossians 1:16 – ‘For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth.’*



Day 3: 🕊️ Jesus' Identity Revealed

Devotional: Jesus Balances Divinity and Humility

Jesus' response reveals a profound understanding of His identity and mission. He acknowledges His divine sonship and yet chooses to pay the temple tax to avoid unnecessary offense.

This demonstrates His humility—though fully God, He submits to earthly customs to maintain peace and witnesses. *Jesus models a nuanced balance of divine authority and servant humility.*

His words hint at the greater mystery of His unity with the Father (John 10:30) and His role as Creator of all things (Colossians 1:16). This passage invites us to contemplate the dual nature of Christ: fully God, fully man, walking gently with His people.



Reflect and Apply

1. What does Jesus' willingness to pay the tax teach about humility?

2. How do you view the relationship between Jesus' divine nature and His earthly actions?

3. In what ways does Jesus' example challenge you in your interactions with others?



Day 3: 🕊️ Jesus' Identity Revealed

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about how you can practice humility in your daily life.

2. Reflect on what Jesus' dual nature means for your faith.

3. Journal any areas where you struggle to submit or show grace to others.



Day 3: 🕊️ Jesus' Identity Revealed

Prayer for Today

Lord Jesus, thank You for showing us how to balance strength and humility. Teach me to follow Your example—honoring God fully while serving others faithfully. Help me to walk humbly and avoid causing offense unnecessarily. May I reflect Your love in all I do and live with grace. Amen. 🙏❤️✨





Day 4: 💰 Paying Taxes with Purpose



Day 4: 💰 Paying Taxes with Purpose

Your Verse

Matthew 22:21 NIV - "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Romans 13:6 - 'This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants.'*
- *1 Peter 2:17 - 'Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.'*



Day 4: 💰 Paying Taxes with Purpose

Devotional: Respecting Earthly Authorities Faithfully

Jesus teaches a principle about civic responsibility: respect obligations to earthly governments. While His kingdom is not of this world, He does not dismiss earthly laws and structures, including the temple tax or governmental taxes.

Paying taxes is seen as an act of respect and submission to authorities, who are appointed by God for order and justice. Apostles like Paul and Peter affirm this teaching, encouraging believers to honor those in authority as part of their faith walk.

For us today, this means faithfully fulfilling civic duties without compromising our allegiance to God's higher authority. Jesus models how to engage in society with integrity, balancing kingdom living with responsible citizenship.



Day 4: 💰 Paying Taxes with Purpose

Reflect and Apply

1. How do you view your responsibilities to earthly authorities and laws?

2. Are there conflicts you have experienced between your faith and civic duties?

3. What practical steps can you take to honor both God and government in your life?



Day 4: 💰 Paying Taxes with Purpose

Journaling Prompts

1. Reflect on any tensions you face regarding obedience to laws and faith.

2. Write about how you can better fulfill your civic responsibilities.

3. Journal prayers for wisdom in navigating your role as a citizen.



Day 4: 💰 Paying Taxes with Purpose

Prayer for Today

Father, help me to live as a faithful citizen under Your sovereignty. Guide me to honor earthly authorities while maintaining my ultimate allegiance to You. Give me wisdom to navigate any challenges and courage to stand firm in my faith. May my life reflect integrity in all relationships and obligations. Amen.





Day 5: 💡 Faith and Provision Together



Day 5: 💡 Faith and Provision Together

Your Verse

Philippians 4:19 NIV - 'And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.'

Supporting Scriptures

- *Matthew 6:31-33 - 'Do not worry... seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.'*
- *Psalms 23:1 - 'The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.'*



Day 5: 💡 Faith and Provision Together

Devotional: Trusting God for All Needs

Jesus' provision of the temple tax through the coin in the fish reminds us to trust God for every need. Our faith calls us to rely on God's abundant provision and care, even for practical, day-to-day necessities.

Paul encourages believers that God supplies all needs, and Jesus teaches not to worry about material things but focus first on God's kingdom. The God who cares for nature and orchestrates miracles promises to provide for His children.

When faced with financial pressures or uncertainties, remember Jesus' example and the biblical call to trust God fully. Such trust nurtures peace and frees us to serve Him with joyful hearts.



Reflect and Apply

1. In what ways have you experienced God's provision in your life?

2. Do you find it challenging to trust God for material needs? Why or why not?

3. How does focusing on God's kingdom shift your perspective on worries about finances?



Day 5: 💡 Faith and Provision Together

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about an area of life where you need to grow in trusting God's provision.

2. List blessings that remind you of God's care.

3. Pray for faith to seek God above all else.



Day 5: 💡 Faith and Provision Together

Prayer for Today

Lord Jesus, teach me to trust You completely for my needs. Help me to seek Your kingdom first and not be anxious about tomorrow. Fill me with peace as I rest in Your promises and provision. May my faith grow so I can live with confidence in Your care every day. Amen. 🙏💖🌸





Day 6: 👑 Christ's Kingdom Today



Day 6: 🏰 Christ's Kingdom Today

Your Verse

John 18:36 NIV - 'My kingdom is not of this world.'

Supporting Scriptures

- *Romans 14:17 - 'The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.'*
- *Luke 17:20-21 - 'The kingdom of God is in your midst.'*



Day 6: 🏰 Christ's Kingdom Today

Devotional: Living as Citizens of God's Kingdom

Jesus clarifies that His kingdom transcends earthly realms. It is a spiritual kingdom based on righteousness, peace, and joy, not political power or territory.

Living as citizens of this kingdom means embodying its values daily. We are called to a higher allegiance that impacts how we interact with the world, govern ourselves, and relate to others.

This kingdom is already present among us through the Spirit, inviting us to live transformed lives marked by God's love. Jesus' story about the temple tax shows how believers balance earthly duties while embracing their true identity in God's reign.



Day 6: 🏰 Christ's Kingdom Today

Reflect and Apply

1. What does it mean to you that Jesus' kingdom is not of this world?

2. How can you live more fully as a citizen of God's kingdom today?

3. In what ways do your actions reflect the values of righteousness, peace, and joy?



Day 6: 🏰 Christ's Kingdom Today

Journaling Prompts

1. Describe how your faith shapes your daily decisions.

2. List areas where you struggle to prioritize God's kingdom.

3. Pray for strength to live as a true ambassador of Christ.



Day 6: 🏰 Christ's Kingdom Today

Prayer for Today

King Jesus, help me to live as a faithful member of Your kingdom. Guide my thoughts, words, and actions so they reflect Your righteousness, peace, and joy. Empower me by Your Spirit to live distinctively in this world and faithfully represent You. Amen. 🏰 ✋ 🌟





Day 7: 🙏 Integrating Faith and Life



Day 7: 🙏 Integrating Faith and Life

Your Verse

James 1:22 NIV – 'Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.'

Supporting Scriptures

- *Matthew 7:24 – 'Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.'*
- *Colossians 3:17 – 'Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.'*



Day 7: 🙏 Integrating Faith and Life

Devotional: Applying Jesus' Teaching in Real Life

This final day invites us to consider how the lessons from Jesus and the temple tax story apply to our lives today. Jesus models not only faith but active obedience—He fulfills obligations, honors God, and serves humbly.

James warns us to not be hearers only but doers of the Word, and Jesus illustrates this integration perfectly. Whether it's living out our faith in civic responsibilities, trusting God for provision, or embodying kingdom principles, application matters.

Pray for the grace and strength to live what you have learned. Let your life be a testimony to Jesus' teaching, impacting those around you for His glory.



Reflect and Apply

1. What practical steps can you take to live out the teachings of this study?

2. Are there areas where you feel called to grow in obedience to God's Word?

3. How will you balance earthly responsibilities with your identity in Christ?



Day 7: 🙏 Integrating Faith and Life

Journaling Prompts

1. Write a personal action plan to apply this study's lessons.

2. Reflect on habits you want to develop or change.

3. Pray for courage to live faithfully and witness boldly.



Day 7: 🙏 Integrating Faith and Life

Prayer for Today

Lord, help me not only to hear Your Word but to put it into practice.
Strengthen my faith, guide my steps, and empower me to live as a witness of Your love and truth. May my life honor You in every responsibility and relationship. Amen. 🙏📖❤️





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