

Matthew 22:15-22

- Mat 22:15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk.
- Mat 22:16 And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not regard the person of men.
- Mat 22:17 Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”
- Mat 22:18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, “Why do you test Me, you hypocrites?
- Mat 22:19 Show Me the tax money.” So they brought Him a denarius.
- Mat 22:20 And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?”
- Mat 22:21 They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” And He said to them, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”
- Mat 22:22 When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him and went their way.



Context:

The Pharisees and the Herodians were normally enemies (think Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez & Donald Trump working together!) Yet, with a common threat to their way of living they joined forces to attack Jesus.

Pharisees - religious Jews who hated the Roman government and their occupation of the Promised Land & opposed Roman taxes on religious grounds.

Herodians – political Jews who sold out their own people & nation in exchange for the benefits of Roman rule (money and power) & supported Roman taxation.

Their temporary alliance was a subtle trap, for they hoped that they might be able to trap Jesus in His words and thereby find some cause to arrest Him, something both groups desired!

Observations & Discussion

1. The question posed to Jesus in vs. 16 & 17 is a question of our duty, specifically what duty if any does the child of God have to human government? Based on Jesus' response how would you answer the following:

- A. As a follower of Jesus are you exempt from the laws of Man? For example, do you have to pay state & federal taxes? Compare your answer to Rom. 13:1, 6-7 & 1Peter 2:13-17.

- B. Can you as a child of God fulfill your civic duties to these United States without compromising your faith? For example, if your Christian tradition taught pacifism what would you do if you were drafted into the Army?

- C. What should you do if the government were to pass a law that directly contradicted the Law of God ; for example, if the government required you to turn over Jews & homosexuals to the police like the Nazis did? What example from scripture would you use to justify your position?

2. How did Jesus' response in vss. 18-21 completely dismantle the Pharisees & Herodians hope of finding a cause to arrest Him?

3. In vs. 21 Jesus said, "*Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.*" What was Jesus telling us about ourselves when He compared human beings to a Roman coin? Why is that significant?

4. According to Jesus what are you supposed to give to God?