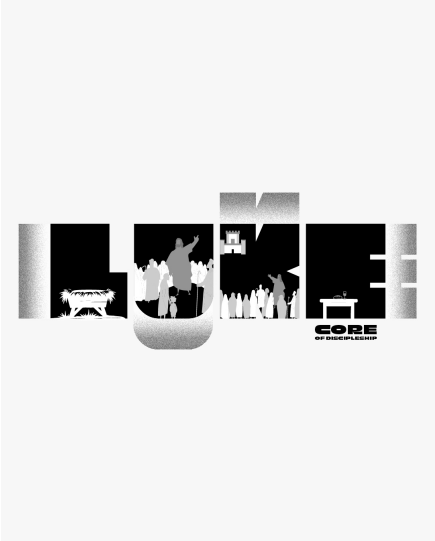
BIBLE DISCOVERY

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LUKE: Core of Discipleship

Luke 20:19-26

In our final portion of the Gospel of Luke, we enter the climactic week in the life of Jesus. We'll slow way down and dive into some CORE moments for Christ followers, including the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. We'll also learn why we can be certain that the Gospel is true and it's the only way that leads to eternal life.

WATCH: YouTube or Website

The Big Idea

(What is the author's point?)

Jesus answers the question of political involvement by encouraging that one honor the state, and yet also give primary loyalty to the God who is sovereign over all.

Why It Matters

(Why is this relevant to us?)

What should the Christian's relationship be with the state? Should we remove ourselves from the political sphere completely and focus exclusively on spiritual concerns? Or must Christians obligate themselves to political activism—even to the point of rebelling against political corruption? Or is some sort of mediating position the answer?

How we answer this question is currently shaping our churches. In the twentieth century, churches divided into liberal or fundamentalist camps over theological questions such as the divinity of Jesus, original sin or the atonement. Today, evidence suggests that evangelical churches are far more likely to divide themselves based upon where they land on the political spectrum. In fact, Christian political activists often order their followers to leave and join churches with specific political posture—whether left, left-center, center, right-center or far right.

Remarkably, the environment in Jesus' day was even more explosive. As a small and oppressed minority, the Jews resented living under the thumb of the Roman regime. They fought and divided over what to do with unjust taxation and oppression of the Roman state. Some used violence to oppose Rome (zealots). Others allied themselves to Rome (Sadducees, i.e. chief priests and scribes). Still others found mediating positions through peaceful or patient resistance (Pharisees), while a smaller minority fled and preferred to live as nomads in the desert (Essenes).

At a surface level, Jesus behaved more like a Pharisee or Essene. Yet, instead of fitting in any box, Jesus asked every position to reflect anew on the sovereignty of God. In verse 25, by stating that one must “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s,” He forced deep reflection on God’s sovereignty. Whatever honor Caesar deserves must be given, because of God’s providential distribution of power. Similarly, whatever it is that the sovereign Lord requires, we must also give.

Good to Know

(What are some helpful insights into this passage?)

Verse 19 reminds us that this interaction comes on the heels of a parable of Jesus that chastised the chief priests and scribes. As a result, irony fills the scene. These religious leaders fulfill Jesus’ prediction in the parable by setting out to kill him!

In verse 20, Luke teaches us their strategy. They are seeking to catch Jesus leading a tax revolt against Rome. Tax revolts were one of the common types of rebellions against Rome. In fact, the last one occurred in Jerusalem roughly two decades earlier.

Verse 21 wreaks of deceit and hypocrisy. The flattery of the questioners was only meant to trip Jesus up. Jesus instantly sees through their play-acting.

The Jewish region occupied by Rome still circulated coins that carried the image of a pagan, defied Caesar. In verse 24, when the questioners pull out the coin per Jesus’ request, in a way, they showed their political cards. At the very least, they made use of the Roman currency that promoted pagan ideals.

Jesus’ statement in verse 25 is worthy of deep reflection. Interestingly, Jesus refused to fit into anyone’s political box. Instead, He urged deeper reflection, and alignment with, a healthy view of God’s sovereignty. God is one who sets up and brings down kings (Luke 1:52). God is also sovereign over so much more. The “things that are God’s” encompasses everything; what Jesus is saying then is that God deserves our utter allegiance in every domain of life! Part of what Jesus is getting at is that political posturing very easily pulls us away from our service to the sovereign Lord: His mission, His purposes and His plans.



THIS WEEK'S
Bible Discovery Author
Pastor Chad Reeser

Group Guide

Following the series with your group?

- Start with some **icebreaker questions**.
- Read the passage together before you dive in.
- Share any insights from the message. Use the questions below to get your conversation started.

Conversation Starters

1. What are your initial reactions to this passage?

2. How were the leaders and pharisees feeling going into this interaction with Jesus?

3. What is Jesus teaching about God's sovereignty?

4. What does Jesus' response teach us about the relationship between God's Kingdom and the kingdoms of this world?

5. How would your life change if your total allegiance was to Jesus in every area?

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for your Word, for showing us the way we should go. Help us to give you our total allegiance—to follow your mission, purposes and plans. We love you and want to love you more. Amen.

Looking for more prayer opportunities?
Click **here** to be notified about ongoing DCC prayer needs.
Click **here** to send in a prayer request.