

Study

Read the text twice

Look at the painting

Read the Painting Caption

Questions

What jumps off the page at you?

FGP

List what the text says about the teachers of the law and chief priests (who sent the spies (Luke 20:19).

3s/ FB

How does our identity as image bearers of God speak to our value and how we should live?

FGP

How do we balance our responsibilities to those in authority with our responsibilities to God, particularly where these clash?

3s/ FB

The painting caption, and the text, speak of issues of power and money. In a world that prioritises these things so much, how can we ensure that we remain faithful to God?

FGP

Like Jesus, we are surrounded by the images of those with power and money. How can we resist these alluring images and instead value our life — and the lives of others — as image bearers of God?

3s/ FB

Study Key

3s / FB - Groups of 3 with feedback to whole group

FGP - Full Group

GPS - Larger groups of 6 (if desired)



The Project

The Gospel Sketchbook is a three-year project based in St George's Tron, Church, Glasgow, in which Artist in Residence Iain Campbell is painting 24 canvases from Luke's Gospel, one for each chapter.

Key to each painting is reflecting on the Biblical text and how it might apply to contemporary Glasgow.

The Study

The following Bible Study considers both the Biblical text and the painting on which it is based, encouraging participants to think about how to apply the Biblical text to their context. The study is designed to be used with *The Portrait Gospel*, a special edition of Luke's Gospel that features Our Last Supper on the cover, the first canvas painted as part of this project.

Conversations Bible Study

Each of the individual studies uses the Conversations style. Conversations is a method of Bible study developed by the Scottish Bible Society and the Contextual

Bible Study Group. Conversations seeks to encourage people to actively engage with the Bible and apply it to life.

The questions are designed to stimulate conversation within groups where people may have varying backgrounds and knowledge of the Bible. You will notice a similar pattern of questions used throughout the studies. All of the questions are 'open' questions which don't presume an answer but instead invite people to reflect personally on the text. The first question is always, "What jumps off the page at you?" – an opportunity for people to begin to share their thoughts on a passage. Then there are 'listing' questions that encourage a closer reading of the text, 'theological' questions that seek to understand the meaning, and finally 'contextual' questions that begin to apply the text to life.

We hope you find this a refreshing and stimulating way to study the Bible.

More Bible study resources that utilise the Conversations method can be found at: scottishbiblesociety.org/equip

Double Portrait

Study 20 • Luke 20:20-26



Text: Luke 20:20-26 Page 80-81 of The Portrait Gospel

²⁰ Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be sincere. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said, so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. ²¹ So the spies questioned him: ‘Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. ²² Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?’

²³ He saw through their duplicity and said to them, ²⁴ ‘Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?’

‘Caesar’s,’ they replied.

²⁵ He said to them, ‘Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.’

²⁶ They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

Painting Caption

When the religious authorities sent spies to trick Jesus into saying something that can get him arrested and executed, Jesus turns this into an opportunity to talk about something more important. Their question is about money, but his reply points to where real value is found in life.

Martin, the model for the painting, is a regular in The Wild Olive Tree café at St George’s Tron Church of Scotland. He holds out a pound coin, which bears an image of Queen Elizabeth II, who has more than 900 official portraits. This juxtaposition shows that regardless of how others have perceived us, each of us is of equal value in the sight of God.