
FOLLOW ME
MADE BY JESUS
The Life, Ministry, and Letters of Peter

FREEDOM: THE SONS ARE FREE

MATTHEW 17:24–27

FOLLOW ME: MADE BY JESUS

Peter is the lens. Jesus is the center.

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FREEDOM: THE SONS ARE FREE

MATTHEW 17:24–27

Peter's Formation Summary (1 of 2)

MESSAGES 1–5 / IDENTITY THROUGH CONFESSION

IDENTITY	Jesus knows Simon and names what He will make.
CALLING	Jesus calls Peter to trust His word and follow.
DISCIPLESHIP	Jesus forms Peter to be with Him and serve.
FAITH	Jesus rescues Peter when his faith wavers.
CONFESSION	Peter confesses who Jesus is.

Peter's Formation Summary (2 of 2)

MESSAGES 6–9 / CORRECTION THROUGH FREEDOM

CORRECTION	Jesus corrects Peter's resistance to the cross.
SURRENDER	Jesus calls His disciples to follow His road.
GLORY	The Father commands them to listen to His Son.
FREEDOM	Jesus teaches Peter that freedom does not require insisting on one's rights.

From the mountain to Capernaum

MATTHEW 17:1–27 / CONTEXT SUMMARY

On the mountain, Peter witnessed the glory of God’s beloved Son.

Back in Capernaum, Jesus teaches him about the freedom that belongs to that Son.

The road to this encounter

MATTHEW 16:13–17:23 / CONTEXT SUMMARY

Peter confesses the Son and is corrected for resisting His suffering.

Jesus calls His disciples to deny themselves and follow.

The Father reveals His Son’s glory; Jesus again predicts His death and resurrection.

BIG IDEA

MATTHEW 17:24–27

Jesus, God's Son, willingly pays what He does not owe to avoid unnecessary offense.

I. Jesus Reveals His Freedom as God's Son.

MATTHEW 17:24–26

His identity establishes His exemption.

The collectors' question

MATTHEW 17:24 | NASB95

24 When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma *tax* came to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma *tax*?"

Peter answers; Jesus speaks first

MATTHEW 17:25 | NASB95

25 He *said, “Yes.” And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?”

The royal analogy

MATTHEW 17:26 | NASB95

26 When Peter said, “From strangers,” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are exempt.”

The temple tax

EXODUS 30:11–16; 38:25–26 / BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Exodus describes a half-shekel contribution associated with the census and tabernacle service.

First-century temple support is later administration.

This is a temple payment, not ordinary Roman taxation.

One payment; two payments

MATTHEW 17:24, 27; 20:2 / EXPLANATION

Two drachmas ≈ half a shekel: one payment.

One stater ≈ four drachmas: two payments.

The two-drachma payment represents approximately two days' wages.

His identity establishes His exemption

MATTHEW 17:25–26 / EXPOSITION

The temple belongs to God.
Jesus is God’s unique Son.

His freedom flows from His identity, not from His circumstances.

What Matthew does not establish

MATTHEW 17:24–26 / INTERPRETIVE LIMITS

Peter’s “Yes” is not necessarily wrong or impulsive.

The plural “sons” belongs naturally to the royal analogy.

Matthew does not establish that Peter shares Jesus’ exemption.

II. Jesus Voluntarily Restrains His Freedom to Avoid Offense.

MATTHEW 17:27a

His concern for others governs His decision.

The Son willingly pays

MATTHEW 17:27a | NASB95 EXCERPT

“However, so that we do not offend them”

He chooses not to insist upon it

MATTHEW 17:27a / EXPOSITION

Jesus does not surrender His exemption.
He voluntarily chooses not to insist upon it.

The glorious Son is also the humble Son.

Related words; different encounters

MATTHEW 16:23; 17:27 / COMPARISON

skandalon: Peter resists Jesus' announced suffering.

skandalizō: Jesus acts to avoid offense.

The words belong to the same family. A deliberate literary linkage is unproven.

Christ’s humility shapes our response

PHILIPPIANS 2:5–8 / CANONICAL SUMMARY

Christ humbles Himself and becomes obedient to death on a cross.

The same glorious Son acts in humility.

The temple-tax payment is not explicitly a type of the atonement.

Freedom and honorable conduct

1 PETER 2:11–17 / CANONICAL SUMMARY

Peter later teaches believers to live honorably and use freedom responsibly.

This is compatible biblical teaching.

Scripture does not establish that Peter recalled the temple-tax encounter when writing.

Conviction or preference?

APPLICATION THROUGH THE BROADER CANON

Faithfulness sometimes requires standing firm, even when others take offense.

Not every preference is a principle worth defending.

Not every legitimate freedom must be exercised.

III. Jesus Demonstrates His Authority Through Extraordinary Provision.

MATTHEW 17:27b

His instruction reveals extraordinary authority and provision.

The extraordinary instruction

MATTHEW 17:27b | NASB95 EXCERPT

“go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for you and Me.”

Matthew ends with Jesus' word

MATTHEW 17:27 / EXEGESIS

Jesus specifies where to go, what to do, which fish to take, and what Peter will find.

Matthew records the instruction.
He does not narrate Peter carrying it out.

Provision sufficient for both

MATTHEW 17:27 / EXPOSITION

The coin covers Jesus and Peter.

Their inclusion in the payment does not establish identical exemptions.

His humility does not diminish His authority.

Peter encounters the Son’s authority

LUKE 5:1–11; MATTHEW 14:22–33; 17:27 / COMPARISON

At his calling, Peter acts upon Jesus’ word.
On the sea, Jesus rescues him.
Here, Jesus directs an extraordinary provision.

Each encounter retains its own emphasis.

Trust Christ without presuming

APPLICATION

Trust the authority of Christ's word.

This account is not a universal promise of miraculous financial supply.

Its purpose is to reveal Jesus' extraordinary authority.

One Son: free, humble, authoritative

MATTHEW 17:24–27 / MESSAGE REVIEW

SONSHIP → HUMILITY → AUTHORITY

The Son is free.
The Son willingly pays.
The Son directs the provision.

Peter’s formation

CONFESSION → CORRECTION → SURRENDER → GLORY → FREEDOM

FREEDOM — Jesus teaches Peter that freedom does not require insisting on one's rights.

His sacrifice saves us

PHILIPPIANS 2:5–8; 1 PETER 2:21–25 / CANONICAL SUMMARY

Christ bears our sins in His body on the cross.
We follow in His steps.

His sacrifice saves us. His example teaches us.

Reflection & Response

APPLICATION

1. When am I justified in exercising a freedom but wiser not to insist upon it?

2. Can I distinguish a biblical conviction that must be defended from a personal preference that may be relinquished?

Faithfully representing Christ

APPLICATION

Are we more concerned about asserting our rights or faithfully representing Christ?

If the Son of God can voluntarily refrain from exercising a legitimate privilege, why do we sometimes find it so difficult to yield our own?

The glorious Son is also the humble Son.

MATTHEW 17:24–27 / CONCLUSION

Jesus knows who He is. He knows He is free. Yet He willingly pays what He does not owe.

His humility does not diminish His glory. His voluntary restraint does not diminish His authority.

This is the Jesus Peter is learning to follow.

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