

Episode 905 Matthew 22 Part 7-Whose Son is Christ?

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord was having a final, conclusive confrontation with the corrupt, religious leaders of Israel in Jerusalem. They were trying to trap Him with words, but had not so far succeeded. Now, an expert in the law came forward to ask Him a very difficult question.

III. The Great Commandment. Matthew 22:34-40.

- A. Verse 39. The Lord goes beyond what He was asked and gives a second, like commandment as well. This commandment is from Leviticus 19:18, once again not a part of the Ten Commandments. The Lord says the two greatest commandments are not found in the Ten! How can so many think the Ten are the most important, then? They do not get this idea from Jesus Christ! “Love” again is the *agapE*, self-sacrificing love in action. In Luke 10, the Lord gives the same answer to the same question and explains further who the neighbor is. How good it would be if people could just keep these two commandments today! Yet mankind has demonstrated over and over that he is not capable of loving his fellow man this way. If I loved my fellow man this way, I would not do him any wrong in property or person, and also I would try to promote his good. This is the kind of love we need to express. Yet God needs to change the hearts of men, in some cases to make it possible for them to be loved.
- B. Verse 40. “Hang” is the last word of the sentence in Greek, sticking out as if to hang these things on it. (The same word for the Lord hung on the cross.) This whole concept, then, is the foundational principle of all that the law says in giving its commandments, and in all the prophets say in calling men back to right living, both in relationship to God and to each other. If one could only learn to love God like one might love a dear and beloved Father, then one would act as would please Him in a way that no rules or demands could accomplish. Those serve best who do it from the heart. If we seek to train children right, then we would teach them to obey God out of love. If men want to teach the law, why put emphasis on keeping the Sabbath, or on abstaining from meats, when the Lord sets these forth as the key to all the law?

IV. Whose Son is the Christ? Matthew 22:41-46.

- A. Verse 41. Remember they had gathered to oppose Him in verse 34. Now, He uses the occasion to ask them a question. He is asking the combined gathering of the Jerusalem Pharisees, supposedly the best of the best and the greatest of the scholars. If anyone could have told Him an answer, it was supposed to be these men.
- B. Verse 42. He wants their opinion. “The Christ,” Greek, means the Messiah, John 1:41. Certainly every Jew in Israel would have answered this the same way. They all knew the prophecies that connected the Messiah with David. No one thought, as some Jews argue (against Christians) today that the Messiah might just be the nation of Israel itself, or an organization and not a man.
- C. Verse 43. David said this not in his own spirit, but in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is how Scripture was written. David did not write of his own volition, but he wrote in the power of God. “Call” is *kaleo*, in this case meaning to name or designate. The answer to this is the pre-existence of the Lord Jesus Christ. David said this

because Christ existed and was David's Lord when he spoke these words. Yet He would become a direct descendant of David and be his Son.

- D. Verse 44. This is quoted from Psalm 110:1, where it reads "Jehovah said unto my Adonai." In Greek, both are *kurios*, whereby we realize that Jehovah and *kurios* are not equivalent by Divine interchange, since *kurios* is also used for Adonai. This passage is quoted seven times in the New Testament, of which this is the first. Also Mark 12:36, Luke 20:42, Acts 2:34, I Corinthians 15:25, Hebrews 1:13, and Hebrews 10:13. This makes it the most quoted Old Testament verse of all. "Make" means when He will set or place these enemies in this position.
- E. Verse 45. Again the answer is He was pre-existent. He was David's Lord when he wrote this, and became David's Son at Bethlehem a thousand years later.
- F. Verse 46. They could not answer because to them, the Messiah was just to be a man like they were. A good man, yes, a Godly man, but just a man. So they could not answer Him, for they were bound to this wrong idea. "Was able" is the Greek *dunamai*, meaning no one had the inherent power to. They were not bold enough to ask Him more. This was because His words came to them with the power of God, and so these words shut their mouths, and no one dared inquire of Him any more.

V. Burdens of the Pharisees. Matthew 23:1-12.

- A. Verse 1. Having spoken to the scribes and Pharisees directly, He now speaks to the crowd and His disciples. Yet He is speaking to them about the scribes and Pharisees, and these wicked men are still very much in the audience and hearing what He says.
- B. Verse 2. To be in Moses' seat was really to be the ruler of Israel. These scribes and Pharisees had the rule and authority in Israel. Seat is the Greek *kathedras*, meaning a seat of authority. Our word cathedral comes from this. The cathedrals of men are not the true seat of God, for He only ever chose one building on earth to place His name there, and that was His temple in Jerusalem, II Kings 21:7, which does not now exist. The cathedrals of men, then, are not the Lord's seat, Acts 17:24. To the church, the cathedral is the seat of the bishop, a seat of power of a leader in a man-made religion.
- C. Verse 3. Bullinger points out that "the second person plural is exactly the same in the Indicative and Imperative, and nothing can determine which is the Mood but the context." In other words, this may well be stating a fact, "Whatever they tell you to observe, that you observe and do." The Lord does not command this; just state that is what they do. These men had good teaching but very bad example when they taught what was right out of the law, but would not do it themselves. At the same time, I do not believe that the scribes and Pharisees were right in everything they taught, for they taught many traditions of men, which the Lord defied. There is a good deal of irony and sarcasm in what the Lord says here. Bullinger points out that "Later (27.20-23) they "bade" the People to ask Barabbas and destroy Jesus.
- D. Verse 4. Their idea of governing was to find out how to make the life of the people hard. They tried to show their zeal by the difficulty of the traditional burdens they prescribed. But God was not impressed. Men's is *anthropos*, people, for surely women were bound as well. Will is the Greek *thelo*, they do not move them because they do not desire to move them, as if to ease these burdens, or to carry them.

VI. Conclusion: The Lord revealed that the most important commandments are to love the Lord your God with all your being, and to love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and the prophets on these commandments hang. Do we strive to obey these most important commandments? The

Lord asked why David calls Messiah his Lord when He is his son? They could not give the answer, but we know the answer was His pre-existence. The religious leaders might have been done with Him, but He was not done with them, castigating their hypocritical works. May we never be the kind of hypocrites these people were!