

“Whose Image”
Mark 12:13-17
9/22/24
Message 29

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “Whose Image”

- **Illustration**

- **Show Pic**

- ***Dr. Suess said, Sometimes the questions are complicated and the answers are simple.***

- Meaning does not have to be so hard...

- **Now in the rest of Chapter 12 we will see that lived out!**

- There will be

- 3 complicated questions - 3 simple answers

- 1st The Pharisees & Herodians ask

- A Political Question - Pay Taxes?

- What we will deal with today

- 2nd The Sadducees ask

- A Hypothetical Question - Whose Wife?

- 3rd The Scribe asks

- Which Is the First Commandment?

- **Now Remember - Context**

- **Jesus has come into Jerusalem – Celebrated as the Messiah**
 - Examined the Temple
 - Cleanses the Temple – Den of Thieves
 - Then they question Jesus' authority
- **Jesus Gave the Parable of the Vinedresser**
 - These leaders knew was about them
 - That they have rejected the CHIEF Cornerstone – Jesus
- **SO Now theses leaders are all joining together –**
 - To attempt to TRAP Jesus with questions
 - We will be dealing with the first one today
 - What about Taxes...
 - Whose Image is on it!
 - How Many love to pay their taxes? Haha

• **Have you ever noticed our dollar bill (which is almost like a penny today)**

○ **Show Pics**

- **Crazy stuff all over it**
 - What does the unfinished pyramid with the eye in a triangle over it mean?
- **People have different thoughts on what that means**

- 1st There are those who say that the pyramid and the eye are cultic images
 - That reflect the influence of Free Masonry on our early government
 - They mention the fact that, among the committee members who designed it, Ben Franklin at least was an confirmed Mason
 - The eye in the pyramid is evidence that sinister conspiracies are real which will impose a 'New World Order' eventually on our country...and even world
 - The Free Masons are planning the takeover themselves, or are working with European bankers and the Illuminati
- 2nd Others say that the images have a less sinister, more universal, meaning
 - For them, the Egyptian pyramid is a symbol of strength and duration the 13 steps indicate the original number of U.S. states and the 13 steps leading to an unfinished summit indicate the future growth of the nation
 - They say that the eye is the Eye of Providence and is a symbol of God's watchfulness over our nation
- Well who really KNOWS
 - BUT our text today – is very clear – Whose Image is on that bill?
 - Then it belongs to them

• **Now This Morning We Will Be looking at 2 Powerful Truths about Whose Image**

- Render To Caesar What You Owe vs. 13-17a
- Surrender To Jesus What He Owns v. 17b

Render To Caesar What You Owe vs. 13-17a

• First: Their Approach vs. 13-15a

- **1st Context – They Sent v. 13**

Mark 12:13 (NKJV)

13 Then they sent to Him *some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, to catch Him in His words.*

- **No one likes paying taxes**
 - Over-taxation has led to revolution against the ruling government many times
- **The First century Jews were NO Different**
 - They hated paying taxes to their Roman oppressors...
 - It did lead to a revolt that ultimately destroyed Jerusalem
- **NOW Note - There were three basic types of taxes:**
 - 1st There was a land or produce tax
 - That took one-tenth of all grain and one-fifth of all fruit (or wine).
 - 2nd There was a poll tax that was collected
 - Whenever a census was taken.
 - It was one day's wages – a denarius - and was paid by everyone aged fourteen to sixty-five.
 - 3rd There was a customs tax was collected at ports and city gates as toll for goods transported.

- Rates were 2 to 5 percent of the value of the goods.
- All the taxes together totaled over one-third of a person's income.
- **As a result of the TAXES**
 - Especially the poll tax
 - A movement known as the Zealots began trying to revolt against Roman rule
 - They considered paying taxes to Rome an act of infidelity to God
 - This was also on the reasons Jerusalem was attacked in 70AD
- **So their question this morning was a loaded question to ask...**
 - It seemed a NO-WIN for Jesus:
 - If Jesus answered - NO
 - It is not right to pay taxes to Caesar
 - He would be considered a Zealot sympathizer by the Roman government and be subject to arrest.
 - If Jesus answered – YES
 - It is right to pay taxes to Caesar
 - He would be alienated from the common people.
 - The religious leaders wanted Jesus OUT of the way

- **2nd They sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians v. 13**

Mark 12:13 (NKJV)

13 Then they sent to Him **some of the Pharisees and the Herodians**, to catch Him in His words.

- **1st Now The first question comes from the Pharisees and the Herodians**
 - 1st These 2 groups hated each other – They had completely different views
 - The Pharisees
 - They Were nationalistic of Israel
 - They represented narrow, conservative Judaism
 - They were right-wingers
 - They represented resistance to Rome
 - The Herodians
 - Sold themselves out to the Romans and served as their stooges
 - They Were liberal in their convictions
 - They were left-wingers
 - They Accommodated Rome
 - **BUT they are willing join forces to destroy their common enemy**
 - **2nd To Catch Him in His Words / Pretended to be Righteous (Luke 20:20)**

Luke 20:20 (NKJV)

20 So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor.

- **They wanted to seize on His words**

- They should have let His words grip their hearts
- BUT They Joined together to attempt to defeat Jesus

- *Hughes; “But they were cemented together by their mutual hatred for Jesus. The Pharisees hated him because he was disrupting their religious agenda, the Herodians because he threatened their political arrangement. They both wanted him dead”*

- They Wanted to find ways to hurt Him with his words
- They did not want to accept His Authority
- They were ALWAYS looking for a way to stop Him

- **2nd Teacher, we know that You are true... v. 14a**

Mark 12:14a (NKJV)

14 When they had come, they said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?

- **All this was – FLATTERY**

- Jesus was having nothing to do with this!!!
- These guys had an agenda

- **Application – Warning against Flattery**

- Flattery can be defined as

- Excessive and Insincere praise
 - Given especially to further one's own interests.
- Flattery has a selfish motivation.
 - The flatterer hopes to gain approval or advantage over the one being flattered.
- Someone has defined flattery
 - As saying something to a person's face that you would never say behind their back
 - O you such a GREAT Guy to his face BUT you would NEVER say that when he was not around
- The Bible has a lot to say about Flattery

Psalm 5:9 (NKJV)

9 For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; Their inward part is destruction; Their throat is an open tomb; They flatter with their tongue.

Romans 16:18 (NKJV)

18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

Psalm 12:1–3 (NKJV)

1 Help, LORD, for the godly man ceases! For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.

2 They speak idly everyone with his neighbor; With flattering lips and a double heart they speak.

3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips, And the tongue that speaks proud things,

- This SHOULD NEVER be with Christian

- 3rd Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? vs. 14b-15a

Mark 12:14–15 (NKJV)

14 When they had come, they said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You are true, and care about no one; for You do not regard the person of men, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?

15 Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?” But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, *“Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it.”*

- **Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?**

- They seemed to put Jesus in a trap.
- BUT you cant trap the Word with words...
- Is it Lawful... I mean Look at how Rome spends are money...

- **Application - This is A Struggle for God’s People**

- 1st Who likes to pay Taxes?
- 2nd When we see what our Government Does with them UGH
- 3rd Today: we as Believer still struggle with it
 - Some believers try use the Bible as a reason Not to pay TAXES
- 4th So YES - Is it BIBLICAL lawful to pay taxes

- **Second: Jesus’ Answer vs. 15b-17**

- 1st Why do you test Me? V. 15b

Mark 12:15 (NKJV)

15 Shall we pay, or shall we not pay?” But He, knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, “Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it.”

- **Bring Me a denarius that I may see it:**

- **Show Pic**

- On the denarius they showed to Jesus, there was a head of Tiberius, the reigning Roman Emperor.
 - Around his head was written the abbreviation for "Tiberius Caesar, the Divine Augustus."
 - On the back was the title "Pontifex Maximus," declaring that Caesar was the high priest of the Roman Empire.

- **NOTE**

- 1st Jesus makes them answer the question for themselves
 - The fact that they could Produce a Denarius
 - Proved they believed it was lawful to pay taxes
 - Why?
 - They were using Roman coinage on a daily basis
 - If it really bothered them, on a spiritual level
 - They would already have refused to participate in anything connected to Caesar's Rome
 - By making them produce the denarius
 - Jesus established that they were willing to benefit from the government even while they were critical of it

- 2nd At this time in history they believed that coins actually belonged to the person whose image and inscription was stamped upon it
 - In other words, the Jews would not have thought of the denarius as belonging to them...It belonged to Caesar
 - Example: Arcades
 - The tokens are only good while you are on their property; but, while you are there, you can use them to your enjoyment.
- So that leads to our ANSWER

○ 2nd Whose image and inscription is this? v. 16-17

Mark 12:16–17 (NKJV)

16 So they brought it. And He said to them, “*Whose image and inscription is this?*” They said to Him, “Caesar’s.”

17 And Jesus answered and said to them, “*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.*” And they marveled at Him.

▪ **Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s**

- If we take advantage of the benefits of governmental rule
 - We are obliged to submit to government
 - Simply said, Jesus told us to pay our taxes.
 - The Apostle Paul repeated the same idea in Romans 13:6-7.
- Wasn’t that easy
 - Doesn’t that make perfect sense
 - The coins and currency they used already belonged to Caesar

- They should therefore render... to Caesar – which means to pay what is due
- SO YES PAY YOUR TAXES

- **Third: Application – The Christians Allegiances**

- **1st Towards Taxes**

- **The Right Of The State Govern and To Collect Taxes**

- Turn to (Romans 13:1-7)

- We MUST Never forget that YES even though we have a role to play in how we are governed
- Once a choice is made we must understand it is God's Will
- Honor and respect
- Pay Taxes even when the money we give them goes to evil things

- **2nd Towards “Things”**

- **Jesus wasn't JUST talking about taxes**

- He used the word, THINGS
 - He took it to the higher level of your responsibilities, roles, and rights as a citizen of heaven living as a citizen of an earthly government
- God's people on earth hold a Dual Citizenship
 - We are, first and foremost, a citizen of heaven
 - But you are also a citizen of some country on earth and as such have a responsibility here

- **No Doubt You have Heard It said; “Don’t Talk Religion and Politics”**

- Especially with your family at the Holiday celebrations
 - Or At Work
 - Or At Etc...
 - Pastors and the church **MUST** never talk about Politics
- Some Christian **POINT** to this portion of Scripture to support that view
 - To point out that we should not be involved in politics
 - Separation of Church and State they say
 - I just **DON’T** see how they come to that conclusion with this text or any other
 - **AS** a matter of **FACT** –
 - Christians are to be Christians in **EVERY** walk of **LIFE**!
- Let’s Also Define terms - Politics
 - Is it not just **HOW** will we be governed
 - Since we have a choice in that should we not say something?
 - In reality it not be political **BUT MORAL**
 - Most issue come down to Moral, Biblical issue

- **Let's look at Separation Of Church And State**

- **Not Biblical**

- You can't find it anywhere in Scripture
 - More on this in a minute – on what a Christian should be doing

- **Not Historical**

- Some have misinterpreted the First Amendment
 - The idea of a separation of church and state.
 - The First Amendment was intended
 - To keep government out of the church
 - Not the church out of government.
 - When Thomas Jefferson wrote his letter in 1802 to the Danbury Baptists in Connecticut, he was interpreting the constitutional rights that churches had to be involved in politics.
 - The separation of church and state was intended to help churches and Christians realize that the government can't intrude, not the other way around
 - LETS be very CLEAR –
 - The First Amendment was to keep Government out of CHURCHES – not the other way around
 - Sadly –

- In 1950's, the Johnson Amendment came into law. It muzzled Pastors in the Pulpit from endorsing candidates.
 - *Johnson Amendment is a provision in the U.S. tax code, since 1954, that prohibits all 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations from endorsing or opposing political candidates. Section 501(c)(3) organizations are the most common type of nonprofit organization in the United States, ranging from charitable foundations to universities and churches. The amendment is named for then-Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, who introduced it in a preliminary draft of the law in July 1954.*
- This was NEVER the intent of our founders nor the Constitution
 - By the way President Trump symbolically over turned that

- **What our Founding Fathers Thought**

- **First Amendment**

- *Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

- **Our Founders DID not want the CHURCH separate from the STATE**

- THEY WANTED THE STATE Separate from the CHURCH
- Why would they have put SCRIPTURE ALL over the PLACE
- Examples
 - In the United States Capitol, the declaration “In God We Trust” is prominently displayed in both the United States House and Senate Chambers.
 - Around the top of the walls in the House Chamber appear images of 23 great lawgivers from across the centuries, but Moses (the lawgiver, who– according to the Bible – originally received the law of God,) is the only lawgiver honored with a full face view, looking down on the proceedings of the House.
 - The Corridor of the Capitol where the words “America! God shed His grace on thee” are inscribed
 - At the east Senate entrance the words there are Latin words that mean (“Annuit Coeptis”) “God has favored our undertakings”;
 - Images of the Ten Commandments are found in many federal buildings across Washington, D. C.
 - In the Washington Monument not only are numerous Bible verses and religious acknowledgements carved on memorial blocks in the walls, including the phrases:

- “Holiness to the Lord” (Exodus 28:26, 30:30, Isaiah 23:18, Zechariah 14:20),
 - “Search the Scriptures” (John 5:39),
 - “The memory of the just is blessed” (Proverbs 10:7),
 - “Praise be to God” – is engraved on the monument’s capstone.
- The TRUE MEANING is the STATE will NOT interfere with RELIGION

▪ **Founders Wanted the Pulpits to Speak Boldly**

▪ *President John Adams; “We have no government armed in power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Our Constitution was made only for a religious and moral people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other.”*

▪ *Alexis de Tocqueville; “I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers – and it was not there . . . in her fertile fields and boundless forests and it was not there . . . in her rich mines and her vast world commerce – and it was not there . . . in her democratic Congress and her matchless Constitution – and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.”*

- **Brief History of America**

- **We ARE A Constitutional Republic**

- To me it's Very frustrating when I hear people say Democracy
 - Democracy is Majority rule
- A Constitutional Republic
 - Is a state where the chief executive and representatives are democratically elected by the people, and the rules are set down in a written constitution. The head of state and other representatives are elected but they do not have uncontrolled power.
 - As Benjamin Franklin left the Constitutional Convention, he was reportedly asked what kind of government the founders would propose. *He replied, "A republic, if you can keep it."*
- WE ARE THE RIGHTFUL OWNERS of OUR NATION we elect Representatives and we are GOVERNED by the Constitution / Bill of Rights / LAWS

- **THE Christians Responsibility**

- First What were Not responsible for
 - Some how making the world good enough for Christ to return
 - We have people who actually believe that
 - According to God's Word this world is going to get a lot worse – BEFORE Christ comes

- Let me stress I don't SEE Politics as the Answer or our savior
 - MAIN focus HAS and WILL ALWAYS be the Gospel
 - ONLY SEEK To be a GOOD Stewart and leave a good country to our kids and grandkids
- We have a RESPONSIBILITY
 - Be SALT & LIGHT
 - Be a GOOD Stewarts
 - He who know the good...

James 4:17 (NKJV)

17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

- Be Submissive (So long as it does not violate God)
- Be in Prayer for our Representatives
- Stand and Vote for a Biblical World View
 - Abortion is evil
 - Sexual sins being promoted in our schools
 - Stand for the Constitution
 - Will this party or candidate stand strong on the Constitution
 - WHY?
 - The Constitution & America
 - Has Given Christians Freedom

- All other form of Government limits our freedoms
- As Christians we can't NOT have BLINDERS on
 - We will be accountable for our votes
- **NEVER Forget We are Pilgrim's**
 - God's people on earth hold a dual citizenship
 - You are, first and foremost, a citizen of heaven
 - **1st As A Citizen Of Heaven, You Have A Responsibility To Respect And Obey Your Government (1 Peter 2:13-17)**

1 Peter 2:13–17 (NKJV)

13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme,
14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.
15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—
16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.
17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

- Does this mean we can't speak out against leaders that do evil?
- Jesus called Herod a FOX (Luke 13:32)
- JTB called Herod out on his sin (Luke 3:19)
- Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar to turn from his sins and to do rightly (Dan. 4:27)

- Those who want to silence the church from speaking out on moral issues have carried the argument for the separation of church and state to ridiculous extremes.
 - Christian citizens should speak out on moral issues that threaten the well-being of our society.
 - We are called to be salt and light (Matt. 5:13-16) and to bear witness in this evil world.
 - Sometimes that witness involves confronting sin before we share the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.
 - I know this I am grateful for our Christian brothers and sister who spoke out against Hitler and help free the slaves in the south
- **2nd As A Citizen Of Heaven, You Have A Role To Play In Affecting Your Government (1 Timothy 2:1-2)**

- **PRAY**

1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NKJV)

1 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,
2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

- **Share the Gospel**
 - Evangelism, NOT Political Power is the WAY God will HEAL Society's problem

- If we forget this, we fall into the trap of the social gospel.
- The major problems in this evil world stem from sin in the human heart.
- The only solution is the gospel

- **Run For Office if you feel led**

- **3rd As A Citizen Of Heaven, You May Have Restrictions That Conflict With Government (Acts 5:29)**

Acts 5:29 (NKJV)

29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

- When obedience to God conflicts with obedience to government, then we go with God
- NO matter the cost or conflict

Surrender To Jesus What He Owns v. 17b

- **First: Whose Image**

Mark 12:17 (NKJV)

17 And Jesus answered and said to them, "*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.*" And they marveled at Him.

- **I want to return for a moment to Jesus' question about the denarius**
 - Whose image and inscription does it have?
- **THIS illustrates a Great Spiritual Truth**
 - Mankind has been created with an IMAGE

- Genesis 1

Genesis 1:27 (NKJV)

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

- Therefore we ought to bear His image and His inscription!

- We HAVE been Bought at a price

1 Corinthians 6:20 (NKJV)

20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

- Jesus owns US

- **Second: Our Position - Image**

- **How do we bear God's image?**

- LIVE FOR HIM

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- **Third: Our Purpose – Inscription**

- **How do we bear God's inscription?**

2 Corinthians 3:2–3 (NKJV)

2 You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men;

3 clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

- You are a living epistle
 - Everyone around you is reading about God and Jesus whenever they see or hear you

Closing

- Render to our government what you owe
- Surrender to God, because you are owned
- Whose Image Is On You?