

Wednesday

Read: **Matthew 22:18-19a** *Another test for Jesus*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Why are the Pharisees and Herodians joining up to trick Jesus?*
2. *It's almost April! What role does your faith play in paying your taxes?*

Prayer Focus Redeemer, we often put aside giving and serving in your name. We put you last even though you gave everything for love of us. Forgive us, and help us recall and share your love each day.

Thursday

Read: **Matthew 22:19b-21a** *Whose coin?*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *The Jews in Jesus' time were paying taxes in tribute to a force occupying their homeland. Did paying a tax to Rome mean they approved of that?*
2. *What is your relationship between your money/ possessions and God? Reflect and pray.*

Prayer Focus Brightest and Best, you remind us that we're made in God's image, not in the image of some monarch or leader. Help us as we seek to live lives that reflect your image and your ways.

Friday

Read: **Matthew 22:21b** *What belongs to God?*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Go back and reflect on Matthew 4:10. Have you ever felt trapped by conflicting priorities?*
2. *Is there something you'd like to give God this week?*

Prayer Focus Christ Jesus, your teachings lead us from confusion and self-absorption into assurance that we're forgiven for clinging to things that wither and die. We are ready to take the challenge, to turn and follow you, strong in the abundant life you've brought to us.

The Teaching: Risking Challenge

Pastor's message: Matthew 4:1-11; Matthew 22:18-21

Message Notes:

Small Group Format



Welcome

- Introductions/getting acquainted
- Mutual Invitation question: *Briefly share: If you were extremely rich, what would you buy for someone else today?*

Opening Prayer

Song (optional)

Reflection on Scripture

Have someone read: **Matthew 4: 1-11; Matthew 22:18-21**

- Discuss observations about the text
 - *What word or phrase strikes you the most?*
 - *What do you think is the most important point of the text?*

Application of Scripture (The central transformative questions)

- What did you hear God say to you through this week's Scriptures?
- What are you doing about it?
- How can we support you?

Share your faith (in groups of 3)

- *How have you experienced God recently in your life?* (This is a weekly question - it may be difficult to answer at first, but if you ask it each week you may start to notice God more in your life.)

Pray for each other

Refreshments (optional)

The Teaching: Risking Challenge February 12, 2023

Monday

Read: Matthew 4:1-9 *Jesus tested in the wilderness*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *The tempter wants Jesus to prove that he's the Son of God. Do you think Jesus proved he was God's Son?*
2. *What does it mean to you to know that Jesus faced temptations of the body, of security, of power?*

Prayer Focus Thank you, Jesus, for the way you responded to temptations. We're blessed in the knowledge that you experienced how we are tempted. Give us hearts to see that God's love is beyond anything the world can offer.

Tuesday

Read: Matthew 4:10-11 *Jesus silences the tempter*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Why do you think this word from Jesus silences the devil?*
2. *Reflect on how you express your loyalty to God.*

Prayer Focus Teacher, you answered temptation in your truth and in your faithful love of God. We pray we can follow your example when we find ourselves worshiping or serving anyone or anything other than our Creator.