



CURRENT

session page

Image Bearing

Matthew 22:15-22 | Session 9.43

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)
- Find web links for underlined items on this session's webpage at faithelement.net.

Context

Invite the group to think about recent fundraisers they have seen. Share what gimmicks people, students, neighbors have used to prompt giving funds to a cause.

- Why do you think these fundraising efforts were successful?
- What made people willing to give their money for a cause?

Show the [Best Ice Bucket Challenges](#) and ask:

- What do you think made this fundraiser so popular that it became an Internet sensation?
- Why do we hear so little about it now, only a couple of years later?
- Why does doing good for others seem so infectious at times, and at others so hard?
- What does our capacity to give to others say about our humanity?

Content

Read [Matthew 22:15-22](#), and watch the Bible Background Video.

Ask questions like these:

- Why do you think the Pharisees tried to trap Jesus during a discussion of money?
- How are these people looking for Jesus to align his thoughts with what they understand as “truth”?
- When have you experienced something that felt like this kind of a trap?
- Imagine that you were standing there when Jesus talked about the coin. How might you have reacted to his response?
- In what ways does Jesus demonstrate getting right to the heart of the matter, even in this response to those who would trap him?
- When have you similarly had an image suddenly gain new meaning for you in the way you understand God in the world?
- The Bible background video says: “As people of faith, we know that all we are and own belongs to God. And all things we do are to be offered to God.” What might that look like?

Closure

Share with the group this story about a late night TV host committing to donate money to hurricane relief efforts in Puerto Rico.

- What stands out to you in this story and why?
- Stephen Colbert could have easily donated more money, in a straightforward way. Why do you think he developed the idea of donating in connection with celebrities?
- Besides being funny, why does it matter that celebrities were invited to participate in the fundraising by submitting an embarrassing picture?
- Does giving mean more to you when you are invited to participate or required to give?
- How is it useful to sometimes offer an image that defies what is expected?
- How can that kind of vulnerability build Christian community?
- Why might it be easier to invite people to participate in such a thing, even if it is messy or unscripted, instead of keeping our plans more straightforward and streamlined?
- In what ways can inviting people to offer their own moments of vulnerability help meet a need in our world?

Pray together to end the session, asking God for the courage to be vulnerable and risk offering your whole self to God.

Close with a prayer.

Writer: Erin Hall