

Beware of Offenses

Sermon 52 in the Matthew Series

Matthew 17:24-18:14

I. Does your Teacher Pay Taxes? Matthew 17:24-27

A. The Knowledge of the Lord

B. We don't know why the Question Arose.

Most likely they were trying to find fault with Jesus – and accuse him of breaking the law according to Exodus refusing to pay this tax that is called “a ransom” in Exodus 30:12ff.

C. He was “Made under the Law” in his State of Humiliation (Gal. 4:4)

Why did he pay it? So as not to offend.

JC Ryle comments: “Lest we should offend them”

“Let us remember this passage as church members. We may not like every jot and tittle of the forms and ceremonies used in our *worship*. We may not think that those who rule us in spiritual matters are always wise. But, after all, are the points of which we are dissatisfied really of vital importance? Is any great truth of the gospel at stake? If not, let us be quiet, ‘lest we should offend them.’”

D. The Miracle

II. The Call to Humility Matt. 18:1-4

A. The Background of the Account

Luke 9:46 – “Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest.”

B. The Object Lesson

He takes a small child – *paidiov* (It probably wasn't a baby as there is usually a different word used for an infant in arms – but it could also be a 5 or 6 year old, boy or girl, the word is not gender specific.

C. The Lessons of the Account

1. We need to humble ourselves and come to God as children.

Children are usually represented in a positive light in Scripture.

Children are sinners too.

Adults are more adept at sinning (practice makes perfect)

Prov. 29:15 -- The rod and rebuke give wisdom,
But a child left *to himself* brings shame to his mother.

Prov. 22:15 -- Foolishness *is* bound up in the heart of a child;
The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

2. Instead of looking for greatness – we are to be servants.

a. **Mark 9:33-37**

b. **Mark 10:35-41**

c. **Mark 10:42-45**

Matt. 19:13-15 – “Receive these little ones (*paidia*) – and you receive me.”

D. Would you rather Serve or be Served?

Chapter 18 has been called “the discourse on the church”.

Matthew is the only gospel writer to use the word “church” – although we see it as one of the more common words from the book of Acts onward.

III. Woe, because of Offenses Matt. 18:5-14

A. Offenses are Inevitable v. 7

B. Offenses are Serious v. 8-9

C. Do not Offend the “Little Ones” v. 10-11

D. Seeking the Lost Sheep v. 12-14