SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

†
20:17

DEEP DIVE

Luke

Chapter Twenty, Verses 1–47

The Stone the Builders Rejected — four questions in the temple — authority, a vineyard, a coin, a resurrection — and the question only Jesus could ask

NASB 1995 | VERSE BY VERSE | FOUR VOICES | WITH DIAGRAMS

In the last week, in the temple, the chief priests demand His credentials, spies bring a coin, and Sadducees bring a riddle about seven brothers; Jesus answers every one, tells the parable of the beloved son, and then asks the question that unlocks them all: how can David's son be David's Lord? Read through four teachers — **David Guzik**, **R.C. Sproul**, **C.H. Spurgeon** and **Matthew Henry** — with the Greek behind Luke's key words.

THE PASSAGE

Luke 20:1–47

authority · vineyard · Caesar · resurrection · Lord

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

Color-coded by teacher

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Five movements of question and answer in the temple courts

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"Now He is not the God of the dead but of the living; for all live to Him." — Luke 20:38

SECTION I · THE PASSAGE

Luke 20:1–47

The Stone the Builders Rejected — In the temple courts the leaders try to trap Jesus, and every trap closes on the men who set it

† How to Read This Study

This study walks Luke 20 in 5 movements, in Luke's own order. Each movement opens with the full NASB 1995 text of those verses, marked with the Berean colors and shapes; then the Greek behind the key words; then the teachers, each in his own color — **David Guzik**, the pastor who walks the text verse by verse; **R.C. Sproul**, the theologian who presses every word for its doctrine; **C.H. Spurgeon**, the preacher who turns the doctrine into a call to the heart; and **Matthew Henry**, the Puritan commentator who gathers it into plain, practical counsel. The figures draw the passage so you can see where Luke is going. Read the Scripture first; then let each voice add its angle.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word — R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's
C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle — MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions; Command / instruction; Key repeated word; Sin / warning; Promise / blessing; Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · LUKE 20:17

"But Jesus looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: '△ THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, △ THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone'?""

† Before the Passage

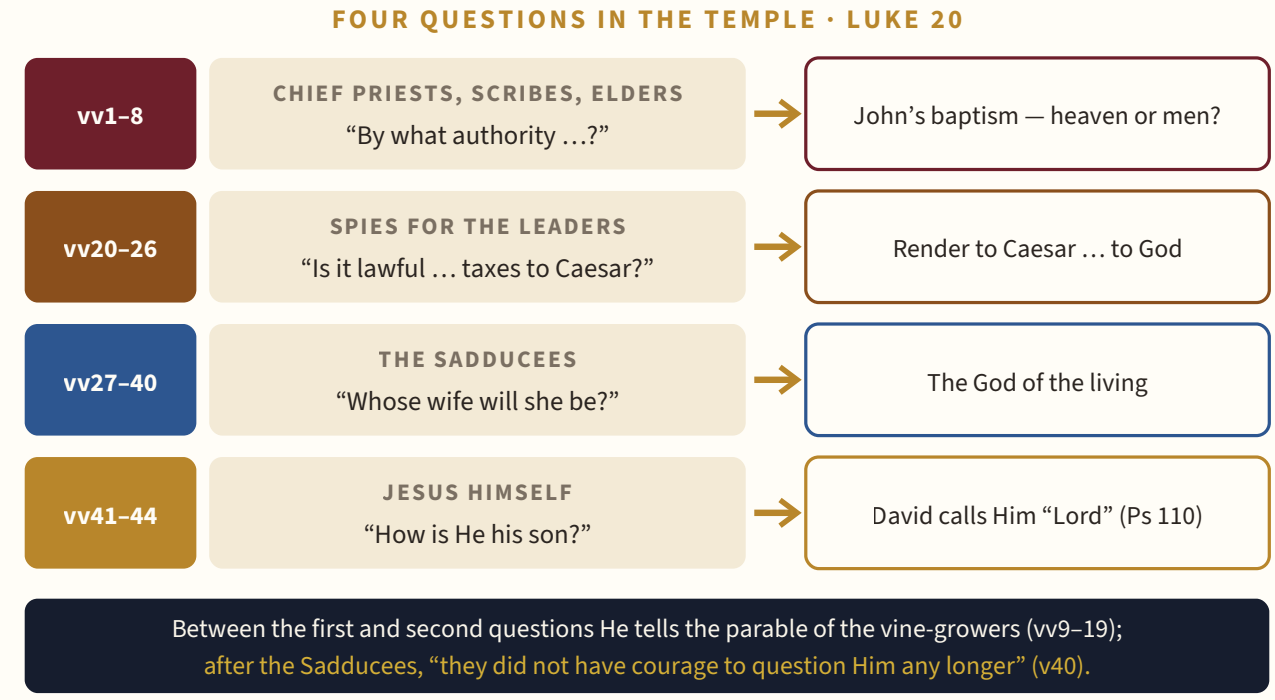
Luke 19 ended with Jesus in the temple after driving out the sellers: "He was teaching daily in the temple; but the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him," and they could find no way, "for all the people were hanging on to every word He said" (19:47–48). Chapter 20 shows what they tried. One group after another comes with a question meant to discredit Him or get Him arrested. By the end, "they did not have courage to question Him any longer about anything" (v. 40).

The questioners are the whole Jewish leadership. "The chief priests and the scribes with the elders" (v. 1) are the three groups that made up the Sanhedrin, the council that would condemn Him (22:66). The spies of verse 20 want to hand Him over to "the governor," Pilate. The Sadducees (v. 27) were the priestly party; Sproul: "The Sadducees traced their tradition to Zadok, the priest during the time of David," and "they denied the resurrection of the dead." The scribes were the experts in the Law, mostly Pharisees.

The tax question was a live wire. Judea had paid a direct tax to Rome since AD 6, when it came under a Roman governor, and a Galilean named Judas led a revolt over it (Acts 5:37). The coin was a denarius, "the value of basically one day's labor" (Sproul), stamped with Tiberius Caesar's head and titles. Sproul: "Tiberius Caesar, like his predecessor, considered himself a god." To say "Pay" would anger the people; to say "Don't pay" would be treason against Rome.

Jesus answers out of the Old Testament every time. The vineyard is Isaiah's song of the vineyard (Isaiah 5:1–7); the rejected stone is Psalm 118:22, from the same psalm the crowd sang on the road (19:38); the resurrection argument comes from the burning bush (Exodus 3:6); and His own question comes from Psalm 110:1, the Old Testament verse the New Testament quotes most often. In the next chapter, still in the temple, He will speak of the temple's destruction and His coming in glory (Luke 21).

FIGURE · QUESTIONS IN THE TEMPLE



Read each row from left to right: who asks, what they ask, and how Jesus answers — until the last question is His own and no one can answer.

I
MOVEMENT

LUKE 20:1–8

By What Authority?

The Sanhedrin demands His credentials, and Jesus asks about John

> [1] *On one of the days while He was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders confronted Him,* [2] *and they spoke, saying to Him, "Tell us by what authority You are doing these things, or who is the one who gave You this authority?"* [3] *Jesus answered and said to them, "I will also ask you a question, and you tell Me:* [4] *"Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?"* [5] *They*

reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' [6] *"But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us to death, for they are convinced that John was a prophet."* [7] *So they answered that they did not know where it came from.* [8] *And Jesus said to them, "Nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things."*

LUKE 20:1–8

ἐξουσία

EXOUSIA · "AUTHORITY" · G1849

The right and power to act — not raw strength (*dynamis*) but lawful authority. Four times in this chapter (vv. 2 twice, 8, 20). Luke has shown it from the start: the people were amazed "because His message was with authority" (4:32), and He proved His "authority on earth to forgive sins" (5:24). The leaders' question is really, "Who licensed You?" The irony of verse 20 is that they finally hand Him over to "the authority of the governor," the very thing they will not grant Him.

συνελογίσαντο

SYNELOGISANTO · "THEY REASONED" · G4817

From *syllogizomai*, to reckon together, to calculate — the root of our word "syllogism." Its only New Testament use is verse 5. The leaders do not ask, "What is true?" but, "What will it cost us?" Both answers they weigh are about themselves: He will expose us; the people will stone us. Guzik: "They cared more about winning the argument against Jesus than in knowing the truth."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that "Jesus didn't look for these great debates with the religious leaders"; they came to Him. His counter-question was no dodge. The leaders' refusal to answer about John "showed they were not sincere seekers of truth," and he quotes Geldenhuys: "If you do not recognize authority when you see it, He said in effect, no amount of arguing will convince you of it." "They cared more about winning the argument against Jesus than in knowing the truth," and "These men knew that John said Jesus was the Messiah, and were not willing to accept it." "Jesus had great care and compassion for the sincere seeker, but not for cynical critics and manipulators."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "Jesus' Authority & the Parable of the Tenants" (29 Nov 2015) imagines the answers the rulers wanted to give — "Those were not the answers Jesus gave." "He knew what the rulers would say," and "Instead of answering their question, He turned the tables on them." Caught between the truth and the crowd, "The rulers saw that the better part of valor was diplomacy." They claimed not to know where John's baptism came from — "But of course they knew."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry notes that Jesus was in the temple preaching: "Christ was a preacher of his own gospel," and "nothing weakens the interest of Satan's kingdom more." His question "gravelled them, and ran them aground, and served to shame them before the people" — "a plain question, which the meanest of the common people could answer." Their silence was chosen: "those that are governed by reputation and secular interest imprison the plainest truths," and so "Those that bury the knowledge they have are justly denied further knowledge."

II
MOVEMENT

LUKE 20:9–19

The Beloved Son and the Rejected Stone

A vineyard, beaten slaves, a murdered heir, and the cornerstone that crushes

9 *And He began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a* ↻ *vineyard and rented it out to vine-growers, and went on a journey for a long time.* 10 *"At the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, so that they would give him some of the produce of the* ↻ *vineyard; but the vine-growers* ⚠ *beat him and sent him away empty-handed.* 11 *"And he proceeded to send another slave; and they beat him also and treated him shamefully and sent him away empty-handed.* 12 *"And he proceeded to send a third; and this one also they wounded and cast out.* 13 *"The owner of the* ↻ *vineyard said, 'What shall I do?* △ *I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.'* 14 *"But when the vine-growers saw him, they reasoned with one another, saying, 'This is the heir;* ⚠ *let us kill him so that the inheritance will be ours.'* 15 *"So they threw him out of the* ↻ *vineyard and killed him. What, then, will the owner of the* ↻ *vineyard do to them?* 16 *"He will come and destroy these vine-growers and* ◷ *will give the vineyard to others." When they heard it, they said, "May it never be!"* 17 *But Jesus looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written: '*△ *THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED,* △ *THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone'? 18 "*⚠ *Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."* 19 *The scribes and the chief priests tried to lay hands on Him that very hour, and they feared the people; for they understood that He spoke this parable against them.*

LUKE 20:9–19

"For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel And the men of Judah His delightful plant. Thus He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; For righteousness, but behold, a cry of distress."

ISAIAH 5:7

"The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone."

PSALM 118:22

FIGURE · THE PARABLE'S PARTS

THE PARABLE'S PARTS · LUKE 20:9–18 · ISAIAH 5:1–7

the owner	vv9, 13, 15	God, the LORD of the vineyard
the vineyard	v9	Israel — "the house of Israel" (Isa 5:7)
the vine-growers	vv9–16	Israel's leaders (v19: "against them")
the slaves, beaten	vv10–12	the prophets sent again and again
"my beloved son"	vv13–15	Jesus — thrown out and killed
"others"	v16	new stewards: Jesus' apostles and church
the stone	vv17–18	the rejected Son made cornerstone

"they understood that He spoke this parable against them" (v19)

Match each piece of the story on the left to what it stands for on the right; the gold bar is the beloved son, the turning point of the parable.

ἀγαπητός

AGAPĒTOS · "BELOVED" · G27

Dearly loved, the only and treasured one. Luke uses it only twice: at the baptism ("You are My beloved Son," 3:22) and here (v. 13). The owner's "What shall I do? I will send my beloved son" echoes the Father's voice from heaven. Guzik: "This parable tells us that Jesus knew He was the Son – the Son of God – and that He knew that He would be killed soon."

λικμήσει

LIKMĒSEI · "WILL SCATTER LIKE DUST" · G3039

From *likmaō*, to winnow — to toss threshed grain into the wind so the chaff blows away — and so to crush to powder and scatter. Only here and in the parallel, Matthew 21:44. It recalls the stone of Daniel 2 that struck the statue so that it became "like chaff from the summer threshing floors" (Daniel 2:35). Falling on the stone breaks a man; the stone falling on him grinds him to dust. Sproul: "If you trip over Jesus, He will crush you."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that the tenants owed everything to the owner: "The vinedressers didn't buy the vineyard, and they did not make it. They were allowed to work it by a generous owner." The parable reveals Jesus' self-knowledge: "Jesus knew He was the Son – the Son of God – and that He knew that He would be killed soon." The leaders got it at once, but "In their blindness they thought, "This could never be us."" The stone gives two options: "Anyone who comes to Jesus will be broken of their pride and self-will" — or be crushed by it in judgment.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul starts in Isaiah: "At the beginning of Isaiah 5, God likened His people Israel to a vineyard." He pictures the owner as the slaves come back — "The owner saw his first servant limping back empty-handed" — and insists, "There was not a Jew in Israel who did not get the point of this parable." At last the Father "sends His beloved Son, and they murder Him in order to take for themselves the vineyard." The church is built on the prophets and apostles, "but the chief cornerstone would be Christ." "That stone became a stumbling block to the Pharisees and to many people today," and "If you trip over Jesus, He will crush you."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon read verses 9–16 to his people and commented as he went (his exposition with the sermon "Clinging to a Counterfeit Cross"). He hears the long absence first: "It is a long time since Jesus left us, and he has not yet returned." He traces the tenants' slide — "They grow bolder, and more wicked, you see; first beating, and then adding shameful treatment to their former cruelty" — and marvels at the owner's "What shall I do?" and at the Son who "was all love and pity." His application is for the church, not just for Israel's leaders: "Lest we should have the heritage taken from us, let us yield up the fruit to him who has the best right to it all."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry reads the history plainly: "the Jewish nation, by persecuting the prophets, and at length Christ himself, had provoked God." "They that are resolved not to do their duty to God cannot bear to be called upon to do it," and so "Some of the best men in the world have had the hardest usage from it." The leaders knew whom He meant — "A guilty conscience needs no accuser" — and Henry draws the warning: "The condemnation of spiteful persecutors will be much sorer than that of careless unbelievers."

III
MOVEMENT

LUKE 20:20–26

Render to Caesar, Render to God

Spies, flattery, a denarius, and the image on the coin

20 So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they might catch Him in some statement, so that they could deliver Him to the rule and the authority of the governor. 21 They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You speak and teach correctly, and You are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth. 22 "Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" 23 But He detected their trickery and said to them, 24 "Show Me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's." 25 And He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." 26 And they were unable to catch Him in a saying in the presence of the people; and being amazed at His answer, they became silent.

LUKE 20:20–26

FIGURE · WHOSE LIKENESS?

WHOSE LIKENESS? · LUKE 20:24–25



a denarius — "Caesar's" (v24)
about a day's wage · Tiberius

TO CAESAR
what bears his image: taxes, honor, obedience under God (Rom 13:7)

TO GOD
what bears His image: you — "in the image of God" (Gen 1:27); worship belongs to Him alone

"He's due taxes, but not worship." — Sproul

The coin bears Caesar's image, so give it back to him; you bear God's image, so give yourself to God.

πανουργία

PANOURGIA · "TRICKERY" · G3834

Literally "all-working" — readiness to do anything, and so cunning, craftiness. Five New Testament uses, four in Paul: Satan deceived Eve "by his craftiness" (2 Corinthians 11:3), and believers must not be carried about "by craftiness in deceitful scheming" (Ephesians 4:14). The spies came "pretending to be righteous" (*hypokrinomai*, G5271, v. 20), the verb behind "hypocrite." Sproul: "they pretended to be sincere, the very definition of hypocrisy."

εἰκών

EIKŌN · "LIKENESS, IMAGE" · G1504

An image or likeness — the stamped head on the coin (v. 24). It is the word of Genesis 1:26–27 in the Greek Old Testament: man made "in the image of God." Paul calls Christ "the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15). The command in verse 25 is *apodote* (from *apodidōmi*, G591), "give back" — return what belongs to its owner. Give the coin back to the one whose face is on it; give yourself back to the One whose image you bear.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that "Public opinion had kept them from stopping Jesus," so they tried a trap. The flattery was "an obvious and clumsy attempt to influence Jesus" — Trapp: "Here is a fair glove, drawn upon a foul hand." In His answer, "Jesus affirmed that the government makes legitimate requests of us," and Morris adds, "Jesus is saying that we are citizens of heaven and earth at the same time." But the coin points beyond itself: "Everyone has the image of God impressed upon them."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

In "Render Unto Caesar" (20 Dec 2015) Sproul describes the spies "dripping praise like syrup from their lips" — "they pretended to be sincere, the very definition of hypocrisy." The denarius was "a coin the value of basically one day's labor," and "Tiberius Caesar, like his predecessor, considered himself a god." So the answer has two edges. "Give Caesar his due. He's due taxes, but not worship." "We worship God and God alone," and if a government grants a right God forbids, "The government might give you the right to do that, but God does not."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry sees the scheme: they meant "to make the secular powers the tools of their malice." But Christ "can see through the most politic disguises, and so break through the most dangerous snare." His answer sets limits on both sides: "You are not bound to be of Cæsar's religion," for "in sacred things God only is your King." The flatterers are silenced, and "Christ is honoured; even the wrath of man is made to praise him."

IV
MOVEMENT

LUKE 20:27–40

The God of the Living

Sadducees, seven brothers, one widow, and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

27 *Now there came to Him some of the Sadducees (⚠ who say that there is no resurrection),* 28 *and they questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that* IF A MAN'S BROTHER DIES, *having a wife,* AND HE IS CHILDLESS, HIS BROTHER SHOULD MARRY THE WIFE AND RAISE UP CHILDREN TO HIS BROTHER. 29 *"Now there were seven brothers; and the first took a wife and died childless;* 30 *and the second* 31 *and the third married her; and in the same way all seven died, leaving no children.* 32 *"Finally the woman died also.* 33 *"In the ⟲ resurrection therefore, which one's wife will she be? For all seven had married her."* 34 *Jesus said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage,* 35 *but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the ⟲ resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage;* 36 *for ✩ they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being ✩ sons of the resurrection.* 37 *"But that ✩ the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the burning bush, where he calls the Lord* THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB. 38 *"Now △ He is not the God of the dead but of the living; for ✩ all live to Him."* 39 *Some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well."* 40 *For they did not have courage to question Him any longer about anything.*

LUKE 20:27–40

"When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her."

DEUTERONOMY 25:5

> *"He said also, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God."*
>
> EXODUS 3:6

ἀνάστασις

ANASTASIS · "RESURRECTION" · G386

From *ana* (up) and *histēmi* (to stand): a standing up again. Four times in this chapter (vv. 27, 33, 35, 36 — "sons of the resurrection"); verse 37's "the dead are raised" uses the verb *egeirō*. Simeon said the child Jesus was set "for the fall and rise (*anastasis*) of many in Israel" (2:34). The Sadducees deny it; Jesus will soon demonstrate it, and Acts makes it the heart of the apostles' preaching (Acts 4:2).

ἰσάγγελοι

ISANGELOI · "LIKE ANGELS" · G2465

From *isos* (equal) and *angelos*: "equal to angels." It occurs only here in the New Testament (v. 36). Jesus does not say believers become angels; they are like them in this — they "cannot even die anymore," so marriage to raise up children has done its work. Sproul: "Here Jesus says that we will be like the angels." The jab at the Sadducees is double: they denied angels too (Acts 23:8).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik calls the Sadducees "the ancient version of the modern liberal theologians": "They did not believe in immortality, spirits or angels." Their riddle was meant to make the resurrection look ridiculous. Jesus answers from Moses, whom they accepted, and the present tense of the burning bush proves life beyond death: "This emphatically tells us that those departed from this life in the Lord live." "They are not lost – we know where they are, and they also know." He cites Spurgeon: "A living God is the God of living men; and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still alive." "Jesus answered well, and both His friends and enemies recognized it."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "The Resurrection & David's Son" (3 Jan 2016) explains the questioners: "The Sadducees traced their tradition to Zadok," "they held up the Torah at a higher level than the rest of the Scriptures," and "they denied the resurrection of the dead." On marriage he is careful: "At first glance, that would suggest that we are not in a state of marriage in heaven," yet "Whatever state we will be in will be better than anything we can imagine now." "Here Jesus says that we will be like the angels," and "All the population of heaven will be there by God's grace for eternity."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's "Departed Saints Yet Living" (No. 1863, 4 Oct 1885) on verses 37–38 begins, "We are not troubled with Sadducean doubts." At the bush, "He who then spoke to Moses was the God of life," and the bush itself was "life in the midst of death, continuance in the midst of destruction." So "A living God is the God of living men; and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still alive." Nor do they become someone else: "Abraham has about him still everything that is Abrahamic; he is Abraham still." That is comfort for mourners — "We are by no means deprived of our dear ones by their death." "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry calls the resurrection a foundation: “Take away this, and all religion falls to the ground.” The Sadducees’ method is old: “It is common for those that design to undermine any truth of God to perplex it, and load it with difficulties.” Marriage belongs to this life — “Marriage is instituted for the comfort of human life, here in this state where we carry bodies about with us” — and “God owns those only for his children that are the children of the resurrection.” “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

V
MOVEMENT

LUKE 20:41–47

David’s Son and David’s Lord

Psalm 110, the Messiah’s true identity, and a warning about religious show

41 *Then He said to them, “How is it that they say the Christ is David’s son?* 42 *“For David himself says in the book of Psalms, ‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, “△ SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,* 43 *UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.”’* 44 *“Therefore △ David calls Him ‘Lord,’ and how is He his son?”* 45 *And while all the people were listening, He said to the disciples,* 46 *“Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love respectful greetings in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets,* 47 *who ⚠ devour widows’ houses, and ⚠ for appearance’s sake offer long prayers. ⚠ These will receive greater condemnation.”*

LUKE 20:41–47

“The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.””

PSALM 110:1

κύριος

KYRIOS · “LORD” · G2962

Master, owner, lord — and in the Greek Old Testament the word that stands for the divine name, the LORD. Psalm 110:1 in Hebrew reads “Yahweh says to my Adonai.” Sproul: “Throughout the Old Testament, that supreme title Adonai, or Sovereign One, is reserved for God.” A father does not call his son “lord”; if David does, the Messiah is more than David’s descendant. Luke has already given the answer: “a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (2:11), born in the city of David.

κατεσθίουσιν

KATESTHIOUSIN · “DEVOUR” · G2719

From *kata* and *esthiō*: to eat down, to eat up. The birds “ate up” the seed by the road (8:5); the prodigal “devoured” his father’s wealth (15:30). Here the scribes devour widows’ houses — Henry: they “get their estates into their hands, and then by some trick or other make them their own.” Their “long robes” (*stolē*, G4749) are the same word as the “best robe” the father put on the prodigal (15:22). The next verses (21:1–4) show a widow giving all she had.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the difference between the questions: theirs were traps, but "Jesus didn't do the same with His questions to them. Instead, He got to the heart of the matter: "do you really know who I am?"" "Jesus tested their notion that they already knew all about the Messiah." Then He warned about the scribes: "The scribes were men of leisure, who watched while others worked," and "God is concerned about our religious reality, not the image." With a smile Guzik adds that "Morgan said that some people must be a long way from God because their prayers are so long!"

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul points to the answer in the psalm: "Jesus supplied the answer for us Himself, citing Psalm 110," and "There is no Old Testament text referenced as often as Psalm 110 in the New Testament." The key is the title: "Throughout the Old Testament, that supreme title Adonai, or Sovereign One, is reserved for God." David's son is David's Lord because He is God the Son, who will sit at the Father's right hand.

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry notes the scribes' grudging praise: "Christ had the testimony of his adversaries that he said well." Then Jesus asked them a question they "could not reconcile this seeming contradiction" — "thanks be to God, we can." For the scribes, "Christ reads them their doom in a few words": they "make their religion a cloak and cover for crime," and "dissembled piety is double iniquity."

VI
THEME

CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

From Isaiah's vineyard to the stone that fills the earth

> *"You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."*
>
> DANIEL 2:34–35

> *"This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed."*
>
> 1 PETER 2:7–8

> *"Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."*
>
> ROMANS 13:7

> *"He is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."*
>
> ACTS 4:11–12

> *"But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep."*
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 15:20

> *"For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET."' Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified."*
>
> ACTS 2:34–36

> *"I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."*
>
> ROMANS 11:1

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul ties the cornerstone to the church's foundation: "The foundation would be the prophets and the Apostles, but the chief cornerstone would be Christ."

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

Four voices, one chapter

Four teachers, one chapter of debate. Guzik reads each trap and its answer with help from the commentators; Sproul lays out the history — the Sanhedrin, the denarius, the Sadducees, Psalm 110; Spurgeon preaches the living God; Henry draws the moral from every exchange. They agree that the Son the builders rejected is the cornerstone and Lord of all; they differ in emphasis on the vineyard's "others," which this study reads as new stewards, not the end of Israel (Rom 11:1).

THE MOVEMENT	GUZIK · the text	SPROUL · the doctrine	SPURGEON · the heart	HENRY · the counsel
I · Authority	Not sincere seekers; more about winning than truth.	He turned the tables; diplomacy over valor — but they knew.	— (no Spurgeon sermon on these verses sourced here)	Bury the knowledge you have and you are denied more.
II · The vine-growers	They didn't buy it or make it; "This could never be us."	Isaiah 5's vineyard; trip over Jesus and He will crush you.	Bolder and more wicked; yield the fruit to Him who has the right.	A guilty conscience needs no accuser.
III · Caesar's coin	Citizens of heaven and earth; God's image on everyone.	Due taxes, but not worship; God alone is worshiped.	— (no Spurgeon sermon on these verses sourced here)	Not bound to Caesar's religion; in sacred things God is King.
IV · The resurrection	The departed in the Lord live; we know where they are.	Sadducees and the Torah; better than we can imagine.	A living God of living men; Abraham is Abraham still.	Take away the resurrection and religion falls.
V · David's Lord	Do you really know who I am? Reality, not image.	Psalm 110 most quoted; Adonai is reserved for God.	— (no Spurgeon sermon on these verses sourced here)	Dissembled piety is double iniquity.

LUKE 20:1–47 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **Honest questions get answers; traps get questions.** Guzik: "Jesus had great care and compassion for the sincere seeker, but not for cynical critics and manipulators." The leaders weighed costs, not truth (v5). GUZIK
- **They reckoned instead of repenting.** *Syllogizomai* (v5) — they calculated. Henry: "Those that bury the knowledge they have are justly denied further knowledge." THE GREEK
- **The vineyard was never theirs.** Guzik: "The vinedressers didn't buy the vineyard, and they did not make it." Leaders are stewards, and the Owner sends for the fruit. GUZIK
- **The Son knew He would be killed.** "I will send my beloved son" (v13) echoes the Father at the baptism (3:22). Jesus tells His own murder as a parable to the men planning it (v19). THE TEXT
- **One stone, two outcomes.** Fall on it and be broken; let it fall on you and be winnowed to dust (v18; *likmaō*). Sproul: "If you trip over Jesus, He will crush you." SPROUL
- **"Others" is not "never again."** The vineyard goes to others (v16) — new stewards under Christ. Paul still asks, "God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be!" (Rom 11:1). THE TEXT
- **Give back to God what bears His image.** Caesar's face on the coin, God's image on the man (Gen 1:27). Sproul: "He's due taxes, but not worship." SPROUL

- **Present tense, living saints.** "I am the God of Abraham" (Exod 3:6) — not "was." Guzik: those who die in the Lord "live." GUZIK
- **Like angels, not angels.** *Isangelos* (v36) occurs only here: deathless, so marriage has finished its work. Sproul: heaven will be "better than anything we can imagine now." THE GREEK
- **David's son is David's Lord.** Psalm 110:1, the Old Testament verse most quoted in the New (Sproul). Only the God-man fits both titles. Henry: "thanks be to God, we can" reconcile it. HENRY

† Questions for the Table

1 **The leaders asked what answer would cost them least, not what was true. Where am I tempted to calculate rather than simply obey what I already know?**

Those that bury the knowledge they have are justly denied further knowledge (Henry).

20:3–8

2 **The vineyard belonged to the owner; the tenants only worked it. What part of my life am I treating as mine that really belongs to God?**

They didn't buy the vineyard, and they did not make it (Guzik).

20:9–16; Ps 24:1

3 **Jesus is a stone you either fall on and are broken, or one that falls on you. What does it look like for me to be broken on Him rather than crushed by Him?**

Anyone who comes to Jesus will be broken of their pride and self-will (Guzik).

20:17–18; 1 Pet 2:7–8

4 **I bear God's image the way the coin bore Caesar's. What would it mean this week to "render to God" what is His — my time, body, money, worship?**

He's due taxes, but not worship (Sproul).

20:24–25; Gen 1:27

5 **God is the God of the living, and those who die in the Lord live. How does the resurrection change how I grieve, and how I face my own death?**

They are not lost — we know where they are (Guzik).

20:37–38; 1 Cor 15:20

6 **Jesus warned about men who wanted to look holy and used religion to take advantage of the weak. Where do I care more about my image than my reality?**

God is concerned about our religious reality, not the image (Guzik).

20:46–47

Luke 20 is a chapter of traps, and every one closes on the men who set it. The Son the builders rejected is the cornerstone; the coin goes to Caesar and the man goes to God; the God of Abraham is the God of the living; and David's son is David's Lord. Fall on the stone and be broken, give Him what bears His image, and beware the religion that looks long and prays long but loves little.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

† Sources

Each teacher's section summarizes the pages below in our own words; short quotations are verbatim from them. Matthew Henry (1662–1714) completed his *Commentary* himself through the Gospels and Acts. Henry's Commentary and C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) are in the public domain; Guzik and Sproul are summarized — consult each author's own work.

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