

# RENDER UNTO GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD'S.

Matthew 22:15-22

Introduction:

- This is an important passage that shows how Christ felt about human government
- It also is timely as we are in the middle of our tax season:
- Illustr: A man on vacation was strolling along outside his hotel in Acapulco, enjoying the sunny Mexican weather. Suddenly, he was attracted by the screams of a woman kneeling in front of a child.
- Apparently, the child had swallowed a coin. Seizing the child by the heels, the man held him upside down, gave him a few shakes, and an American quarter dropped to the sidewalk.
- "Oh, thank you sir!" cried the woman. "You seemed to know just how to get it out of him. Are you a doctor?"
- "No, ma'am," replied the man. "I'm with the United States Internal Revenue Service."
- The two things you can't escape- death and taxes!

I. The Pharisees try to entrap Jesus- v. 15-17

a. Who is asking this question?

- i. The Herodians: The Herodians were a non-religious Jewish political party, and saw Christ as a threat. Unlike most other Jews, the Herodians openly supported the dynasty family of Herod and were pro-Roman empire.
- ii. The Pharisees, on the other hand, were members of a Jewish sect who followed strict oral traditions and the written Law of Moses. They didn't believe that Christ was the Messiah. These groups usually hated each other, coming from opposite sides of the spectrum
- iii. Plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk: Here the Pharisees and the Herodians worked together. "A common enemy makes strange bedfellows."

- b. The forces of darkness have no problem uniting against the light! Don't fear opposition!
  - c. After a flattering introduction, the Pharisees ask Jesus a problematic question.
  - d. Should we pay taxes to Caesar or not?
  - e. They tried to put Jesus in a dilemma with this question. If He answered no He made Himself an enemy of Rome, and the Herodians could charge him with treason. If He said that taxes should be paid, He could be accused of denying God's Kingship over Israel (making him appear to be a traitor to the Jews).
  - f. "Lawful does not refer to Roman law (there was no question about that!), but to the law of God; is it permissible for the people of God to express allegiance to a pagan emperor?" (France)
- II. Jesus' response to their question- v. 18-22
- a. Jesus' answer was brilliant!
    - i. He proved he was more than just an ordinary Master/Rabbi/Teacher
    - ii. He knew the thoughts and intents of their heart
    - iii. Mark 12- But he, knowing their hypocrisy...
    - iv. He knows ours too!
    - v. V. 22 They marveled at his response
  - b. As was common, he replied with a question of His own- Whose image is on the coin?
  - c. The Roman coin- denarii- bore the head of Tiberius and the inscription Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus.
  - d. (Mat 22:18-22) Jesus answers: Render to Caesar what is his, but render to God what belongs to God.
  - e. "Render means 'give **back**'. It is the verb for paying a bill or settling a debt; they owe it to him. The proper mindset one should have- We owe a debt to society, not the other way around!
  - f. But Jesus goes deeper and emphasizes a second rendering- an ultimate rendering to God! Our very souls have been stamped with His image!

- g. When Jesus said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's," He was drawing a sharp distinction between two kingdoms. There is a kingdom of this world, and Caesar holds power over it. But there is another kingdom, not of this world, and Jesus is King of that (John 18:36). Christians are part of both kingdoms, at least temporarily. Under Caesar, we have certain obligations that involve material things. Under Christ, we have other obligations that involve things eternal.
- h. Our duty to Government
  - i. Gov't role is to protect its citizens (security, freedom). This is done by establishing Law and Order
  - ii. There will be no perfect system of government on this earth until King Jesus reigns from His throne during the Millennial Kingdom!
  - iii. Thankfully, at this time here in the USA we enjoy a great measure of freedom, opportunity, and security.
  - iv. Jesus affirmed human gov't, because gov't authority comes from God
    - 1. Prov. 8:15-16 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.
    - 2. Dan 2:21- And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings...
  - v. Jesus affirmed that the government makes legitimate requests of us. We are responsible to God in all things, but we must be obedient to our government.
  - vi. Instead of clamoring- what are my rights, we should first find out what are my duties? JFK's famous words
  - vii. Peter said it like this: Fear God. Honor the king. (1 Peter 2:17)
  - viii. See I Peter 2:13-17, Romans 13:1-7 note the oppressive regimes in power at this time! We honor the office, not necessarily the man!
  - ix. So, we must be good citizens, if we are to be good Christians! Ethical things like honestly paying taxes, obeying all the laws, etc.

- x. Illustr- building codes, fire marshall visits, etc. All a part of our testimony before man! Matt 5:16- Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
- xi. As we will soon see, Jesus here shows that our religious life and our secular life come together when we submit and surrender to God.

i. Our duty to God

- i. Render to God the things that are God's- Jesus' question implies the important image stamped on every man- imago dei
- ii. Everyone has the image of God impressed upon them. This means that we belong to God, not to Caesar, or not even to ourselves.
- iii. See Genesis 1:26-27. Not in physical appearance, but in our soul (increased intellect, emotion, and free will). In our spirit we have a capacity to commune with God!
- iv. Speaks to the sanctity of every human life (even the unborn!)
- v. **We are all image bearers of God, and are all the creation of God (by the way he didn't make a mistake in your appearance, gender, race, etc.), but we are not all the children of God!**
- vi. See Eph. 2:1-3
- vii. The image of God was marred at the Fall of man. To be become the children of God, we must be born again! John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name
- viii. Have you rendered your heart to Christ for salvation? Our first duty!

III. Surrendering all to God

- a. Our very souls are stamped with the image of God! And so we must repay to Him what He rightly deserves.
- b. Illustr- I read a thank you card- You are like my student loans, I can never repay you.
- c. We can never repay God, but we can surrender all to Him in love!

- d. Render- It is more blessed to give than to receive!
- e. Jesus said if we lose our lives for his sake we will find it!
- f. He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. Jim Elliot

### **The what of surrender to God**

- 1. Our time. Especially youth;
- 2. Our substance.
- 3. Our children.
- 4. Our ambitions
- 5. Our wholeseves should be rendered back to God!**

#### The How:

- 1. Without *delay*. (*i.e. when Jesus called many of the disciples*)
- 2. Freely, and without reluctance.
- 3. Thankfully, and without murmuring.
- 4. Humbly, and without ostentation.
- 5. Wholly, and without reserve.
- 6. Forever; endlessly without drawback.
  - g. When we render to God our souls, we are accomplishing our true purpose in life!
  - h. We may not possess much in the way of US currency, but we must recognize that on our very soul rests the stamp of God's image making us His currency, to be used for His purposes! Sadly, there are many coins missing from the Father's treasury...

#### Conclusion:

- Jesus here shows that we owe everything to God.
- Jesus' reply to their question: "The penny itself has settled that question. It has, stamped upon it, an image or medallion which is Caesar's likeness. Give Caesar, therefore, his due. Pay your taxes, obey the laws, honour the civil authorities. The penny bears an image; so do you. The penny is from the mint of the emperor; you are from the mint of God. The use of the penny is determined by its likeness. So, too, your use is determined by your likeness. You have the stamp of the Divine. You bear His image. Render to Him your supreme and unceasing tribute.