

The Twenty-Third Sunday after Trinity

Late Elementary · Student Edition

For the student: Read along, fill in the blanks, and write your answers on the lines. Your parent has the answers.

Step 1 Understand the Collect

A collect is a short prayer the pastor prays for the whole church. Here is today's collect:

O Lord, absolve Your people from their offenses that from the bonds of our sins, which by reason of our frailty we have brought upon ourselves, we may be delivered by Your bountiful goodness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Words to know. *Absolve:* forgive; set free from sin. *Offenses:* wrongs; sins. *Bonds:* chains or ropes. *Frailty:* weakness. *Bountiful:* overflowing and generous. *Caesar* (in the Gospel): the Roman emperor. *Denarius:* a Roman silver coin. *Likeness and inscription:* the picture and the words stamped on a coin. *Render:* give what is owed.

1. We ask the Lord to _____ His people from their offenses.
2. Our sins are like _____ that tie us up.
3. We ask to be delivered by God's bountiful _____.

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Matthew 22:15-22

15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. **16** And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. **17** Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

18 But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites?

19 Show me the coin for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. **20** And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" **21** They said, "Caesar's."

Then he said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." **22** When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away.

1. What did the Pharisees plot to do?

2. What question did they ask Him?

3. Whose picture was on the coin?

4. What did Jesus answer?

Step 3 Find the Collect in the Gospel

Our prayer asks God to forgive us and set us free from the chains of our sins. In the Gospel, Jesus' enemies try to trap Him with a question about taxes, and He answers with a coin. Let's find our prayer in the story.

1. The collect speaks of the *bonds* of our sins. What did the Pharisees try to do to Jesus with their words?

2. Whose picture was on the coin, and to whom did the coin belong?

3. God made people in His own image (Genesis 1:27). If the coin with Caesar's picture belongs to Caesar, to whom do we belong?

Step 4 The Small Catechism

The Table of Duties: Of Citizens. The Small Catechism gathers these passages for citizens. "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (Matthew 22:21) "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God." (Romans 13:1) "Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed." (Romans 13:7) "I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way." (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

1. Which verse from today's Gospel does the Table of Duties quote?

2. What does 1 Timothy 2 tell us to do for our leaders?

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

Pray today's collect together one more time. Then ask:

1. What does Jesus do for you when your sins tie you up?
