

An Anatomy of the Original Jesus Haters

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles, would you, this morning and open them to Luke chapter 20.

Luke chapter 20 and when I say principal characters I'm speaking of the Jewish leadership and we're going to be looking at them this morning and kind of a what I have called an anatomy of the original Jesus haters.

And so find your passage it's chapter 20 verses 19 through 26 Luke 20 19 through 26 we're finally getting back to Luke after I think a month actually.

And the chief priests and the scribes that that very hour sought to lay hands on him. But they feared the people. For they knew.

He had spoken this parable against them. So they watched him. Sent spies who pretended to be righteous. That they might seize on his words in order to deliver him to the power of the authority of the governor.

[1 : 20] Then they asked him saying teacher. We know that you say and teach rightly. And you do not show personal favoritism.

But teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not? But he perceived their craftiness and he said to them.

Why do you test me? Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have? They answered and said Caesar's. And he said to them.

Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. To God the things that are God's. They could not catch him in his words in the presence of the people.

And they marveled at his answer. And kept silent. I love this passage. For a number of reasons. It certainly teaches a principle about taxes.

[2 : 18] Though really that is actually secondary to the point of the passage. What it is revealing to us. Teaching us about a certain group of people.

So we want to look at this passage this morning. And always you know the problem with taking a few weeks off. I think four weeks off from my sermon series on Luke.

We kind of tend to lose the flow of the storyline. And it's important that we keep that in our minds. I mean the gospel of Luke is after all a story. A narration.

A narration of the ministry. Life and ministry of Jesus Christ. It is truly his story. The story of Christ. From his miraculous birth.

To his victorious ascension. Back to the right hand of the Father. On the throne in heaven. And with that the promise that he would one day return.

[3 : 14] So it's his story. His story. And the gospel of Luke is that. It's a narration. Of his story. The story of Jesus Christ. And so to restore in our minds the flow of the story.

I want to take you back to the parable. That we studied. Some weeks back. Not going to study the parable all over again.

I'm not going to review the sermon. Again. But just to remind you. Where we are. In the life of Christ. It's Wednesday. It's Wednesday.

At this particular time. Mid-week. We could say. In Jesus last week. His last week. His passion week. So we're halfway through the passion week. Even though we have several chapters left.

In the gospel of Luke. I mean Luke does. As all the gospel writers. Focuses quite a bit of attention. Upon that last week of Jesus life. And so here we are. In mid-week.

[4 : 12] I mean by Friday of this week. Jesus will be dead. He will have been crucified. But it's now Wednesday. And Jesus is teaching. He's teaching in the temple.

The temple area. Various places in that very large area. Within the temple. And crowds are following him here and there. And he's taking the opportunity to teach.

And he's surrounded at this particular time. By a multitude of people. We're not told how many. But I think quite a few. This was the standard for these days.

The people followed him. And listened to him. And he taught them. And all the people were there. Because it's Passover week. And so there were a number of people there. Not only in Jerusalem. As they flooded the streets. But also in the surrounding area. And in particular. Inside the temple area. It's Passover week. And there is an extremely heightened.

[5 : 07] Sense of expectation. At this point. And why? Because of the presence of one man. One particular man. And we know who that is.

Jesus. Because he's there. And the people are at this point. Thinking. That he's the one. He's the one they've been looking for.

Longing for. He's the one the prophets had foretold. About. And so he may be the one. That they've been longing for. That he may be the Messiah. That's what the people are thinking.

At this point. And so Jesus' popularity is quite high. Here. And they're following him around. And grouping around him. Crowding around him. They want to listen to every word. He has to say.

And all the signs. In their minds. At this point. All the signs are pointing. To Jesus as the Messiah. His teaching ministry. What he'd been teaching about.

[6 : 02] His authority in teaching. His miracles. His power over the demonic forces. His triumphal entry. Into Jerusalem. Just recently.

And his authority. There in the temple. Driving out the dishonest. Merchants. And money changers. And so forth. Who but Messiah. Could have that kind of authority.

So everything is pointing. To Jesus as the Messiah. And the people are buying into that. And so they're very interested. And they're crowding around him. To listen to what Jesus has to say.

Listen to his teachings. Monday. Tuesday. Wednesday. In the temple. And now we're at Wednesday. And his popularity again. Is at its highest perhaps. In all of his ministry.

At least among the people. The common people. Because there is a group of Jews. Who hate him. Hate him with a passion. And this is not new for them.

[7 : 02] And we're talking about the leaders of the Jews. The leadership. In Israel. And our text for this morning. Begins with. The chief priests. And the scribes.

That very hour. That very hour. Sought to lay hands on him. Now that's kind of. Worded a little bit mildly.

Translated mildly. It's really quite strong. It means they sought to kill him. And not just eventually. They've been plotting to do that all along. But right then. They wanted to kill him.

They wanted to kill him. And at least have him killed. Okay. They were white hot. With anger.

Toward Jesus Christ. I understand. They had hated him from the beginning. Okay. This was not new. But at this point.

[7 : 57] Something. Something. Had happened. To enrage them. To so enrage them. That they were ready to grab him. Right at that moment. Haul him off some place.

Where they could throw him down. And stone him. And kill him. Whatever. Well what happened? This is why we need to tie. In.

This passage. That we're studying this morning. With. What we studied. Four weeks ago. Over a month ago. Jesus told a parable. He told a parable.

And the parable. Was obviously. Aimed. Right. Directly. At the Jewish leadership. Remember. In verse 9. He told this parable. About a certain land owner.

Or. Or vineyard owner. And. He had gone away. Into a far country. Remember. And. He left. Farmers there. To. Tend.

[8 : 53] His vineyard. For him. And then. When he. Was ready. To receive. What was rightfully his. The fruit of. Of his vineyard. He sent a servant. And they. Kicked him out. They sent another.

And they killed him. And they sent several. Servants. And they kept. Killing them. And then. He finally sent. His only son. Remember. The parable. What did they do to him?

They drug him out. Side. The vineyard. And. Murdered him. And we know. That's a picture of. The crucifixion. Where. It's a picture of.

The death of Christ. And not only do we know that. But also the people. There. Who heard the parable. They. Knew that. And so that's why. Immediately after.

Jesus. Tells this parable. We read these words. And the chief priests. And the scribes. That very hour. Sought to lay hands on him. They sought. To kill him. They were angry with him.

[9 : 47] And why? Well. Well. They feared the people. They feared the people. And why? For they. That is the people. Knew. He had spoken this parable.

Against them. That is against the Jewish leadership. Jesus had exposed them. He had exposed them. As the Jesus haters. Haters. The haters of God's son.

Jesus had in that parable. Exposed them to. The common Jews. The people. There. The people of the Jews. Had exposed. Them.

As having plotted. To have Jesus killed. Now of course. It was all true. Wasn't it? It's all true. They. They are the Jesus haters.

We could say the original. Jesus. Haters. And they had been plotting. To destroy Jesus. Almost from the very. Very beginning. Of his ministry. In fact. You can look at.

[10 : 44] The gospel of Mark. We won't turn to it. But I'll just give you the reference. In Mark chapter 3. That's early on. In Mark's account. In Mark chapter 3. Verse 6. Early on. In Jesus ministry.

The Bible says. Then the Pharisees. Plotted. How they might destroy him. So it wasn't something. That was just a new thought. With them. Or a new. Kind of. A thing. Or problem.

With them. It's something they desire to do. From the very beginning. Of Jesus ministry. So let's see. These Jesus haters. That's the point of the passage.

To reveal to us. Who they were. How they were thinking. Their conniving. Their plans. Let's see.

The Jesus haters. And our text reveals. A number of characteristics. About them. And I've called. It an anatomy. An anatomy. Of the original. Jesus haters.

[11 : 37] So. First notice. This morning. Something that is just. Kind of barely mentioned. And might be something. We would miss. But it is important. First notice. Their inglorious.

Coalition. Their inglorious. Coalition. Now. Matthew. Mark. And Luke. All three of them. Include this account. In their gospel.

Gospels. Their gospel accounts. When you put them all together. All three of them together. You learn something very interesting. About these Jewish leaders. It was a coalition. It was a coalition. Of all the various. Sects. Branches. Of Jewish leadership. All of them. And. They didn't really get along. With one another.

Most of them. But they came together. For this. And it was a shameful. Coalition. Coalition. It was. A coalition. Void. Of all honor. I call it.

[12 : 33] An inglorious. In glorious. Coalition. Now. Luke only mentions. Two of them. In verse 19. He mentions. The chief priests. And the scribes. Just those two.

Now. Who were they? Who were they? Well. The chief priests. You could say. They were at the top. All right. They were the top. Of the leadership. That would include. The top guy.

The high priest. His name was Caiaphas. At this time. But it would also. Have included. In an interesting point. Of history. Would have included. The former high priest. As well. Annas.

The father-in-law. Of Caiaphas. And. They tell us. Historians. Even out. Outside of the Bible. Tell us. That Annas. Really was the one. Who was calling the shots. He was the one.

In charge. Even though. His son-in-law. Caiaphas. Was the high priest. At the time. The chief priest. Would have included. The high priest. The former high priest. It would have included.

[13 : 27] Also. What was called. The captain of the temple. We don't know his name. He would. Would have been. The high priest. Right hand man. And it would also. Have included.

Many other. High ranking priests. Many of them. Probably all of them. Members of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin. Was the ruling. Kind of the ruling body. Within.

Israel. In that day. So. And that would have included. A group called. The Sadducees. You heard about them. The Sadducees. And who were they? Well. They were the theological liberals.

Of the day. We've always had. Theological liberals. And they had them in Israel's day. They denied the miraculous. They refused. The. To believe in the resurrection.

And. And so. They're the Sadducees. So. This group. Would have been included. Here. As coming together. Luke also mentions. The scribes. Who were they? Well. They were the lawyers.

[14 : 24] Of the day. Now. Not lawyers. In any sense. That we would use. The term today. But lawyers. In the sense. Of biblical scholars. And theologians. They were the ones. Who interpreted.

The mosaic law. For the people. And so forth. Now. So. Luke mentions. These two groups. The chief priests. And the scribes. Now.

If you go to Matthew's account. In Matthew chapter 22. Two. And also. In Mark's account. In Mark. I think. It's chapter 12. You have. Also. Some others. Mentioned here.

Some that we're familiar with. Well. One that we are. And one that maybe. We're not so familiar with. But Matthew. In chapter 22. Verse 15. He says. Then the Pharisees.

The Pharisees. Went and plotted. How they might. Entangle him. Entangle Jesus. Catch him. In his. Talk. In his. Words. Now we know about.

[15:18] The Pharisees. Don't. So this is kind of a third group. That has come together. To form this coalition. Against Jesus Christ. The Pharisees. The Pharisees. Were the purists.

Of the day. The Pharisees. Were the. Theological. Fundamentalists. Really. Of. Of. Of. The conservatives. Of the day. The Pharisees. And the Sadducees. They didn't get along. In fact. They were diametrically. Opposed to one another.

Theologically. As well as politically. They were opponents. And then Matthew. Also mentions. The. Herodians. Now that might be a group. That we don't know much about.

Mark. Also. Mentioned. The. Herodians. They're part of this coalition. This. This. The Inglorious Coalition. Now who were the Herodians? Well they were. Yet another.

[16:12] Sect. Among Israel. Within Israel. But they were strictly. Political party. They were political. All things political. They. They. They. They were not. Spiritual in any way.

Theological in any way. They were pure. Purely. Political. And they were called. Herodians. Because. They were pro Herod. Right. We probably guessed that.

They were pro Herod. Now who was Herod? Well Herod was the sort of. Pseudo king. Of Judea. In that time. There were a number of Herods. A whole family of them. Started with the.

The. The patriarch of the family. And they. Ruled in various. Parts. Of. Israel. Galilee. Judea. And so forth. And so.

This particular group. Would be. Pro Herod. And they were pro Herod. For. Political reasons. Political.

[17:07] Expediency. And the Jews. Hated the Herods. And so many of them. Hated. The common Jew. Anyway. Would hate the. Herodians. Because they were in bed.

With the Herods. They were in bed. With the Romans. And that is why. This is such a strange thing. To read. When Matthew and Mark. Mentioned the Pharisees. And the Herodians.

Together. Because they. They were enemies. They. They hated one another. They were certainly. Theologically. Theologically. Separated. Poles apart. But they were also. Politically.

Separated. Pharisees. Were not for. The Romans. In any. Degree. But the Herods. Or the Herodians. Were. And so it's strange. To have them together. And yet you have them together.

In Matthew and Mark's account. Of this same story. For example. In Mark. Excuse me. Matthew 22. Starting with verse 15. The Bible says. Then the Pharisees.

[18:01] Went. And plotted. How they might entangle Jesus. In his talk. And they sent to Jesus. Their disciples. Beside the Pharisees.

With. The Herodians. Now this is strange. The two. Have come together. For this purpose. Mark chapter 12. Verse 13. Then they.

Probably the Sanhedrin. A reference to the Sanhedrin. The ruling body. They sent to him. To Jesus. Some of the Pharisees. And the Herodians. To catch him.

In his words. There it is again. The two have come together. And this is amazing. Because the Pharisees. And the Herodians. Wouldn't agree. On anything. Except.

Except. Their desire. To kill Jesus. To have Jesus destroyed. What an. Inglorious. Coalition. Everybody. Is in on this.

[18:56] The priests. Including the high priest. The scribes. The Pharisees. The Sadducees. The Herodians. Cumulatively.

The. The. The Sanhedrin. Itself. They're all in on it. They all agree. On. At least. One thing. Kill. Jesus. Kill. Jesus.

There's just one problem. The Romans. They're in charge. Right. They're in charge. And they had taken away. The authority. Of capital punishment.

They had taken away. The authority for. Israel's leadership. To perform capital punishment. They couldn't do it on their own. And so if Jesus is going to be destroyed. He's going to be killed. Then.

It would have to be done by the Romans. That was the problem that they faced. But how? How could the Jewish leadership. Get the Romans to carry out capital punishment.

[19 : 53] on Jesus. How could they do that? That's a problem. Problem they faced. And yet they had an even bigger problem, by the way. And we have an indication of that in the very first verse of our text. And the problem was, how could they do this?

Get the Romans to kill Jesus. How could they do that without at the same time endangering their own leadership among the common people, the people of Israel?

How could they do that, get that done without hurting their influence and possibly even losing their position and power among the people? Remember at this point, I've already said this, the people loved Jesus. They loved Him. They were attracted to Him.

The people were attracted to Him because they were certain, pretty certain that He was the Messiah. And they could not, the Jewish leadership could not afford to be seen as killers of Jesus. Couldn't afford that. That would jeopardize their position and their power. Maybe even for some of them, their lives. Because after all, the people are pretty well convinced that Jesus is the Messiah.

[21 : 08] So the Jewish leadership had to be very careful. They didn't want Jesus' parable to become a self-fulfilled prophecy. They were killing the Son of God. And so somehow they had to keep their hands clean before the people.

And at the same time, get the Romans to kill Jesus for them. And so we see in this passage, as we look at this anatomy of the Jesus haters, we see not only their inglorious coalition, but second, their insidious calculation.

They were very calculating at this point. They were insidious, wicked, devilish. Listen, have you ever wondered?

I've wondered this. Have you ever wondered how the people could have so quickly changed their opinion about Jesus? I mean, it doesn't seem to make sense.

It's not even reasonable that the people could so quickly change their opinion about Jesus. I mean, one moment, they're shouting, Hosanna to the King. Remember, just a few days ago.

[22 : 19] And now they are hanging on every word that Jesus has to say. They are following Him everywhere. And they are sure He's the Messiah. So one moment, they're for Him. And then just two days later, less than two days, what are they doing?

They're shouting, crucify Him. Away with this guy. crucify Him. How in the world could they have changed so quickly? Kind of turn on a dime, so to speak.

Well, through the cold, insidious calculation on the part of the Jewish leadership. That's how. Look at verse 19.

And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people. Really, they feared losing their power and position. That's what they feared.

And why did they fear it? For they knew He had spoken this parable against them. And so, they had to somehow get rid of Jesus and at the same time preserve their power position.

[23 : 24] Now, how are they going to do that? Well, get the Romans to kill Jesus. Alright, we've already said that. That's how. And how are they going to do that? Well, they have to convince the Romans that Jesus was an insurrectionist.

That's it. Somehow convince them that He's a troublemaker. He's a threat to the peace in Judea. He's an insurrectionist.

And therefore, He's a threat and has to be getting rid of. That's what they had to do. And so, you see, the Jewish leadership knew something very important about the Jews.

About the Romans, rather. The Romans were hypersensitive to when it came to insurrection. Hypersensitive.

The Romans were all about peace in their kingdom. It's the Pax Romana. Peace in Rome. Or the Roman peace. They were all about that. And so, if they even smelled insurrection, they'd move in quickly and take care of it.

[24 : 33] They'd deal with it. And deal with it usually very severely. And so, they would either arrest the one who was the troublemaker, the insurrectionist, or they might even have him killed right there on the spot.

They were very hypersensitive to this. And the Jewish leadership knew this about Rome. They knew that. And so, they played on that. Their calculations were based upon that reality.

This was an insidious calculation. And so, verse 20, so they watched him. Remember, Jesus is teaching in the temple area. Moving from spot to spot.

There might be a group of Jews over one corner. And so, he walks over there and begins to teach. And many others are following him. And he's moving here and there. And everybody's following him. And the crowds are getting bigger and bigger and bigger.

And so, inside the crowd, there are some spies. They're watching him. They're watching him. They sent spies who, get this, pretended to be righteous.

[25 : 36] What does that mean? It means that they were just pretending to be like the rest of them. You know, the rest of those interested in Jesus and rooting for him and loving him and hanging on his words.

They pretended to be righteous. And according to their calculations, verse 20, they might seize on his words. This is their plan.

They might catch him in his words in order to, this was their goal, to deliver him to the power, that would be the Roman power, the authority of the government.

You see? Their insidious calculation. And all they had to do was get Jesus arrested. That's really all they had to do. Just get him arrested by Pilate.

He didn't have to kill him, actually. Really. Now, that's what they wanted. But all they had to do was get the Romans to arrest Jesus. And so, catch him saying something against the Roman government.

[26 : 37] And that is why they had the Herodians there. Remember, they're the political party. They're in bed with the Romans. And so, just have a few Herodians mixed in there with those spies.

And then, if Jesus said something that was insurrectionist in some degree, then the Herodians would then immediately report that to Herod or his entourage.

They had that direct contact with the Roman Empire. This was their plan. And so, the Romans then, according to their calculations, would then quickly move in and arrest Jesus and quite likely even have him executed.

Pretty smart plan. It's insidious. Now, how would this turn the people against Jesus? Because this is part of their plan. It's not just to have the Romans kill Jesus for them.

But they also have to get the people to turn against Jesus. That's the only way. Otherwise, they would be seen as implicit in this killing of Jesus. and fulfilling the parable that Jesus just told.

[27 : 46] People would turn against the leadership of Israel because they were instrumental in killing their Messiah, whatever. So, how are they going to appease the people?

How are they going to turn them against Jesus? Well, simply. Because it all fits together. They were looking, see, the people were looking for a Messiah that would conquer the Romans.

right? That was their theology of Messiah. Actually, it's true enough, but it's way yet future. They didn't see this first coming of Jesus as a suffering servant.

They only saw him as the glorious king. And so, they're looking for the Messiah to be the conqueror and a conqueror. Not one that would be arrested by the Romans, by the Gentiles.

See the insidious nature of their plan? All they had, they really had to do was to get the Romans to arrest Jesus as an insurrectionist.

[28 : 49] Because then, when the people saw that the Gentiles had power over their would-be Messiah, then the tide would turn against him because then, in their eyes, he could not be the Messiah.

Simple. And that's why two days later, they're crying, crucify him. So, here was their insidious calculation. Trip Jesus up in his words.

Twist them to sound insurrectionist. To sound against Rome. Get the Romans, then, to arrest him and perhaps even kill him.

That would be the icing on the cake. It's what they really desired. And thereby, dash the people's hopes that Jesus is indeed the true Messiah and that would turn public opinion against him.

So, the goal being get rid of Jesus and preserve their position and power with the people which is what they really care. That's it. Now, how would they do this?

[29 : 51] How would they accompany it? It seems like a pretty simple plan. How would they do it? So, notice the third thing as we look at this anatomy of the Jesus haters, their ingenious confrontation with Jesus.

Ingenious. The stroke of genius. Their ingenious confrontation. See, so they placed their spies in the crowds who pretended to be righteous and they looked for opportunities to seize on Jesus' words.

And so, verse 21, they asked him, now get this, get this, teacher, we know that you say and teach rightly. That's how they begin this.

I mean, they're just putting on the soft soap here. What are they trying to do? Trying to butter Jesus up as if that would work with him. This is classic insincere flattery.

Right? In fact, I really thought about making this a separate point. Get this one. Their incredulous commendation. Okay. I thought I'd throw that out if you get a little bit too complicated.

[31 : 03] But look at it. We know, they said, we know that you say and teach rightly. They didn't believe that. Huh? Did they believe that? They didn't believe that.

This is flattering. This is ridiculous. And they said, we know you do not show personal favoritism. by the way, who did show personal favoritism in this day? The Jewish leadership. People thought that about the Jewish leadership. They see, they're pretending to be righteous. They're not one of them. They're kind of separated themselves from them. They're just one of the common people. And they're saying, we know that you don't show personal favoritism. They would score big with the crowd there.

And then they said, but teach the way of God in truth. Really? That's what they know. That's what they claim to know. You see what they're doing?

[32 : 00] It's pretty clear. I mean, on the one hand, they're using flattery, hoping that Jesus would let his guard down, and then they could trick him in his words, but that was a false hope, because he's the Lord of glory.

You can't trick him. Okay? But then on the other hand, they are saying what they know the people believe. What the people believed about Jesus.

So they're playing to the crowd, aren't they? They're setting all this up. And so they ask a question of Jesus that seemed, really seemed to be a stroke of genius on their part, and I guess it would have been if they had asked it of anybody other than Jesus.

And so they ask the question, verse 22, is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not? That's their question. Genius.

the question they're asking. Is it lawful for Jews, for us Jews, to pay taxes to a pagan idolatrous Roman government?

[33 : 06] That's their question. I mean, on the coins there's the image of Caesar who claimed to be a god himself. Idolatry.

is it lawful for we Jews to pay taxes to such a government and to such a person as Caesar or not? Now, he's not asking is it lawful according to Roman law.

He's asking, they're asking according to the Mosaic law, God's law. It's an ingenious question. It really is. And in their minds, of course, the biblical answer, at least among the Pharisees, their answer would be absolutely no.

It's not right. It would be unlawful for us before God to pay taxes to Caesar. That's what they believed. And they also knew that's exactly what the people did.

And they knew that the people there would have been expecting an answer like this, no, it's not lawful. Not right for us to pay taxes to this overbearing, oppressive, idolatrous, pagan government.

[34 : 22] And especially considering that the leader of this government claims to be a God. That's the answer they expected. And they knew that.

So I guess it seems that Jesus is between a rock and a hard place. I mean, if he says, yes, it is lawful, then what are the people going to do?

They might even stone him. But if he says, no, it's not lawful, then the Romans will take care of it. I mean, which way is he going to go on this?

And so this is an ingenious confrontation on the part of the Jewish leadership. But hold the celebration, because how did Jesus respond? Well, he responded really with an even greater level of genius.

Verse 23, but he perceived their craftiness, their trickery, and said to them, why do you test me? Read between the lines, and I think he's saying, it's a waste of time, it's not going to work with me.

[35 : 27] And then he said, verse 24, show me a denarius. That would be a Roman coin. And by the way, it might have been difficult for him to get one there, because most of the Jewish people would not carry Roman coins.

Why would they not want to carry a Roman coin? Because it had the image of Caesar on it. And that would be like carrying around in your pocket an idol.

And yet apparently someone had, probably one of the Herodians there in the group had one, and so I guess we're to assume that handed him one, and he then said what?

He said, whose image is it? And they said Caesar's. Right? And then he said to them, this famous statement, render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are done.

What an answer. Incredible. Now you can't trick Jesus into anything. He and by the way, it wasn't his time to die yet.

[36 : 43] He can't be killed by some mob that's now angry with him and thinks he's a blasphemer, taken out, stoned, cannot be killed by the Roman government, not yet.

And so what an answer. now here is the really one and only direct application to us today and that is you know someone might say does that mean we're to pay taxes I don't really think I have that question among us here though there might be some who are entertaining the thought about the rightness the wrongness of paying taxes to a pagan government that's basically what we have today and the answer to that is yes pay taxes to your government that's what Jesus said render to Caesar what is Caesar but now what if I'm a believer living in North Korea communist nation ruled by a brat of a dictator what about that yes you pay your taxes to that government well what about China yes how about Iran one of the biggest funders of terrorism in the world do I pay my taxes if I'm a citizen of Iran do I pay my taxes to that kind of government yes yes you do now what Jesus says here goes way beyond just the paying of taxes now certainly the question pertained to taxes but Jesus answer is broader not just taxes the other things you owe your government you must pay you must give see we are in a very real sense as Christian citizens of two worlds we are for now and we're citizens of a temporal world one in which we live right now that is not a Christian world it's not a theocracy we live in one day it will be it's not right now we live in a temporal world we also are citizens of an eternal world citizens of heaven

God's kingdom and so there are some things in this world that belong to this world that's how we ought to understand this things that belong to this world like government governments belong to this world in which we live this temporal world and God has ordained them government even terrible God has ordained them and so there are things that belong to them in this temporal world to our government things that belong to them like laws belong to government are we to obey them yes they belong to this world and we are citizens of this world and there are things like civil peace that belong to our government and we owe that to them civil peace and obedience and taxes

I'm sorry yes I think about Israel what did Jesus say he's talking to Israel render to Caesar what is Caesar's he said and that would just if he had left it there just would grate on them this pagan government and yet the point is that God has ordained that that government he ordained that Israel would be under the rule of the Roman Empire he ordained that government and that is true of all ruling powers and governments that have existed and exist today I don't care how wicked they are it's true Romans 13 tells us we don't have to go back and look at it it just says that powers that be are ordained of God that's pretty simple all the powers that be are ordained of God and by the way he says and they don't carry the sword for nothing and I know I would get a few amens from Tom if he were here see listen government is ordained to protect the innocent and punished evil and even the most wicked of governments do that the government is ordained to provide a military to protect their nation they're ordained to keep the peace civilly a civil peace they're ordained to do that they're ordained to provide security and protection they are ordained to build roads things like that ordained to do all those again those things have value don't they don't they they have value and you have to pay for these things you have to render to

Caesar what is Caesar obedience to his laws they belong to him obedience or civil peace belongs to him taxes belong to him now someone is thinking what about when the government demands what God forbids didn't Jesus give us an answer for that too he said render to God the things that are God and we can find a number of examples in scripture that help us understand how this works in Acts chapter 5 verse 29 you might remember the officials the government of Israel ordered Peter to stop preaching in the name of Jesus and his answer was what we ought to obey God rather than men see if anybody ever comes my government says it's now illegal for you to preach then I have to obey I have to disobey I disobey and this is what

[43 : 57] Peter is saying we have a higher command to obey we obey God and so do with me as you will that's what he said something that may be more recent to our day if the government ever says to Highland Park Baptist Church you must allow homosexuals to be members of your church

I'll take any homosexual who come and repent of sin and trust in Christ but I'm talking about unrepentant homosexuals that if the government ever says that you cannot exclude homosexuals from the active membership of your church or if it says that you must allow homosexuals to serve on your staff hey maybe even be your pastor if the government ever says to Don Cole you must marry homosexual couples I must say I will disobey I will not obey

I cannot obey see listen now that's an easy one isn't it it ought to be not so easy or not so clear with some it seems today but we ought obey God rather than men that's what Peter said I have a higher command to obey I obey God so do with me what you will do with me what you will see those are clear cut and Jesus speaks to both of those possibilities here and we go other places in scripture to get even more clarification about a higher command that takes precedence over the commands and laws of any government but in the absence of that we obey our government we obey our government it has been ordained God ingenious confrontation!

Certainly on the part of the Jewish leadership though it didn't work out the way they had hoped but ingenious certainly more so on the part of Jesus and by the way there is implied here an evangelistic plea Jesus is giving an evangelistic message to these enemies of his he said give to God the things that belong to God that are God's and what belongs to him your soul first and foremost your soul so an anatomy of the original Jesus haters they're in glorious coalition their insidious calculation and I'll add in there their incredulous commendation and their ingenious confrontation and then one more you'll love this one their injurious convolution their injurious convolution verse 26 says but they could not catch him in his words in the presence of the people that's what you ought to highlight in the presence of the people that is they couldn't get it done right then couldn't catch him in his words do anything with his words right then and they marveled at his answer and they kept silent and we could add because it's implied kept silent for now for now and so did they leave it there well no they didn't you have to go a little bit further in

Luke to discover this but they eventually twisted those very words their injurious convolution they twisted his words and they mixed it with their lies and they used it against him anyway they really did you have to go to chapter 23 and verse 2 and listen to this and they led him to Pilate this is after Jesus was arrested and they led him to Pilate and they began to accuse him saying we found this fellow perverting the nation and what forbidding to pay taxes to see really did he say that they twisted his words they they they used his words against him they mixed their lies with what Jesus said that by the way is going on many places in our world today one of the bewildering things to me that for example the government of China would be so against biblical

Christians coming into their country and leading teaching people and even nationals being free to preach and teach the word of God because the word of God does not teach insurrection but they have believed the lie the lie of Satan these Christians are dangerous people they got to take care of them they're the problem talking about the true biblical Christian we'll just get out a gun and go to some college and pick out a Christian killed it it's always been the lie of Satan part of the anatomy of the original Jesus haters those haters still exist today I look around this room and I am very comfortably convinced that not any of us in this room are haters of Jesus so I'm not speaking to that crowd today not like the principal characters of our passage today but I wonder how many of us are brave stand on our convictions and be overtly

[50 : 37] Jesus lovers overt I struggle with that not that I don't love Jesus but in key situations and circumstances of life just not saying not standing up for Jesus when he's being put down or even just in a casual conversation with someone who's an unbeliever to not be overtly a lover now there's no haters of Jesus here no Jesus haters shall we all be Jesus lovers Jesus lovers by