

What does it mean to “give to God what is God’s”?

Our _____
1 Corinthians 6:13 – 20

Our _____
Ephesians 5:22 – 28; Ephesians 6:1- 4

Our _____, and _____
2 Corinthians 9:7 – 8; 1 Peter 4:10

Our Commitment to _____
Hebrews 10:25; Colossians 3:15 – 16



SCC Message by John Aldax, October 14, 2012

Part 34

Do I *Really* Have to Pay My Taxes?

Mark 12:13 – 17

¹³ Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. ¹⁴ They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? ¹⁵ Should we pay or shouldn’t we?” But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “Why are you trying to trap me?” he asked. “Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.” ¹⁶ They brought the coin, and he asked them, “Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?” “Caesar’s,” they replied. ¹⁷ Then Jesus said to them, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were utterly amazed at him.

The Pharisees were a _____ who _____ the Roman occupation of Palestine.

The Herodians were a _____ that _____ the Herods and the policies of Rome . . . they were connected and benefited from their alliance with Rome.

LIFE LESSON from the *Life Application Bible Commentary* – People appreciate genuine praise, but flattery is always manipulative. The men addressing Jesus hoped that he would fall for it and fall into their trap. People whose egos are out of control or who have low self-esteem are in danger of falling prey to flattery. Jesus did not. (p. 342)

You were bought with a price. You have the stamp of God on you so give to Caesar what is Caesar’s but give to God what is God’s.

LIFE LESSON from *The Life Application Bible Commentary* – Some people in the past gained great reputations for holiness by refusing to even look at a secular image.

But Jesus showed a different face to the world. He called for a worldly object, a coin, and recognized the title and power of a secular ruler. He cared enough about the practical world to know whose image local coinage carried, and he didn't believe that handling the world's artifacts would pollute his character.

Jesus illustrates what it takes to connect and reach people **today**. We should be aware of our world, and what's going on in it, and use examples from everyday life. By understanding and respecting your audience, and by moving from the known to the unknown, you can introduce people to Jesus. (p.344)

Romans 13:1 – 7 —¹ Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. ² So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. ³ For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. ⁴ The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. ⁵ So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.

⁶ Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. ⁷ Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority. (NLT)

1 Timothy 2:1 – 6 —¹ I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. ² Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. ³ This is good and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. ⁵ For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. ⁶ He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. (NLT)

1 Peter 2:13 – 17 —¹³ For the Lord's sake, respect all human authority—whether the king as head of state,¹⁴ or the officials he has appointed. For the king has sent them to punish those who do wrong and to honor those who do right. ¹⁵ It is God's will that your honorable lives should silence those ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you. ¹⁶ For you are free, yet you are God's slaves, so don't use your freedom as an excuse to do evil. ¹⁷ Respect everyone, and love your Christian brothers and sisters. Fear God, and respect the king. (NLT)

LIFE LESSON from the *Life Application Bible Commentary*: Jesus avoided the Pharisees' and Herodians' trap by showing that believers have dual citizenship.

Our citizenship in the nation requires that we pay for the services and benefits we receive.

Our citizenship in the kingdom of heaven requires that we pledge to God our **primary** obedience and commitment.

As God's followers, we have legitimate obligations to both God and the government. But it is important to keep our priorities straight. When the two authorities conflict, our duty to God always must come before our duty to the government. (p.345)

LIFE LESSON from the *NIV Application Commentary* – While Jesus rejects militant nationalism, he does not suggest that his followers drop out of society. He does not tell us to divorce ourselves from government. (p. 465)