

Whose Son is the Christ?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 June 2025

Preacher: Joe Hall

[0 : 00] Pray for God's help as we do that. Our Father, we thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ. And we thank you that everything that we've just heard about him is true.

! That if we thirst, if we are weak, that we should come to him and in him find our shield and protection, our strength, our satisfaction.

He truly gives the water of life. He is the bread of life. And we thank you all the more, Father, that when we were weak and when we were lost, that he came to us to seek and to save us.

So, Lord, lead us to him, the Lord Jesus, today. We pray by your word and your spirit. We ask in his name. Amen. Amen. Now, boys and girls, do any of you guys, do you any kind of, like, karate, boxing, jiu-jitsu, do anything like that?

Anything that you might have to, I don't know, hit someone? Not at home, right? Okay, maybe you go to a club.

[1 : 08] Maybe you do something like that, okay? Here's a little-known fact about me. Okay, I did karate a long time ago, okay? I never got a black belt. Don't need to worry, okay?

Okay. Okay. But I say that because, or I ask because, today in our passage, we're going to see a fight. It's a battle.

It's a fight. Not with hitting and kicking, but with questions and answers. Now, boys and girls, upstairs in our services, we've been going through one of the four Gospels, Matthew's Gospel, together as a church, and we've been seeing that Jesus is the king for the world to bow to.

Jesus is the true king from God. A word for that is Christ. Maybe you've heard that. He is the king from God. And he is for the whole world.

He's not just for one group of people. He's not just for grown-ups. He's for every kind of person that there is. They can be part of Jesus's kingdom. And the way for us to be part of his kingdom is for us to turn, put our trust in him, and bow to him.

[2 : 23] Not physically, like with our knees kneel down or bow our bodies down, but bow to him in our hearts. Right? Listen to him with our ears. Obey him in our lives.

We want to put Jesus first because he's the king for the world to bow to. And you guys have come, actually, on a really fun Sunday this morning because in our passage, we see some super religious people getting really quite cross with Jesus because they think that they should really be the king in God's kingdom and not him.

And in our passage today, they take it in turns to try to trick him or trap him or catch him out with tricky questions. So they come to him one after another trying to take him on and battle him.

But who do you think, if you have to guess, who do you think wins in the end? Who do you think wins? I think it's God as well.

I think it's Jesus, isn't it? He wins in the end. We're going to see that together. And we're going to see that he is supreme. He is the champion. No one can take him on.

[3 : 40] No one can trick Jesus or trap him because he is not just any old king. He is the Christ. He is the Son of God. And so it's completely right that we all do bow to him in our hearts and live our lives for him.

And we're going to see that through four rounds this morning in the ring. So round one, who tries to take on Jesus first in verse 15, chapter 22? It's the Pharisees.

The Pharisees, round one. Matthew tells us they plotted how to entangle Jesus in his words. Now, Pharisees is a funny word.

They were people in Jesus' time who thought that if they could keep all of God's rules really, really, really well, then God would come and save us.

So they were super into God's law. They just looked at God's rules all the time. And they wanted all the time to see, how can I keep this rule? And how can I get other people to keep all the rules?

[4 : 48] They were super, really super strict. And so some of them and some other people, they go to Jesus with a tricky question about God's rules.

And first of all, they give it loads of this, don't they? Jesus, Jesus, you're amazing. You're the best, Jesus. Jesus, you know everything.

We can't wait to hear what you have to tell us. Right? Do you think they really mean that? Do you think they mean that? I don't think they mean that.

No, they don't mean that. If they really meant that, and they thought that Jesus really did just tell the truth, well, they wouldn't be coming to fight him, would they? They would be coming to follow him.

It's like they're trying not to laugh, isn't it? When they're saying, teacher, we know that you are true. Ha! Then you teach the way of God truthfully.

[5 : 45] Yeah, right. So tell us what you think. Here's their question. Is it against God's rules to pay taxes to Caesar? So basically, does God want us to give money to the king or the government of our country when they ask us to?

Now, for you guys, that's a question you don't have to think about for a wee while, okay? A bit in the future. For the grown-ups here, that's actually quite an important question. But remember, the Pharisees who asked it are not there to try to find out the answer.

They are just trying to trick Jesus. But do you think Jesus was tricked? No. He wasn't. Matthew says, Jesus, aware of their malice, that's a word for evil or hate, he said, why do you put me to the test, you hypocrites?

They went to catch Jesus out, but guess what? Jesus actually caught them out. He says it's like they're wearing masks.

They put on a mask to come to Jesus that's smiling and happy, but underneath the mask, their faces look a bit like this. Right, really cross, really grumpy with Jesus.

[7 : 03] And, you know, we can sometimes do that as well. We want Jesus to think we're really good people. We just tell Jesus what we think he wants to hear.

We pretend to follow him. But actually, when we pray to him, we don't really mean what we pray. Or when we read our Bible or listen to someone read us the Bible, we don't really care what it says, or we don't want to change because of what it says.

It's like we're wearing a mask when we come to Jesus that's smiling and happy, but underneath we are cross and hard and grumpy with him. And perhaps some of us here today are like that, trying to catch Jesus out, or perhaps just we pretend that we're listening to him.

But Jesus sees right through us, and he wants to tear the mask right off. And he does that with the Pharisees by giving a really clever answer to their question. He says, give me one of these.

Give me one of these. What are these? It's not a trick question. It's money.

[8 : 15] And pounds. Yeah, some coins, right? Have a look at this. Do you know whose face that is? The queen. Yeah, what about this one?

That one's a bit rubbed out, isn't it? What about this one? It's the queen again, right? And what about that one?

Also the queen. They all have the queen's face on. Now, I did actually try. I don't have any with a king on it. Do they exist? I don't have any, okay? I really tried, right? We cannot pay the queen money, okay?

She is deceased. But the point is that Jesus is saying, give me a coin. Whose face is on it? Right? It's the king's face.

It's the queen's face. So he says, look, if it's got the king's face on it, it belongs to the king. So give the king what belongs to the king. And give to God what is rightfully his.

[9 : 25] Of course, brothers and sisters, Jesus teaches us to pay our taxes. Render to Caesar what is Caesar's. But the big punch that Jesus lands in this round is when he says we should give to God what really belongs to him.

That's been the big problem, hasn't it? Ever since Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, God's people weren't giving God what really belonged to him. That is, our hearts, our faith, our prayers, our praise, gladly turning and trusting in him and his king.

And so, friends, Jesus is saying, don't try to wear a mask with God. If you are today, it's time to take it off and be real with God about who you really are.

Turn away from that coldness, that hardness towards him and take hold of the free forgiveness and eternal life that he holds out to us in Jesus. Because Jesus sees straight through our mask as he did with the Pharisees back then.

He knows exactly what we're up to. And when they heard his answer to the question, the mask fell off and they went from looking like this to looking like this.

[10:47] They were amazed when they heard Jesus. They marveled. So round one goes to Jesus. But now another group of religious leaders tried their luck with Jesus.

So we're on to round two. The Sadducees, verse 23. Do you think they do any better? What do you think? No, they don't. They don't. Again, Sadducees is a funny word.

These guys are a bit different to the Pharisees. Here's one way. Matthew says that they said there's no resurrection. In fact, I did a bit of research this week.

They didn't think that there was such a thing as a heaven or a hell, no afterlife at all, let alone that God was going to bring our bodies back from the dead on the last day. So the Sadducees and the Pharisees were different, and they were always trying to kind of win against each other.

So this is a bit like, do you ever get this in school, right, where the teacher asks a question, and someone puts up their hand, and the teacher asks them, and they get it wrong, and then everyone else is like, oh, I know the answer, and they want even more to be asked by the teacher.

[11:54] Pick me. Ask me the question, because they want to show how super clever they are, right? Do you ever get that in school? Right, maybe you and your friends are not as keen beans, right, as me and my friends.

That's what the Sadducees are doing. The Pharisees had had a go at catching Jesus out, and they got it wrong. So now these guys are going to try their luck by asking how their clever question can be answered.

They want Jesus to say, man, you are smart, you guys. And it is a tricky question. And it's quite a tricky question to explain in the family service.

But Matthew's really helped us out by telling us the Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection. So all we need to understand about their really long question is that it's about what happens after the resurrection.

So what's the catch? Well, they don't believe in a resurrection anyway. So what's the point of asking? Definitely not to learn Jesus' answer, but again, to catch him out.

[13:01] It's like a riddle. Have you heard this one? What's black and white and red all over? What's black and white and red all over? There's a few different answers. My favorite, a penguin with a sunburn.

But of course, penguins don't get sunburned. So it's a silly question, isn't it? It's a silly question. And Jesus isn't afraid to let them know that, verse 29. How about this?

Jesus answered them, you are wrong. Straight to the point, isn't it? You are wrong. Something we've thought about over the last few chapters of Matthew is that there is no wrong question for Jesus.

You can ask him anything. Boys and girls, I hope you know that. You can ask Jesus any question you have at any time. And other people can help you.

People at home, mom and dad, brothers and sisters can help you, your Sunday school teachers, other people in church, or you can just open your Bible and have a look. You can ask Jesus any question at any time.

[14:07] But this is a silly question. Not because they're asking Jesus a question, but because they're not really asking a question. They're not trying to find out the answer. They're just trying to catch Jesus out.

And so, boys and girls, when you ask Jesus your questions, make sure you're ready to listen to Jesus' answer. Make sure you're ready to hear what Jesus really says.

Don't ask him questions to try and trick him. It's the wrong way to come to Jesus, and it doesn't work. And that can actually be any of us, however old or however clever we think we are.

Amazingly, Jesus turns to these religious experts and say that their questions show that they don't know their Bibles and they don't know God. Life in the resurrection is so different from life here and now, says Jesus.

You can't even begin to imagine it. There's no marriage in heaven. And as for God, he is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Even though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were long gone, they

are still alive with him in heaven, along with everyone who's ever put their trust in Jesus.

[15 : 20] And so, he is still their God. He is the God of the living. These are ways of Jesus telling the Sadducees and us that there is a life after death.

There is a heaven and a hell. There is a resurrection coming on the last day. The Sadducees are totally wrong. And when the crowd heard it, we're told, they were astonished at his teaching.

If the Sadducees had really wanted to know that, they could have just asked him, instead of coming to Jesus to try to catch him out. That's a really silly way to come to Jesus. We want to ask him real questions and get ready to listen to his real answers.

So, who wins round two? It is Jesus again. Two down, but still two more rounds to go because now, look, the Pharisees come back for more.

Round three, the Pharisees again. Again, these guys never learn, do they? Verse 34, when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.

[16 : 31] And they came up with a question to test Jesus again. Right, they're like two kind of rival football teams, aren't they, going up against each other. Who can score a goal against Jesus? But neither of them can.

None of them can. Even when the Pharisees get their top striker, a lawyer, to think of a question. But in the end, it's a little bit like watching like Bape or Messi, like one of these top guys, right?

They get the ball, they're going to take their penalty, they take like 10 minutes to put the ball down on the spot. They take 10 minutes, like take their deep breath and do their little shuffle and kick the ball, but it's straight at the keeper who just catches it and boots it up the pitch.

This lawyer takes an incredibly lame penalty. Verse 36, Jesus, which is the great commandment in the law? Which is the most important rule of all God's rules?

He clearly thinks he's being really clever. What if Jesus gets this one wrong? How silly would he look? But this lawyer has clearly forgotten or just missed the really easy answer to this really easy question.

[17 : 46] It's the answer that every Jewish child would have memorized from as young as they could talk. Faithful parents would have taught their children this at home and on journeys at bedtime and when they woke up, the words of the Shema, Ah, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Pick any one of the children who is praising Jesus in the temple only the other day and they would have said that.

This might be reading into it a little bit, but this is another theme, isn't it? We've seen through Matthew's gospel as well. Children, boys and girls, just like you guys sitting here or wherever you're sitting around the church this morning, boys and girls like you are exactly the kind of people who get into God's kingdom and for exactly this reason, the simplicity of their faith, their spiritual littleness. Children do not overthink overthink or overcomplicate the answer, do they? Boys and girls, if you've fallen asleep, just wake up a minute. I want to tell you something. Okay?

I hope you know that you don't have to be a grown-up or another year older to know God as truly as Jesus knows God.

[19 : 20] The Bible's a really big book, but you, right now, you can know the big message of the Bible as well as Jesus knows the big message of the Bible because really knowing God and really knowing his message is really very easy.

Mums and dads, grown-ups, I hope you know this. Never forget, the gospel is simple enough for the youngest child to grasp. Speak about it at home, in the car, at bedtime.

Don't overthink it. Just speak it, pray it, sing it to your children, and with God's help, they can get it in their heads and in their hearts.

The reason why the Pharisees thought this was a tricky question is because they weren't spiritually little. They thought that they were bigger than Jesus, but Jesus' answer shows that even the spiritually biggest, and you don't get bigger than Jesus, do you?

Even the spiritually biggest can still only give the littlest answer because really God's truth at heart is so simple. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

[20 : 37] And the second commandment is like it says, Jesus, love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets. All God's law, all his rules, Jesus says, are summed up in two lines.

Two lines. A handful of words that every boy and girl can learn from birth. The lawyer wanted to make Jesus look silly, but how silly does that lawyer look now?

Who wins round three? It's Jesus again, isn't it? Jesus again. So it's three-nil to Jesus, but there's still one round to go, and this time, it's Jesus who brings the fight to the Pharisees.

In round four, Jesus lands the knockout blow by showing them and us why he can't be beaten. Because he is the Christ who is the Son of God.

Verse 41, while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, what do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?

[21 : 48] Right, the Pharisees and Sadducees have asked all their favorite questions about money and marriage and morals and rules. They've gone all over the Bible, all over the shop trying to trick Jesus, but Jesus brings them back to the most important question of all.

It's a question they haven't even asked yet. Maybe they haven't even thought of it. What do you think about the Christ? And grown-ups, I'm sure you get this. Boys and girls, maybe you get this a little bit as well at school or in your clubs, maybe someone in your family.

Does someone ever ask you, why do you have to make it all about Jesus? Right, can't you talk about anything else? It's fine, you're a Christian.

I get that. I understand that you're a Christian, but there is more to life than Jesus. Sometimes it can be a bit like that in churches as well. I don't think this church, but sometimes even in churches people can say things like that.

And maybe if we follow Jesus, we actually just feel really stupid when someone says that and like we don't know anything. But the best answer, I think, when someone says that is, well, do you know what?

[23 : 00] Jesus made it all about Jesus. These guys want to go all around the houses talking about this, that, and the next thing. And Jesus brings it all back to this. What do you make of me?

What do you think of the Christ? He can do that. We should do that because of whose son he is. Now, the Pharisees are thinking pretty horizontally.

That's like along this way. I've forgotten more than these guys even know, right, since school.

Horizontal is that way, right? They're thinking like this, okay? And Jesus asks them, whose son is the Christ?

And they're just thinking about earthly kingdoms and they say, well, the Christ is the son of David. And they're not totally wrong because God had promised King David someone from his family would be king forever.

But Jesus has been talking throughout the gospel about the kingdom of heaven. So he's thinking less like this way and more that way, vertically, up and down, about God's kingdom.

[24 : 03] And he takes the Pharisees to a psalm in the Old Testament where David wrote this, the Lord, that's God, said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.

So David's writing about the Lord, that's God, but he's also talking about my Lord. And that is, well, who is it?

Who is it? Says Jesus. Who is that? That's Jesus' question. Who's my Lord in that psalm? It can't be David because he wrote it. He can't be his own Lord. And it can't be one of David's sons because then he wouldn't call him my Lord.

So if David's Lord in Psalm 110 isn't David and it isn't one of David's sons, who is God saying to, sit at my right hand. Now Jesus doesn't say it here, but Matthew does in other places.

So do the Psalms that the Christ, he, Jesus, is not only the son of David. The point is that he is the son of God. Jesus is God's own son who came down to earth to be our true king.

[25 : 24] And so it's no surprise, is it, that after four rounds of fighting, finally, verse 46, no one was able to answer him a word. Nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

They are stumped by him. The fight goes to Jesus. He's won every round, hands down. They tried to trap him, but however hard they tried, they failed.

Why? Because he is no ordinary man. He is not only just some good teacher, even. Not even an ordinary king, but the Christ and the son of God.

Now, of course, that's not the last question. We can ask Jesus, they finished with their questions, we can ask him questions at any time. But even more importantly than asking Jesus questions, what we've learned is that we must treat him and come to him like the king that he is.

If you met the man with his face on all the coins and on all the money, the king, well, you wouldn't try to trick him, would you? Or catch him out.

[26 : 36] We would bow to him, we would listen to him, we would show him respect. How much more with Jesus? Boys and girls, grown-ups, how much more with Jesus should we give him the place in our lives that he deserves?

We sing lots of songs at home. One of the songs that we sing, maybe you've heard this in the car, maybe you sing this one at home, I really hope I'm not the only one. It's a Colum B. Cannon, and there's a bit where we go round and we say, Caleb is not their boss, nah-ah.

And we go round and we say, Samuel is not their boss, nah-ah. And we get all the way round to Daddy is not the boss, nah-ah.

Somehow I think that's their favorite bit. And even the baby is not the boss, even though the babies wanted to be the boss this week. The baby is not the boss, nah-ah.

Because Jesus is the boss. And then we get the chorus, Jesus is the mighty, mighty king. Jesus is the mighty, mighty king.

[27 : 45] God made him the boss of everything. So Jesus is the mighty, mighty king. If you want someone to sing that to you, it's not me, it's these guys, okay.

We would all do well, wouldn't we? We'd all do well to sing and say to ourselves often, I am not the boss.

You are not the boss. We are not the boss. Because Jesus is the boss. He is the mighty, mighty king.

We can't score points against him. We can't lie to him. We can't put a mask on with him. We do have to come to him. Bow to him in our hearts.

Have him as our Lord and Savior. Listen to him. Live his way. Because he is the Christ and the Son of God. Let's pray that we would know that together.

[28 : 46] Father, we thank you for Jesus and we do honor him now as Lord. We thank you that he is king and we pray, Lord, that we, from the youngest of us to the oldest, would be so, so glad in our hearts and rejoice that he is king and our boss and Lord.

Help us, we pray, when we want to put a mask on with Jesus and pretend. Help us, we pray, when we want to try to trick Jesus. Help us, we pray, when we don't want to live Jesus' way.

By your Holy Spirit, give us a heart that is ready to come to him and bow before him and trust in him as our king. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. Amen.