

Trouble in the Temple

March 15th & 16th, 2014

Luke 19:45 - 20:26

The Question: Setting a Trap

The scribes and the chief priests tried to trap Jesus by asking Him a question designed to put Jesus at odds against either the people, who hated the Roman tax, or the Roman government, who required the tax.

“Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?” Luke 20:22

- ♦ “Lawful” meant according to God’s law.
- ♦ Jesus was not deceived by them.
- ♦ Jesus answered their question with a question!

“Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?...” Luke 20:24

“...Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” Luke 20:25

- ♦ Jesus’ response left no room for accusation of disloyalty to Caesar but also stressed loyalty to God!
- ♦ The “spies” marveled at His answer and became silent!

Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s

📖 Romans 13:1-7

- ♦ Taxes are necessary for laws and enforcement, for military and protection, and for infrastructure of roads and bridges, etc.
- ♦ Government in Roman times was corrupt as it is today!

📖 1 Peter 2:13-17

- ♦ Biblical examples of honoring governing authorities in a corrupt and godless environment:
 - Daniel and the Babylonian kings *Daniel 2:36-38*
 - Joseph and Pharaoh in Egypt *Genesis 41:41-46*
 - Jesus in His submission to Pontius Pilate in accordance with the plan of God!
John 19:10-11; Acts 4:27-28
- ♦ We are to actively pray for the land in which we live.
Jeremiah 29:7 “But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”

Give to God what is God’s

- ❖ Jesus was not teaching the contrast between the tax and the tithe.
 - ♦ The tithe was not a tax imposed by God but an opportunity to declare God as our sole provider!
Malachi 3:10-11 “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear,” says the Lord of hosts.”
 - ♦ God does not need our money, we need to give as an indicator of our constant trust and faith in Him!
2 Corinthians 9:7-8 “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.”

- ❖ Caesar’s image was on the coin, God’s image is stamped upon every human being!

“Tertullian, in *De Idololatria*, interprets Jesus as saying to render ‘the image of Caesar, which is on the coin, to Caesar, and the image of God, which is on man, to God; so as to render to Caesar indeed money, to God yourself.’”¹

❖ Jesus revealed that man's first loyalty is to God and that the most significant area of life does not belong to Caesar!

Caesar can have his money, God must have our life!

“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.” Colossians 3:23-24

“For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.” Hebrews 10:34-36

Endnotes:

¹From *The Writings of Tertullian*. vol. I, ed. by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1869) p. 164.
As quoted in "Render unto Caesar." *Wikipedia*. 13 Feb 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Render_unto_Caesar>.

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