

A New Way to Love (1/30/22)

Main Verses: Matthew 17:24-27

Key Verse: Matthew 17:26

'Takeaway': When you become a child of God through Jesus, you are set free to love God and love others in a new way.

Getting Started: When you visit family, do you have to pay them to join?



READ the main verses (or have older kids help read).

Some **QUESTIONS** to consider:

Toddler/PreK:

- What is a tax?
- What does it mean to be free?
- Where did Peter find the money to pay the tax?

Elementary:

- Who pays taxes?
- Why don't the disciples need to pay the temple tax anymore?
- Jesus tells Peter where to find the money to pay the tax. Why does he have Peter pay it even though he is not obliged to do so anymore as a son of the King?

Here are some **IMPORTANT IDEAS** we discover in these verses:

Toddler/PreK:

- Every year, people paid an annual tax to support the temple. The temple was the place people went to worship God. God "owned" the temple.
- Children of the true King do not need to pay to support the temple and be allowed to offer sacrifices in it. Jesus was the ultimate and final sacrifice. In His death and resurrection, Jesus has made it possible for us to be children of God. Jesus changes everything.
- Jesus provided the money (through a fish!) to pay the temple tax because he did not want to offend the Jews.
- We should do our best to not "give unnecessary offense" to others as we walk in the freedom Christ brings.

Elementary:

- Every year, each person over the age of 20 was required to pay a half-shekel offering to support the temple. Failure to pay meant they would not be able to enter the temple and offer sacrifices as outlined in the Old Testament.
- The temple was believed to be the dwelling place of God, thus God "owned" the temple.
- Jesus asks the question, "From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?" Jesus is telling Simon (Peter) that as a son of the King, he is not obliged to pay the tax to worship God, nor is he obliged to participate in the rituals of the temple anymore.
- The heart of Jesus is also to give no unnecessary offense to others in the living out of our freedoms in Jesus.
- Jesus, through his life, death and resurrection, radically changed how we are able to love God and others. Through faith in him, Jesus frees us to worship God without the rituals and sacrifices in the OT. We now live under the law of Christ, not the OT law.

An **ENCOURAGEMENT** in light of God's word:

(Toddler/PreK) Talk to God, thanking him that through faith in Jesus, we are able to worship Him freely. Ask Him to help you remember him this week, that you might love and honor him in all you think, do and say.

(Elementary) Talk to God, thanking him that he made a way for us to worship him freely without the taxes and rituals in the OT. Thank God for sending Jesus to die for our sins and rise again so that we can have new life through faith in Jesus. Ask God to help you to live for him this week, walking in the freedom that being his child and living under His law affords us.