

What Happened on This Day in Easter Week - Tuesday

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[0 : 00] What happened on this day in Easter week? Tuesday, Mark 12, 13-17.

Then they sent some of the Pharisees and the Herodians to Jesus to trap Him in His words. When they came, they said to Him, Teacher, we know that you are truthful and don't care what anyone thinks, nor do you show partiality, but teach the way of God truthfully.

Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn't we? But knowing their hypocrisy, He said to them, Why are you testing me? Bring me a denarius to look at.

They brought a coin. Whose image and inscription is this? He asked them. Caesar's, they replied. Jesus told them, Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.

And they were utterly amazed at Him. This is God's word. On Tuesday, leading up to His death, Jesus spends most of the day teaching, including a session being grilled by various groups of the Jewish religious scholars.

[1 : 16] Except the questions they ask aren't because they're keen to learn. On the contrary, we're told they were trying to trap Him in His words, to discredit Him with the listening crowds.

At one point, they ask Him whether they should pay taxes to the Romans, thinking that they've surely got Him now, whether He says yes or no, He's bound to make some enemies. But He says neither.

Instead, He asks them a counter-question. Whose image is the one on the coin? Caesar's, they reply. Well, He says, tossing it back, Give to Caesar what bears his image, and give to God what bears His, which, of course, is each one of us.

Jesus is implying that even the most religious people have not necessarily given their lives to God. And the questions go on, and with each one, Jesus does something similar.

Not only does He answer them, but He turns the questions back on the questioner to show them that they, not He, are the ones who should really be examined. But then, someone else comes along and asks a different question completely.

[2 : 30] We read this from verse 28 onwards. And He asks a question not to trap Jesus, but because He really wants to know the answer. And His question, which Jesus later commends Him on, is the right question to ask.

The only right question to ask God at the end of the day. What do you really want of me? Or, as He puts it, Teacher, what's the greatest commandment of all?

And so Jesus answers Him, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.

That's what God wants. All of His law is actually summed up in that, Jesus says. But we don't ask that question. We don't tend to ask that question.

And the reason is because, well, we already know the answer, don't we? We already know that we haven't loved God like that, and we haven't loved our neighbor like we should.

[3 : 37] We've loved other things more than God, and we've loved ourselves more than our neighbors. And that's why we tend to get fixated on all the wrong questions when it comes to religion.

Just like these religious scholars were, all so that we can avoid asking the one question that really matters. Am I doing what God really wants? But there's another option besides avoiding that question, and that is to look to the only one who did do what God really wants, Jesus.

He loved His Father fully and completely with all His heart, soul, mind, and strength, and who loved His neighbor genuinely, truly, compassionately, and so much so that on Friday, just a few days later, He goes on to die for His neighbor, for you and me, in order to take on Himself all of our failures, our failures to love God as we should, our failures to love our neighbors.

And then He goes on to rise from the dead on Sunday to give us a piece of that new life so that in trusting and following Him, we can begin to be the people God made us to be.

God made us to be. Thank you.