

Matthew 17:22-27

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[0 : 00] I ask if the rest of you physically able desire to do so, join with me as we stand together and read the Word of God. And as you're standing together with me in preparation of the reading of the Word of God, I want to announce one more announcement.

The nominating committee I have approached, I think every one of you guys, nominating committee will be meeting immediately following next Sunday's morning service. So that'll be next Sunday morning.

If you have any questions between now and then, get with me. We're going to be in the book of Matthew, the Gospel of Matthew, the 17th chapter. We'll be finishing up the 17th chapter starting in verse 22, picking up where we left off and reading down to the end of it in verse 27.

I will go ahead and let you know that the contents of verses 22 through 27 are directly connected to the things which happened, I believe, in the beginning of the 18th chapter, but we'll get into that in just a moment.

The Word of God says this, And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day.

[1 : 00] And they were deeply grieved. When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the two drachma tax came to Peter and said, Does your teacher not pay the two drachma tax? And he said, Yes.

And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll tax? From their sons or from strangers? And when Peter said, From strangers, Jesus said to him, Then the sons are exempt. However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw in a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for you and me.

You may be seated. Matthew 17, verses 22 through 27. What seems to apparently be a very obscure passage comes to us with great weight and hopefully great application.

It should not be a surprise to you that Matthew is the only gospel author who records this event. And the reason this shouldn't be surprising to you is because this event primarily centers around the paying of a tax.

[2 : 05] And if you know historically who Matthew is, also known as Levi, and you know also that Levi's occupation prior to coming to Christ and prior to being called to Christ and having a great meal with him and then following Christ, where Jesus found him was at the tax collector's booth.

Levi, also known as Matthew, was a tax collector. So the tax realm was his realm. He is the only author who records this event, which seems to be really kind of misplaced, but hopefully by the time we get to it, we will see that it is actually not misplaced at all.

We know that in Matthew 17, we have this great account of the transfiguration in which Peter, James, and John are called upon a high mountain and they see the glory of Christ resonating from within him and they see the admonition of the Father to hear him.

They see the appearance of Moses and Elijah. This is right after the profession of Peter in Matthew 16 as to who Jesus is. And we understand the reality of now.

He's said who he is and they go up on the mountain and they see who he is and they come down and they encounter in the valley kind of the doubting disciples that were apostles that were left behind. And there's the boy with epilepsy there that is the father has come and they want him healed and he can't be healed and the apostles can't do it and everybody's there.

[3 : 20] There's a great scene going on. We looked at that last week and Christ comes and he casts the demon out. And immediately following that we have this account. Now we know that the profession of Peter in Matthew 16 took place in Caesarea Philippi which is in the very northern part,

primarily outside of the Jewish territory, northern part of the region.

And the things that follow in Matthew 17 all seem to take place in that same part of the world as well. Somewhere around that Caesarea Philippi region, if you're looking at a map, it's very north of the Sea of Galilee and up in that region there's, now don't be confused, there are two Philippi's in that region, but this is Caesarea Philippi, so this is up north.

And now we're told they come into the region of Galilee which is kind of coming back to the hometown of the apostles and of Christ. And then they come to Capernaum. Capernaum is kind of the mission center.

When Jesus leaves Nazareth, they move to Capernaum and the focus of his ministry is in the city of Capernaum. And by the way, this will be the last account of events that we have that happen in Capernaum. This begins his leaving of Galilee and Capernaum and heading south and going up to Jerusalem.

You say, well, how can you head south and go up to Jerusalem? Well, in biblical talk, you're always going up to Jerusalem because the temple of God is in Jerusalem and you never go down to his temple, you always go up to his temple.

[4 : 42] So if you're traveling south, you're going up. It doesn't matter in scripture because you're always going up into the presence of God. You never, ever, ever go down into the presence of God because we always have to ascend into his presence.

And this is why we read it. They are going up to Jerusalem and Jerusalem was situated on a hill a little bit higher. That was intentional, by the way. So we see these things. That's why it's called Temple Mount and all that region that is still there.

But we are met with this account. As they come into Galilee, Jesus again foretells his death. And we'll kind of flesh that out in just a moment. And then we have the account of the fish with the gold coin, right?

This thing which seems to really have no place. But if we were to keep on reading and we were to get down into the 18th chapter, we will read events that are a little bit more familiar with us. We'll read about who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven and the little children, bring the little children to him.

And then we read the account about if your hand causes you to stumble, to cut it off. If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. And all these things. What we have here at the end of the 17th chapter and in the beginning of the 18th chapter are great teachings and truth, which I hope that we will hold on to for the next couple of weeks.

[5 : 55] Because we'll look at the first one this week. And if the Lord allows us to, we'll continue to look at the second one next week or the second and third one together next week. And really the application is how we may live an unoffensive or inoffensive life.

How we may live a life which does not offend. Now we have moved beyond who Christ is to who he has called us to be.

Scripture always moves from the teaching of Christ or doctrine to the practice of the believer. How we ought to live.

Paul is the classic example of this in the Pauline epistles. Primarily we see them, especially in the book of Ephesians. We see them in the book of Galatians.

We see it. When he writes to a church, he spends just about the first half of the book discussing doctrine and theology. That is, who God is, who Christ is, the great truth of the doctrine, that these things are so.

[7 : 01] And in somewhere about the midpoint of the book, Paul makes a shift and he goes from doctrine to practice. That since these things are so, then we ought to live this way.

One of the classic examples that is easier for us to discern is found in the book of Romans. Romans chapters 1 through 8. How many chapters are there in Romans?

Anybody have 16? 16, by the way. Romans chapter 1 through 8. All doctrines. Some of the greatest doctrinal teachings that we'll ever find in all of Scripture, right?

Some have called this the greatest writing of Paul. And it's kind of just his doctrinal thesis, if you will. The first eight chapters of the book of Romans are doctrinal in nature.

And they discuss the reality of who he is and all that he's done, what salvation looks like. And then you have chapters 9, 10, and 11, which deal primarily with the nation of Israel, right? And God's interactions with the nation of Israel and how he has not forsaken them, how he's not done with

them.

[8 : 02] And we're not here to flesh that out. But then you get into Romans chapter 12. And Romans chapter 12 seems really to kind of be out of place because we have spent eight chapters discussing nothing but doctrine. And then we've took another three chapters and really started talking about soteriology and started talking about God's interactions with man and who Israel is and even ecclesiology.

You know, what's going to happen at the end times and how he's going to do those things. And then all of a sudden we come to Romans chapter 12 and it's all about practice. To be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

And there's all these things about how to treat your enemies and how to live. Well, those things are based on the reality of what is discussed in the first eight chapters. If this is true, then this is what your life looks like.

Friend, listen to me. Christianity never stops with doctrinal truths. Doctrinal truths are amazing, but the doctrine is there to demonstrate to us that we ought to change our practice.

And a belief that does not change how we live is not a real belief. It's a great idea, but it's not a belief. But a belief that changes how we live is a true belief.

[9 : 13] Someone asked me recently, and I've gotten to about a two or three day discussion, and it was great, and I love these discussions, explain the gospel to me. This is a believer.

Explain the gospel. It seems like it would be a pretty straightforward answer, right? If I asked you, can you tell me the gospel? And you would probably go to John 3, 16, and you go to all these things.

But then there's this question, but what is belief? Is there something, is repentance a work? Do we have to repent to be saved? Do we have to do this? Is there anything we have to do? The Bible says that whosoever believes shall be saved, right?

But do we have to confess with our mouth? Because we must confess. And you start really breaking this. Well, that's getting a little deep, isn't it? No, it's just getting a little biblical. And it's good to discuss the things of the doctrine, and it's good to discuss the things of the scripture.

But do all I have to do is just believe, and then move on from there, and everything's okay? And then we look at that root word of believe. Whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved, right? We see that over and over and over and over and over again in scripture.

[10 : 11] That word believe, I think I might have told you this before, or pisteo, pisteo in the Greek means to believe in something with the intent of taking action upon it. To have such a rooted belief and confidence in something that you expect to do something because of that belief.

Which means, if we go, yeah, that's who Jesus is, but we don't expect our life to change, then that's not salvific belief. Just to put it blunt. And he does this here.

I'm going to show you how in just a moment. He's transitioning from who he is to what that means to them. How to live a life that does not offend.

And he's modeling it for them, and he's calling them to this reality. He has called us to himself, but he's also called us to live in such a manner that none are offended by us.

Now, the truth is offensive. Let's just say that. The truth of scripture makes me mad. It hurts my feelings.

[11 : 28] And I'm just speaking in human terms right here, right? It tells me that I'm wrong. It tells me that I sin. It tells me that I have faults. It tells me where I mess up. It is offensive, and it needs to be that way because I have to be told the truthfulness of my situation and my condition.

But God has never called his people to be offensive. And we see this here. We will see this morning, Living Without Offending Our Enemy.

If you have to have a title, it's Living Without Offending Our Enemy. If the Lord allows us to tarry, when we get into the eighth chapter, we'll see how to live without offending the innocent seeker and how to live without offending our own lives.

So we'll go from living without offending their enemy to not offending the seeker to not offending ourself. Living in such a manner with Christ that we are not offensive to any whatsoever.

So I want to live without offending our enemy. The truth is this. The moment we come to Christ, all of a sudden we become an enemy to many. That is the reality.

[12 : 48] The moment Christ calls us to himself, we are therefore on the opposite team, if you will. There are those who resist us. Jesus said that if they do this to me, they'll do it to you as well.

If they persecute me and hate me, they'll persecute you and hate you. History has shown us throughout the ages that Christians have suffered immeasurable amounts of persecution. And even today, the number of persecuted believers throughout the world is still rising over and over and over again.

We are reminded of the reality that those who accept Christ do not enter into a life of ease, but rather they enter into a life of warfare. And a life of warfare is a reality because the enemies of Christ are very, very present.

Yet, in light of this, the truth that we see is that our lives ought to be lived in such a manner that they do not even offend our enemies. The presence of an enemy does not excuse the misconduct of the believer.

We are reminded of Christ and his teaching. Remember how so many weeks ago we introduced the Gospel of Matthew and how when we introduced the Gospel of Matthew, we first turned to the book of Isaiah and we introduced the Gospel of Matthew with Isaiah chapter 53.

[13:57] And Isaiah 53 speaks of the coming king. And you read Isaiah 53 and 54 and even get on into 55 and 56, you read of the suffering servant. You see this great picture that Isaiah is painting of the Messiah who would come and the government would rest upon his shoulders, yet he would suffer and he would be handed over like a lamb to be slaughtered and his beard would be plucked out and his countenance would be marred.

And then it makes this comment that a bruised reed he will not break. Which means that in all of this suffering, all this persecution, that he will live in such a manner not to even offend that which was already broken.

And this is the calling he's called us to. And when we see this in this set of verses that he's called us to live in a manner that we do not offend our enemies.

Now I think this is a great place to start when we start speaking of not being a stumbling block to any because probably the last person we think about not causing to stumble coming to Christ are those who don't like us.

Well, they don't like me anyway. Everything I do, they oppose and they're always talking about me and they're my enemies. They always resist to me. So why do I have to care what they think or why do I have to care how they see or why does it matter how I live before them?

[15:12] Well, it matters because Christ sets the example for us. We notice three things in this set of scripture. The first one we see is the reality that he was aware of.

The reality that he was aware of. It says, and when they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men and they will kill him and he will be raised on the third day.

And they were deeply grieved. So as they're coming together, coming down from the region of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus again foretells his coming death. Now this is the second time that he has very plainly told the apostles that he's going to die.

Yet, as with most revelations, there is this progressive revelation throughout scripture. We get more information the further along we go. Paul tells his salvation story five times in the book of Acts.

Have you ever noticed that? Five times in the book of Acts, Paul talks of his conversion on Damascus Road. Five times that account is given to us. Go read the book of Acts again and you will find out that each time you hear of Paul's conversion, you learn something else.

[16:20] Right? Each time that he tells again that story, there's more peeled back. That means you can talk about your salvation for years and every time you do, you're just going to peel a little bit more back. You're going to peel a little bit more back.

You're going to peel a little bit more back. You know why? Because it was so much more than me just saying a prayer. My salvation experience was so much more than that. And I can't even begin to tell you the fullness of the account.

I cannot even begin to tell you the fullness of the account when Christ called me to himself at a point in history in one telling. And there is this progressive revelation of what Christ is doing.

It happens in our life that way. In Matthew 16, verse 21, after Peter has confessed who Jesus is, Peter then is sitting here and so are the apostles and Jesus tells them, okay, now that you know who I am, let me tell you what's going to happen.

And he says that the religious leaders and the Pharisees and the scribes are going to mistreat him. He's going to suffer greatly at the hands of the religious leaders. That's what he tells them.

[17:18] And then you remember, Peter said, this is not going to happen. Let it not, no, no. So Lord have mercy. There's no way this is going to happen. It's not going to take place. Let it not happen. And he says, get behind me, Satan, for you're not considering the things of God, but the things of man.

So here in Matthew 16, Jesus says, the religious leaders and the leaders of the Jewish people are going to mistreat him. Now fast forward just a little bit of time in history.

There's the amount of transfiguration. There's the healing of the man's son. Now they're back down here in the region of Galilee. And Jesus says again, he's going to die. But this time he adds another wrinkle to it.

This time he says he will be handed over to men. So now we begin to put it all together. Jesus is going to Jerusalem. He's going to suffer greatly at the hands of the religious leaders.

And then the religious leaders are going to hand him over to men. Now that word men there means someone other than Jewish people. Right? Now all of a sudden, hey, your light bulb ought to be going off.

[18:18] Right? Because who killed Jesus? Was it the Jews? Or was it the Gentiles? The answer is yes. Absolutely right. Because the Jews took him and mistreated him and abused him and then they handed him over to the Gentiles which is the Romans and the Romans crucified him.

All of us did. At the hands of all men he died. So now all of a sudden we begin to see this progressive revelation. Not only did Jesus know that religious leaders were going to mistreat him and abuse him and mock him and slap him in the face and say, prophesy, tell us who did that and pluck his beard out and ridicule him and shame him in front of everyone.

Then they were going to take him and hand him over to someone else and let someone else kill him and say, we don't want anything to do with that. His blood be on our hands and then he would die but then he says on the third day he raised again and much like ourselves the apostles missed that because it says and they were saddened.

All they heard was he was going to die. They didn't hear that on the third day he was going to raise again. Right? They got hung up at the death. So many people get hung up at the death. I remember many, many years ago I was, long before I was a school bus driver I was a youth leader and as a youth leader the church that I was a youth leader at decided it was a great idea to buy a youth school bus.

By the way that's never, ever, ever, ever a good idea. Okay? Don't go there. So they bought an old manual shift school bus. The only thing cool about that bus is if you hit the gears just right you could shoot a flame out the tailpipe and the youth we used to have loved that bad boy.

[19:45] I could rev it up and shift those gears just right. I think I scorched so many ditches going up and down the road with that thing. But anyway so I had my CDO already and the church decided since I was a youth leader and they had this really good deal on a school bus.

It's amazing that counties will sell you a bus at a good deal. Because I know what we do to them on a daily basis. That's why it's not a good deal. Okay? Anyway, so they bought one and now all of a sudden we have this big old thing out here.

Well, Billy Joe you got a CDO? Well, yes but I also don't have a passenger endorsement which means I can't haul anybody around. Well, since it wasn't a school bus anymore because we painted over that we all rattle can that thing we took our teenagers out there and it was the coolest looking thing you'd ever seen you know for a bunch of teenagers spray painting it and it no longer said school bus I didn't have to have the S endorsement which you know we have now many of us have now who are school bus drivers all I had to have was the P endorsement so I had to go add this passenger endorsement but to add that I had to actually drive the bus with an instructor.

First time I'd ever drove a bus really I mean I'd driven all kinds of big trucks and the only place that would take me was up in Nashville so first time I ever drove a bus down the interstate boom and this old ratty old bus and I'd take it up to Nashville to go drive this instructor around and parallel park this bad boy and all that good stuff it was fun and I remember I was going down the road and kicking the piece and the instructor was with me and he knew I was a youth leader he knew I was in the church and he was talking about how close I got to failing my parallel parking because he failed to tell me he only had X amount of times to pull up and back up before he would fail me he said man one more time and I would have had to fail you and I said well you didn't I passed let's keep going so we were on the road test and he said don't worry he said even Jesus lost one battle and he's a state trooper and I said what do you mean he said well he died on the cross I got a confession to

make with you I wasn't a pastor yet but I was a youth leader but while this man had his pen and paper

I didn't have the boldness to tell him he didn't lose you know that was his victory I didn't have that I just went hmm so that's how you understand it and I just kept on driving and wanted to get out of Nashville much like every time I go to Nashville I just wanted to get out of Nashville but I look back and the problem that man had is the same problem the apostles have all he heard about was the death right and it looks like a loss there this is the reality of which Christ is fully aware of he knew he was going to die and suffer I know I went on a tangent there but stay with me he knew beyond a shadow of a doubt he was going to Jerusalem the religious leaders the Pharisees and the scribes would mistreat him mock him and ridicule him he knew that they were going to take and hand him over and he knew that when he was handed over that he would be crucified and die because he says that he would be raised up that's a very clear teaching in crucifixion it says that in John chapter 3 he knew that he would die the most horrendous death and he knew for three days he would be in the tomb and he also knew on the third day he would come out these are the things he knows he's fully God stay with me on this because this matters he knows the enemies plans and plottings and schemings and attack are of no surprise to him whatsoever this is why he could tell Judas

[23 : 19] Iscariot do what you do quickly because as John said at that time the hour had come and knowing the hour had come he gave Judas Iscariot permission to do it he knew he knew he knew fully aware of what was going to happen fully aware who was going to do it and fully aware of how it was going to take place stay with me it matters number two we see the opposition he faced so we have declared for us in the first couple of verses of this section of scripture what Jesus knows and then we find them moving from the general region of Galilee into the city of Capernaum and as they're in Capernaum more than likely they're at Peter's house because in the original language it says that Peter came into his house Peter lived in Capernaum right this is where we find Christ healing his mother-in-law and we see this so they're at the household there in Capernaum and someone comes up to

Peter but it doesn't say just someone it says and when they came to Capernaum verse 24 those who collect the two drachma tax came to Peter now some translations say temple tax and it's that's accurate the two drachma tax or the half shekel tax is the same thing as the temple tax so what you need to understand is who this is who comes to Peter those who collect this tax come to Peter now this would not have been people the equivalent of what Levi had been because Romans did not collect the temple tax okay so tax collectors like Matthew or Levi or those sitting at his booth would not have come to Peter these would have been those sent from pay attention to this the religious leaders who was it that Jesus knew was going to oppose him mistreat him and hand him over the religious leaders those who were the representative of the religious leaders came to Peter and asked does not your rabbi pay the temple tax now this is just some of the opposition in which he is facing so what we're trying to connect together here because this matters is those whom Jesus knew were going to hand him over mistreat him and kill eventually kill him were the very ones who now come to Peter and ask about the temple tax now the question remains why did they not ask Christ why did they go to

Peter some scholars think well the reason they asked Peter is because Peter is the self-proclaimed leader of them all I mean it's Peter who seems to be the spokesman it's Peter who seems to be the one on the forefront it's Peter who seems to be the outspoken one and I think that could be a possibility I think there's another possibility that we can consider that maybe they went and asked Peter because they're thinking that as they asked Peter this they can show Peter that there's reason to doubt the validity of who Christ is trying to cause a little doubt and discord in the bunch because oh how subtle our enemy is was it not Eve that the serpent went to and said did God really say oh how subtle trying to cast doubt and discord and confusion because see the two drachma tax or the temple tax had been around since the time of Moses and it was God who had commanded Moses to impose a tax at that time a tabernacle tax later on when they constructed the temple turned into a temple tax that would have been a temple tax on all males 20 years and older and it was to be for the restoration later on in history of the nation of Israel it began to be for the construction of the tabernacle we see it being used in Old

Testament scripture to restore the temple when it was in ruins we see it just being applied throughout all of Jewish history that this was an understood practice that every year in the fall every male 20 years and older would pay the half shekel or two drachma temple tax everybody knew that

and now all of a sudden those who are opposing Christ come to Peter you know the the outspoken one the leader of them all and cause a little doubt and a little confusion but what about Christ he hasn't paid it see one of the ways our enemy attacks us and one of the greatest oppositions we face are the things we hear when we're in isolation Peter apparently from the text is outside the house and everybody else is inside the house I'm going to go ahead and just admit it to you and say it that your enemy attacks you a lot more when you get out of here alone and he does when you're in here with us right much confusion and grumbling and murmuring and gossiping takes place outside the walls of the house and it does inside the walls of the house and that's because there's always that voice but what about this here's the opposition he's facing what a subtle enemy it is and do not lose the reality that the one who is posing him are the very ones he knows is out to get him so now let's bring this all together with the third point not only do we see the reality which he was aware of the opposition which he faced number three the choice he made so Peter comes into the house with all this question I don't want you to lose this Peter has just been asked this question out here that's made him to at least stop and consider maybe ponder and wonder well I mean if Jesus is righteous and if he is true then why are we not upholding and adhering to the law I mean at least the lowest level of the law this is something we should do and it says as Peter came into the house it says in verse 25 and when he came into the house now

Peter gave the affirmative he said well yes of course he does I mean I mean he does and but the text seems to imply to us that even though he said yes in his mind he's trying to figure out but how do I reconcile the truth that I proclaim in the reality in which I see because it says and when he came into the house Jesus spoke to him first I love this because we kind of lose it a little bit what the picture is is that Peter's coming into the house with these questions going in his mind and before he even has the opportunity to voice his questions Jesus gives him the answer before Peter said anything Jesus spoke to him first which tells me Jesus knows what our enemy is telling us on the outside right when Satan's whispering in her ear outside the house and he's in the house when we come back in he's gonna go ahead and tell you the answer to what he told you out there I mean Jesus wasn't present when he was asked this question but we do see that when he comes into the house Jesus gives him the answer he was wanting so anytime we are attacked any questions we may have any doubtings which may be kind of whirling around in our mind any confusion friend listen to me confusion always finds his answer in the presence of Christ all Peter had to do was go back into the house he could have stood outside scratching his head he could have stood outside trying to figure it out he could have stood outside taking a poll of everybody that was around he could have called a committee together outside the house to find out well what do you guys think about this question I've been asked but it's when he went into the house that Jesus said now let me give you the answer the problem is today so many people are attacked by the enemy and they never come back into his presence but rather they go ask everybody else the answer to the question that they have rolling around in their head and while men and women may have good intentions men and women are still men and women and therefore are fallible and mess up the place for our ultimate answers is never ultimately in the presence of others but it's in the presence of him that when Peter came to the house

[31 : 31] Jesus said let me go ahead and give you the answer to the problem you're thinking about you know how many times I've had issues and doubts and concerns all you say all pastor you don't ever have those oh my friend let me tell you that pastors deal more with struggles than just about anybody I know there are more I mean the enemy throws fiery darts at all of us but pastors it's like they hit you on a daily basis at areas and you're just man all these wrestlings and and people like oh pastor you you're really good at these answers well I said well the reason I'm really good at these answers is because I've had 17 years of trying to figure them out on my own right that I've had all these questions have come and and these darts are being thrown at me and all these doubts and all this whispering and all this murmuring and and you know every pastor I know at some point in time the enemy he's sitting on his shoulder says what if that's not true every time those things go when I go back to Christ he says let me go ahead and answer for you the doubts and the questions that are in your mind when I go to the world those doubts only get expounded when I go to Christ they get revealed and answered and he says to him first so Peter what do you think I'd love to see the face of Peter so many times in history but I'd really like to see it here Peter comes in thinking I know I said yes but I've never seen him pay that tax so Jesus is about to make a choice stay with me now you got to follow me on this this is really good because he said Peter so what do you think I got a question to ask you ever notice that too that every time Jesus answers

your question he answers it with another question man I don't like that my mentor in the faith every time I ask him a question he asked me to in return and

I just didn't like that bothering me so much but I'm thankful for it right so Peter comes in with one question Jesus do you pay the tax that's the only question he asked but before he could answer that ask that question Jesus asked Peter a question said Peter I got a question for you from whom do the kings of the earth exert taxes from their sons or from their servants pretty simple question right in the time of Christ the kings impose taxes on their servants or upon their sons and Peter says well from their servants because the sons are exempt so Jesus says so the sons are exempt and Peter says yes I mean a king doesn't tax his own sons by the way do you know those who did not pay that temple tax that were 20 years and old the priest right the priest those who worked in the temple and since Jesus wasn't considered a true priest or true rabbi they implied that he had to pay the tax so Jesus says so the sons are exempt yes that's a really cool story except for the truth in it is this it was a temple tax right whose temple is that you better not say it's the Jewish temple that's God's temple Malachi chapter 3 verse 1 says and he will come to his temple his temple so what Christ is teaching us here is since that's my father's house I therefore am exempt from paying the tax on my father's house that's pretty basic right I still have kids who live at my house but when the taxes come due they don't go to each of my children they come to me right that's that's me so they are exempt from paying the taxes on my place since that's my place because I have to pay that but he is saying since it is my father's house and the sons of the father are not taxed therefore I am exempt from this tax Jesus did not have to pay the temple tax because it was not applicable to him that's his house and also it was not applicable to Peter or the other apostles because they are now brought into the family of God so don't lose this he did not have to pay the tax but what does Jesus say what choice does he make but so that we don't offend them now remember who the them was them that hate me will abuse me will mistreat me and will hand me over to kill me that's what you think about when you don't want to offend anybody right but so that we don't offend them Peter go to the lake now Peter had been to the lake a lot of times and Peter went fishing a lot of times but Peter always fished with a net it probably looked a little odd to all these other fishermen when here's this big fisherman Peter not bringing a net but he's bringing a line and a hook Jesus said you don't need to catch a lot of fish you just need to catch the fish and go put a hook in the water and get the first fish that comes up and take the shekel from its mouth now what was the temple tax a half shekel and go pay the tax for me and you

Peter because Jesus never did a miracle that was self-serving he didn't do this this is a miraculous catch he said well I mean a fish can have a coin in its mouth at any time right but of all the fish in the Sea of Galilee to go to that single hook to be the fish that has the coin in its mouth that's pretty miraculous right God can take the normal and make it extraordinary he put that fish on Peter's hook so that Peter could get that coin to go pay that tax and Jesus didn't do it so that his taxes would be paid he did it so that those people would not be offended all of that to say this just because he had the freedom not to did not mean it was fitting that he didn't freedom does not mean that we should knowingly live in such a way that offends even those that oppose us our life should be without offense without offense friend people will oppose us deny us belittle us ridicule us and hate us until we're called the glory but the reality is this our lives should be lived in such a manner that the freedoms we have in

Christ do not give us a license to live in a way that would cause offense to them may they not come to Christ because of what they see in us may the reason they don't come to Christ is because of the sin that's in them may there be no offense in my life whatsoever may they look at me and understand the reality that I have lived my life or at least attempted to live my life in such a way that may that though I may not have to do things I willingly choose to do things that though I may be free to do whatever I want to do I choose to do what I have to do so that they may have the opportunity to come to Christ Paul himself says this I can eat all the steak and hamburgers I want but I'm not going to do it because the moment I do it I'm going to offend someone else I am free to eat whatever I want but that which is free to me may be sin to another and I will not choose to eat that which may cause my brother over here to stumble or fall and I will not choose to eat this which is going to cause my enemy who worships that meat in the temple that I know is false and he's worshipping that meat if it causes my enemy to fall then I will not eat it friend listen to me freedom does not give license freedom entails responsibility which means we choose to live sacrificially in such a way so that we don't offend them and if we're not doing that then we're not following Christ

let's pray Lord I thank you thank you for this day and I thank you for the challenge of your word or
may our lives and hearts be open before you may you have your way within each and every one of
us Lord embolden us and strengthen us for your glory we ask it in Christ's name amen you you you
you you
you you you you you you you you
[47 : 15] you you you you