

▼ **Paying Taxes To Caesar**

Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday October 12, 2025

© 2025 Life Church Ministries, Inc.

<http://www.LifeChurchBoston.org/>

▼ **Opening Material**

▼ **Welcome!**

- Praise the Lord!
- Welcome to another Life Church sermon!

▼ **Transition**

- Welcome to another Sunday at Life Church.
- The QR code (also available on our song sheets) links to our Visitor Landing Page.
- Use it to access our notes, share your contact information, and access our giving page.
- Questions? If you took the time to visit us, you deserve to get answers!
- Email: Questions@LifeChurchBoston.ORG
- We are continuing in Luke 20.
- We will have life group after the message.

▼ **Thoughts**

▼ **Video**

- [Chase: We Talkin' Bout Cashbacking I Chase Freedom Unlimited](#) - YouTube (00:00:30)
- [Talking About Making Disciples](#) - YouTube (00:00:25)

▼ **Acts 2:42-43 - The 4 Devotions:**

- The apostles' teaching
- fellowship
- the breaking of bread
- prayer

▼ **Overview**

▼ **In today's message we will do the following:**

- Moralistic Therapeutic Deism
- ▼ Why are we here?

- Acts 2:36-39
- Acts 17:29-31
- Review passage - Luke 1:1-4.
- Review passage - Luke 4:14-21.
- Review our passage - Luke 20:20-26
- Explore what Jesus is teaching us.
- Transition to Life Group.

▼ Opening Material

▼ Why are we here?

- Acts 2:36-39 - Spoken to Jews

“Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

- Acts 17:29-31 - Spoken to Gentiles

“Therefore, since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

▼ Welcome to Luke!

▼ Video

- [Bible Project: Luke 1-9](#) - YouTube (00:08:16)
- [Bible Project: Luke 10-24](#) - YouTube (00:07:48)
- Luke 1:1-4

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

▼ Embrace Jesus’ Mission

▼ Luke 4:14-21 (NIV) - The Lord’s Spirit Is Upon Me

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

► Setting the Stage

▼ Feed on the Life of Jesus

- Are you “worded up”?
- Eat his flesh; Drink his blood - John 6:53-59; 2 Samuel 23:13-17
- Does the Word of Christ dwell in you richly (Colossians 3:16 - KJV)?

▼ What if you read a Gospel every month - a chapter a day?

- The Gospel of Mark in October (10/1 – 10/16)
- The Gospel of Luke in November (11/1 – 11/24)
- The Gospel of John in December (12/1 – 12/21)
- The Gospel of Matthew in January (1/1 – 1/28)

▼ For October this means:

- Read Mark 11 on October 11 (yesterday).
- Read Mark 12 on October 12 (today).
- Read Mark 13 on October 13 (tomorrow).
- etc.
- As you read, write down any questions you have.

▼ Ask yourself the following questions:

- What did this chapter teach me about how Jesus viewed himself, his mission, his relationship to God, and his relationship to others?
- What would I like to better understand about this chapter?

- What did I find challenging about this chapter?
- What did I learn as I tried to apply this chapter to my life?
- Would an outsider who read this chapter recognize that I was trying to apply it to my life?

▼ **Jesus explained his teaching to his disciples:**

With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything. – Mark 4:33-34 (NIV)

- Did you grow up in church without getting your questions answered?
- Did you grow up apart from church wondering what all the fuss was about?
- Either way, don't be afraid to start from scratch or start over from scratch with someone who can walk you through the Bible so that you can understand God's Kingdom.
- Read and listen to God's Word in community!

▼ **Luke 20:20-26**

Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be sincere. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said, so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. So the spies questioned him: "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

He saw through their duplicity and said to them,

"Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?"

"Caesar's," they replied.

He said to them, **"Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."**

They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

▼ **Parallel / Related Passages**

- **Matthew 22:15-22**

Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?"

But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, **"You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax."** They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, **"Whose image is this? And whose inscription?"**

"Caesar's," they replied.

Then he said to them, **"So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."** When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

- **Mark 12:13-17**

Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know that you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn’t we?”

But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. **“Why are you trying to trap me?”** he asked. **“Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.”**

They brought the coin, and he asked them, **“Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”** “Caesar’s,” they replied.

Then Jesus said to them, **“Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.”** And they were amazed at him.

▼ **Paying Taxes To Caesar**

▼ Narrative

- “They” (the teachers of the law and the chief priests?) send spies to trap Jesus into delivering an opinion on paying taxes to Caesar.
- They plan to hand Jesus over to the governor.
- They flatter Jesus and then ask if it’s right to pay taxes to Caesar or not.
- Jesus asks them to show him a denarius (the coin used to pay the tax).
- He asks whose inscription is on the coin. They acknowledge it is Caesar’s.
- He says: “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.”
- They can’t trap Jesus in what he has said publicly, so they become silent.

▼ Observations / Background

▼ The parallel accounts in Matthew and Mark point out that:

- The spies sent to trap Jesus were Pharisees and Herodians.
- Jesus asked for the coin used to pay the tax, which turned out to be a denarius.

▼ The trap they set for Jesus was as follows:

- If Jesus approves paying taxes to Caesar, he loses credibility with the people, who expect him reject pagan Roman rule over God’s people Israel.
- If Jesus rejects paying taxes to Caesar, he is answerable to the governor for advocating rebellion against Rome.
- This is highly specific to Israel’s situation. It is not a general comment on taxes.
- Jesus did not produce a denarius of his own.

▼ The Roman denarius produced by the spies had the following features:

▼ Obverse:

- The image of Tiberius’ head.
- The inscription which translated as: “Tiberius Caesar Son of the Divine Augustus”

▼ Reverse:

- The image of Livia (Tiberius' mother) as the Roman goddess pax.
- The inscription which translated as: "high priest".
- The coin's imagery and inscriptions were idolatrous and blasphemous. They were extremely distasteful for a Jew to hold or use.

▼ Video

- [Appian Media: Should we pay Taxes to Caesar? Jesus' PROFOUND Answer!](#)
- YouTube (00:04:25)

▼ Jesus clearly avoided their trap. His answer expressed:

- Rejection of Caesar's blasphemous coins without endorsing Roman rule.
- Promoting devotion to God without opposing payment of taxes.
- Jesus has effectively reframed the issue.

▼ Lessons

- The proclamation of God's Kingdom threatened the officials of Jesus' day, and they sought ways to eliminate the challenge that he presented.
- Our proclamation of God's Kingdom will threaten the powers of our day, and they will seek to eliminate the challenge that we present.
- What belongs to "Caesar" today that we should give back to him?
- What belongs to God today that we should give back to him?

▼ Life Group

▼ Welcome (5 - 10 minutes)

- [Icebreaker](#)

• **Worship (optional for life group meetings during Sunday service)**

▼ **Word - Discussion Questions**

For each question, spend 1 – 2 minutes in silence before you begin to respond.

- **What did this passage mean to the people who first received it?**
- **What does this passage mean to you?**
- **How will you apply this passage this coming week?**

▼ **Witness**

How will we work together as a team to be "good news" to the people around us?

- ▼ **Explore the Harvest Skills in the Training Page “Big Blueprint” diagram.**
 - ▼ What level are you at with these?
 - Are you a “wanderer”, “follower”, “achiever”, or a “leader”?
 - What’s your plan for developing these skills?
 - **Pray for the unchurched people you’ve been identifying.**



Paying Taxes To Caesar

Sunday October 12, 2025



Welcome!



Visitor Page

Welcome to another Sunday at Life Church.

The QR code (also available on our song sheets) links to our Visitor Landing Page.

Use it to access our notes, share your contact information, and access our giving page.

Questions? If you took the time to visit us, you deserve to get answers!

Email: Questions@LifeChurchBoston.ORG

We are continuing in Luke 20.

We will have life group after the message.



Thoughts (continued)



- Acts 2:42-43 - The 4 Devotions:
 - the apostles' teaching
 - fellowship
 - the breaking of bread
 - prayer



Overview



In today's message we will do the following:

- Why are we here?
 - Acts 2:36-39
 - Acts 17:29-31
- Review passage - Luke 1:1-4.
- Review passage - Luke 4:14-21.
- Review our passage - Luke 20:20-26
- Explore what Jesus is teaching us.
- Transition to Life Group.



Why are we here?



Acts 2:36-39 – Spoken to Jews

Acts 17:29-31 – Spoken to Gentiles



Acts 2:36-39 – Spoken to Jews

“Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”



Acts 17:29-31 – Spoken to Gentiles

“Therefore, since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”



Welcome to Luke!



- Video: Bible Project: Luke 1-9
- Video: Bible Project: Luke 10-24
- Luke 1:1-4 – Luke's Introduction
- Luke 4:14-21 – Embrace Jesus' Mission



Luke 1:1-4 – Luke's Introduction

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.



Embrace Jesus' Mission: Luke 4:14-21

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”



Feed on the Life of Jesus (1 of 4)

Are you “worded up”?

Eat his flesh; Drink his blood – John 6:53-59; 2 Samuel 23:13-17

Does the Word of Christ dwell in you richly (Colossians 3:16 - KJV)?

What if you read a Gospel every month - a chapter a day?

- The Gospel of Mark in October (10/1 – 10/16)
- The Gospel of Luke in November (11/1 – 11/24)
- The Gospel of John in December (12/1 – 12/21)
- The Gospel of Matthew in January (1/1 - 1/28)



Feed on the Life of Jesus (2 of 4)



For October this means:

- Read Mark 11 on October 11 (yesterday).
- Read Mark 12 on October 12 (today).
- Read Mark 13 on October 13 (tomorrow).
- etc.



Feed on the Life of Jesus (3 of 4)

As you read, write down any questions you have.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What did this chapter teach me about how Jesus viewed himself, his mission, his relationship to God, and his relationship to others?
- What would I like to better understand about this chapter?
- What did I find challenging about this chapter?
- What did I learn as I tried to apply this chapter to my life?
- Would an outsider who read this chapter recognize that I was trying to apply it to my life?



Feed on the Life of Jesus (4 of 4)

Jesus explained his teaching to his disciples:

With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything. – Mark 4:33-34 (NIV)

- Did you grow up in church without getting your questions answered?
- Did you grow up apart from church wondering what all the fuss was about?
- Either way, don't be afraid to start from scratch or start over from scratch with someone who can walk you through the Bible so that you can understand God's Kingdom.
- Read and listen to God's Word in community!



Luke 20:20-26 (NIV)

Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be sincere. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said, so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. So the spies questioned him: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

He saw through their duplicity and said to them,

“Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

He said to them, “Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.



Matthew 22:15-22 (NIV)

Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?”

But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax.” They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

Then he said to them, “So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.



Mark 12:13-17 (NIV)

Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know that you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn’t we?”

But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “**Why are you trying to trap me?**” he asked. “**Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.**”

They brought the coin, and he asked them, “**Whose image is this? And whose inscription?**”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

Then Jesus said to them, “**Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.**”

And they were amazed at him.



Narrative – Luke 20:20-26

- “They” (the teachers of the law and the chief priests?) send spies to trap Jesus into delivering an opinion on paying taxes to Caesar.
- They plan to hand Jesus over to the governor.
- They flatter Jesus and then ask if it’s right to pay taxes to Caesar or not.
- Jesus asks them to show him a denarius (the coin used to pay the tax).
- He asks whose inscription is on the coin. They acknowledge it is Caesar’s.
- He says: “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.”
- They can’t trap Jesus in what he has said publicly, so they become silent.



Observations / Background

- The parallel accounts in Matthew and Mark point out that:
 - The spies sent to trap Jesus were Pharisees and Herodians.
 - Jesus asked for the coin used to pay the tax, which turned out to be a denarius.
- The trap they set for Jesus was as follows:
 - If Jesus approves paying taxes to Caesar, he loses credibility with the people, who expect him reject pagan Roman rule over God's people Israel.
 - If Jesus rejects paying taxes to Caesar, he is answerable to the governor for advocating rebellion against Rome.
 - This is highly specific to Israel's situation. It is not a general comment on taxes.



Observations / Background (cont.)

- Jesus did not produce a denarius of his own.
- The Roman denarius produced by the spies had the following features:
 - Obverse:
 - The image of Tiberius' head.
 - The inscription which translated as: "Tiberius Caesar Son of the Divine Augustus"
 - Reverse:
 - The image of Livia (Tiberius' mother) as the Roman goddess pax.
 - The inscription which translated as: "high priest".
 - The coin's imagery and inscriptions were idolatrous and blasphemous. They were extremely distasteful for a Jew to hold or use.
 - [Appian Media: Should we pay Taxes to Caesar? Jesus' PROFOUND Answer!](#) - YouTube (00:04:25)



The Roman Denarius





Observations / Background (cont.)

- Jesus clearly avoided their trap. His answer expressed:
 - Rejection of Caesar's blasphemous coins without endorsing Roman rule.
 - Promoting devotion to God without opposing payment of taxes.
 - Jesus has effectively reframed the issue.



Lessons



- The proclamation of God's Kingdom threatened the officials of Jesus' day, and they sought ways to eliminate the challenge that he presented.
- Our proclamation of God's Kingdom will threaten the powers of our day, and they will seek to eliminate the challenge that we present.
- What belongs to "Caesar" today that we should give back to him?
- What belongs to God today that we should give back to him?



Life Groups



Word - Spend 1 – 2 minutes in silence before you begin each question.

- What did this passage mean to the people who first received it?
- What does this passage mean to you?
- How will you apply this passage this coming week?

Witness (How we work as a team to be "good news" to others)

- Explore the Harvest Skills in the Training Page “Big Blueprint” diagram.
- What level are you at with these?
 - Are you a “wanderer”, “follower”, “achiever”, or a “leader”?
 - What’s your plan for developing these skills?
- Pray for the unchurched people you’ve been identifying.



Announcements



Visitor Page

- Sunday Service October 12, 2025
- Men's Bible Study Wed (10/15) 7pm - 8:30pm - via Zoom
- Sunday Service October 19, 2025
- Men's Bible Study Wed (10/22) 7pm - 8:30pm - via Zoom
- Sunday Service October 26, 2025
- Men's Bible Study Wed (10/29) 7pm - 8:30pm - via Zoom
- Sunday Service (Communion) November 2, 2025
- Sunday Connection November 2, 2025 12n - 2pm



Life Groups



Word - Spend 1 – 2 minutes in silence before you begin each question.

- What did this passage mean to the people who first received it?
- What does this passage mean to you?
- How will you apply this passage this coming week?

Witness (How we work as a team to be "good news" to others)

- Explore the Harvest Skills in the Training Page “Big Blueprint” diagram.
- What level are you at with these?
 - Are you a “wanderer”, “follower”, “achiever”, or a “leader”?
 - What’s your plan for developing these skills?
- Pray for the unchurched people you’ve been identifying.



Benediction, Life Groups



Announcements

Benediction

Life Groups

Leave Service From Life Groups