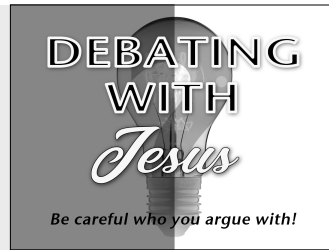


# A taxing question on what we owe.

Debating With Jesus – Part 2 Noah Largent 6/23/19

The Book of Mark 12:13-17



**Mark 12:13-17** Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. <sup>14</sup> They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know that you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by others, 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 the imperial tax to Caesar or not? <sup>15</sup> 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.” <sup>16</sup> They brought the coin, and he asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?” “Caesar’s,” they replied. <sup>17</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were amazed at him.

## **The limits and scope of the passage:**

This passage doesn’t answer all the questions about our responsibility to and tensions with the State. However, it does remind us that we have obligations to both God and the State. Jesus uses the question to remind his audience that whenever the issue of allegiances comes up, don’t forget to consider your obligations to God. The book of Daniel gives us some good examples of how to live with the tensions of these obligations.

## **God appoints governments:**

Romans 13:1 “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”  
& Titus 3:1; 1Pet.2:13-17.

“One may owe Caesar what bears his image and name - money. One owes God what bears God’s image and name. Since we are created in the image of God and bear his name as children God, we owe him our wholes selves. *Exactly what we owe God* becomes clear in Jesus’ answer to a certain teacher of the law. We owe God love from all our heart, soul, mind and strength.”  
-NIV APPLICATION COMMENTARY Mark page 463

## **Obligation to God:**

Mark 12:28-30 “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” <sup>29</sup> “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’”

1. Because you are made in God's image (Genesis 1:27) and if you are his child, discuss what it means *practically* for you to, "love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength?"
2. In what ways was Jesus answer satisfactory to the Pharisees and Herodians and how did the response challenge each of the groups?
3. Suppose it was a group of republicans and democrats that felt threatened by Jesus’ teachings and wanted to trap him in his words. What questions might they use? Using this passage as a template to consider how Jesus might answer them.

## **Notes:**

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