
“...Therefore, render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” (Matthew 22:21)

I. The Political Hot Potato Question

- a. There is one thing the “religious connivers” had correct; Jesus was not afraid of people, nor of the opinions of others.
- b. Their question had a superficial innocence about it, but a negative answer would have been used to denounce Jesus to the Roman authorities.
- c. Based on the Law, the Jews rejected the graven image of Caesar on a coin, it was idolatry.
- d. Roman policy allowed the Jews to coin their own non-idolatrous copper money, which they used for normal everyday business.
- e. There was no need for the Jesus to carry the silver denarius. For any Jew to have one on their person among the holy temple was hypocritical. Yet one of them did.
- f. Is there an incompatibility between loyalty to the governing authority and loyalty to God? According to Jesus, not necessarily.
- g. It is possible to pay dues both to the emperor and to God, to be both a good citizen and a loyal servant of God. Unfortunately, some Christians focus on paying their taxes over paying tithes.
- h. Although Caesar considered himself to be a god, the Lord’s response puts the matter in prospective: *give the things to Caesar that are his; give to God the things that are God’s*.
 1. Jesus does not call Caesar a god and puts *things* in order.
 2. Man created taxes for order. God placed authority over us
- i. Jesus highlighted their refusal to give God His due.
- j. Th Greek word for “give” (*apodote*), means “give back.” The coin bears Caesar’s image: give it back to him. You bear God’s image, so give yourself back to him!

II. God Has Established Structures of Authority

- a. Structures of authority: Home, human government, workplace and the Church are authorities that God established for orderly living.
- b. (Read Romans 13:1-7 and 1 Peter 2:13-17)
- c. Peter teaches that you can live out your faith in this world while respecting authority. The emphasis is on the *activity of submission*. Think of the word cooperation, not compromise.
- d. Submission does not mean slavery or subjugation. It recognizes God’s authority in our lives.
- e. There is freedom in submission. (a child who obeys, the Prodigal Son)
- f. We are called to be “good citizens” on Earth while knowing our “real” citizenship is in heaven.
- g. Be subject to punishment and praise of civic leadership. (v.13)
- h. This is our righteous calling – We are called to live godly in a godless world.

III. The Application of God’s Word

- a. When do we give ourselves, without reserve, to God who gave us everything and formed us in His own image?
- b. As Christians, we must wrestle to discern the areas where Caesar has no right to dictate. What might those areas be?
- c. We are always to seek integrity in a world of compromise.