

Sermon Outline November 16, 2014
"Another Snare Thwarted" Luke 20:20-26

¹¹⁰ **The wicked have laid a snare for Me, yet I have not strayed from Your precepts. (Psalm 119:110 NKJ)**

Capitalize "Me" in Psalm 119:110 and the verse becomes a clear and true prophecy about Christ.

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again!" Thomas H. Palmer

'Tis a lesson you should heed: Try, try, try again.
If at first you don't succeed, Try, try, try again.
William Edward Hickson

"The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity." William Butler Yeats

Satan may tempt men to laziness, but he is not lazy himself. He is constantly active, diligently on the prowl –

⁸ **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (1Peter 5:8 NKJ)**

Immediately, after Jesus was baptized and His Father said -

¹⁶ **When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.**

¹⁷ **And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**

The devil was ready to challenge Him on that -

^{NKJ} **Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." (Matthew 3:16-4:3 NKJ)**

He started against Jesus in the beginning of His ministry, tempting and challenging Him, here in Luke 20, we see the continuation of such Satanic snares by his (Satan's) followers –

I. A plot the devil was probably proud of –

1. No proud prancing pomp but:

A. Watching, seeking an opportunity, looking for what they would consider a weakness - ²⁰ So they watched Him (Luke 20:20 NKJ)

• Consider the goal of such watching –

that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor. (Luke 20:20 NKJ)

B. Pretending - and sent spies who pretended to be righteous (Luke 20:20 NKJ)

• They seem to come humbly

• I imagine these are not dressed like the chief priests or other religious leaders were, these were in disguise -

¹³ **For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. (2Corinthians 11:13-14 NKJ)**

C. Flattery –

²¹ **Then they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but teach the way of God in truth: (Luke 20:21 NKJ)**

Scripture places a WARNING SIGN on such talk -

⁵ **A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet. (Proverbs 29:5 NKJ)**

D. A well thought out question –

²² **"Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" (Luke 20:22 NKJ)**

²³ **But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me? (Luke 20:23 NKJ)**

2. What was so 'crafty' about this question?

A. It seems to place before Jesus an impossible dilemma –

Dilemma - A dilemma is a problem offering two possibilities, neither of which is practically acceptable. One in this position has been traditionally described as "being on the horns of a dilemma", neither horn being comfortable.

Dilemma – A situation that requires two choices which are equally unfavorable.

B. *Jesus' enemies may have thought they were about to get revenge for the dilemma He placed them in when He required they answer the question about John's Baptism. Was it from Heaven or from men? Luke 20:4-7*

II. *Handling what seemed to be a perplexing problem question, like silly putty –*

²⁴ "Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?" They answered and said, "Caesar's." ²⁵ And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." ²⁶ But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent. (Luke 20:24-26 NKJ)

What is it that makes this answer so marvelous?

1. *It easily foiled their seemingly foolproof plot –*

Oh how they thought they had Jesus trapped!

A. *If He says it is lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, we show Him (they think) to be less zealous than the zealous Jews, many of His followers, who would be disappointed in such an answer.*

B. *If He says no it is not lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, we report Him to the Herodians; to the representatives of the Roman Government who would deal with Him quickly.*

"If Jesus answered "No, it is not right to pay taxes to Caesar," he would be impaled on the horn of *arrest*. The Herodians would sprint to Pilate, and he would be arrested as an insurrectionist and summarily executed. Rome tolerated diversity in religion but used cold steel to deal with political problems. But if Jesus answered, "Yes, it is right to pay taxes to Caesar," he would be impaled on the horn of *alienation* from his people. The Pharisees would gleefully spread the message that he was a collaborationist, and the people would abandon him in disgust." R. Kent Hughes

2. *Yet, there is SO MUCH more to Jesus' brilliant answer than mere foiling of a plot, HERE is TEACHING: Theological / Anthropological –*

We are created in God's image as much as a coin may be made in Caesar's image, which implies:

A. *Our lives belong to God, we are therefore to live wholeheartedly for Him and His glory –*

⁴ "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5 NKJ)

¹¹ "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created." (Revelation 4:11 NKJ)

B. *Here human beings are presented as having great value and dignity, the very opposite of being mere pawns of a political emperor –*

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:26-28 NKJ)

C. *Money, pictured in the small coin that may be held even in a child's hand, TAXES from a worldly government are presented by Jesus in a way that emphasizes its SMALL LEVEL of importance. Give your LIFE to God, your spare change to Caesar!*

D. *See Satan as not giving up his pursuit, even now -*

There was a snare before this; and after it one more.

The wicked pursued Jesus, till Judas knocked their door...

Oh how the devil seeks his PREY? Could he trap Jesus? There's NO WAY!

Yet, the devil's dread desire, like a dragon, breathing fire,

Keeps on seeking to devour, till this day, this very hour -

¹³ Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *Child*. (Revelation 12:13 NKJ)

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