

T H E T E X T • N K J V

Matthew 22:15-22



15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk. **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. **17** Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, “Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? **19** Show Me the tax money.” So they brought Him a denarius. **20** And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription is this?”

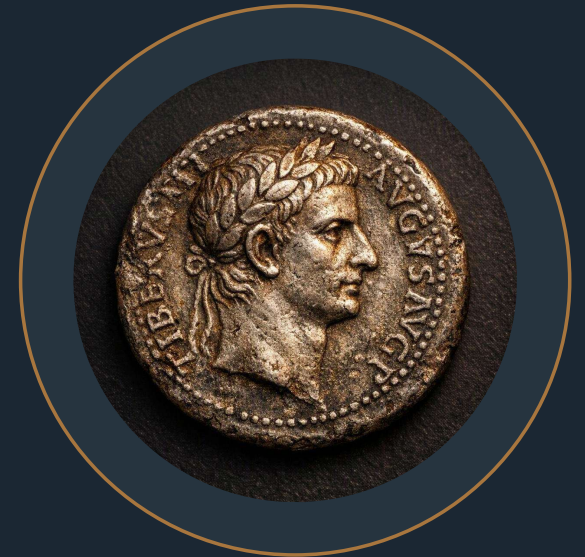
21 They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” And He said to them, “**Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.**” **22** When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him and went their way.

NEW KING JAMES VERSION

A B I B L E S T U D Y

Render to Caesar, Render to God

Matthew 22:15-22



WHOSE IMAGE?

B E F O R E W E B E G I N

My “Disclaimer”

WHAT THIS IS NOT

- I am not here to speak for or against any political party.
- I am not here to campaign for or against any political party.



WHAT THIS IS

- As Christians, our faith must permeate every aspect of our lives.
- We may not be “weekend only Christians.”
- We may not be “religion only Christians.”
- Our faith regulates our spousehood, our parenthood, our neighborhood, our employment, and our citizenship.
- These *may not* influence our faith.
- I will be preaching on **Biblical** issues.
- I cannot ignore issues because they have been politicized.

MATTHEW 5:13-16 • COLOSSIANS 3:17 • 2 TIMOTHY 4:2

Discussion of the Text

THE SETTING

- The purpose was to catch Jesus in a political trap.
- Jewish law forbade placing a foreign king over Israel (Deut. 17:14-15)
- Was paying taxes to Caesar lawful?
- Jewish parties were fractured over this issue

THE TRAP

- If Jesus said 'no' they would tell Pilate that Jesus called for refusing taxation
- If Jesus said 'yes' they would accuse Him of violating Mosaic Law

THE ANSWER

- Jesus saw the "trip wire"
- He established serving government and God are not mutually exclusive
- The Mosaic Law did not prohibit submission to a suzerain (Rom 13:1)
- We must submit to civil government (Rom 13:1-7; Matt 17:24-27)

THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES

Romans 13

“There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.”

Romans 13:1

- Therefore, let every soul be subject to the governing authorities – 1
- Whoever resists the government, resists the ordinance of God - 2
- Civil government is God’s *minister* - 4
- He is an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil – 4 b
- He does not decide *what* is evil; he executes wrath on *him who practices evil* – 4c

To what God was Paul referring?



T H E A N S W E R

To What God Was Paul Referring?

*Government does not **author** morality; it **administers** it.*

Paul wrote to Christians under Rome, whose rulers did not acknowledge the God of Scripture.

Yet the good and evil he assumes is God's standard, not Rome's (Rom 13:8-10).

Government is called God's servant even when it does not know Him (Isa 45:1-4).

When a government calls evil good, it has not changed what is good (Isa 5:20).

And where the two collide: **“We must obey God rather than men.” (Acts 5:29)**

T H E F I R S T A M E N D M E N T

The Constitutional Discussion

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

AMENDMENT I



THE “ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE”

Government may not create or endorse an official religion.

THE “FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE”

Government may not forbid the practice of religion.

- “Separation of church and state” is not in the Constitution. The phrase comes from Jefferson’s 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptists — a minority congregation in Connecticut who feared the state would interfere with them.
- He wrote to reassure a church. The clauses restrain government from ruling the church, not the church from speaking.

T W O D I S T I N C T R O L E S

Making Moral Issues Political

THE CHURCH

- It is not the mission of the church to establish a civil government (i.e. Middle Ages).
- The mission of the church is to proliferate the gospel.
- However, as individuals, Christians may and should vote for, petition representatives and influence public policy for godly values.

THE GOVERNMENT

- It is not the function of government to AUTHORIZE religion.
- Government does not DEFINE morality — God does.
- Government ENFORCES morality — that is its *God-given* charge (Rom 13:4).

So, when a law changes, *the moral standard behind it has not.*

W H E R E T H I S T O U C H E S U S

Biblical Principles that Have Been Politicized

A moral issue does not stop being a moral issue because a party adopts it.

1

**The sanctity of
human life**

PSALM 139:13-16 • GEN 9:6

2

**God's design for
marriage**

GENESIS 2:24 • MATT 19:4-6

3

**God's design for
male and female**

GENESIS 1:27 • ROM 1:26-27

The pulpit must still teach what Scripture says on each — with conviction, and with compassion for every person involved.

H O W W E M U S T S P E A K

Truth, and the Tone It Requires

“Speaking the truth in love, we may grow up in all things into Him.”

EPHESIANS 4:15

Neither word is optional. Neither one softens the other.

TRUTH WITHOUT FEAR

We speak where the Bible speaks, regardless of consequence.

LOVE WITHOUT FLATTERY

Compassion never requires us to soften what God has spoken.

PEOPLE, NOT POSITIONS

Someone in this room is personally affected by every one of these.

MERCY, REMEMBERED

We speak as those who need grace, because we all have.

M A T T H E W 2 2 : 2 1

Render to Caesar, Render to God

*“Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s,
and to God the things that are God’s.”*

- Caesar has a claim, and it is a real one. Honor it.
- God’s claim is greater, and it covers everything — including our citizenship.
- We do not divide our lives between the two. We give each what belongs to it.



The coin bore Caesar’s image.
We bear God’s.



Render to Caesar, Render to God

S E R M O N O U T L I N E · M A T T H E W 2 2 : 1 5 - 2 2 · F O L L O W A L O N G

I. INTRODUCTION - "WHOSE IMAGE?"

- Jesus asks whose image the coin bears. **Matthew 22:20**
- The text for the morning, read in full. **Matthew 22:15-22**

II. THE DISCLAIMER

- Not a campaign for or against any party.
- Faith must permeate every sphere of life. **Matt 5:13-16 · Col 3:17**
- Preach the text, even when it is politicized. **2 Timothy 4:2**

III. THE TEXT IN THREE MOVES

- The setting - Pharisees and Herodians plot together. **Matthew 22:15-16**
- The trap - no answer was safe. **Deut. 17:14-15 · Matt 22:17**
- The answer - Jesus refuses both horns. **Matt 22:21 · Matt 17:24-27**

IV. THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES

- All authority is appointed by God. **Romans 13:1-2**
- Civil government is God's minister against evil. **Romans 13:4**

V. THE HINGE OF THE SERMON

- Government does not author morality. It administers it.
- The standard assumed is God's, not Rome's. **Romans 13:8-10**
- Calling evil good does not make it good. **Isaiah 5:20 · Isa 45:1-4**
- Where the two collide - obey God rather than men. **Acts 5:29**

VI. THE CONSTITUTIONAL CORRECTION

- No establishment; no prohibition of free exercise. **Amendment I**
- "Separation of church and state" is not in the Constitution -
- it comes from Jefferson's 1802 Danbury Baptist letter,
- written to reassure a church, not to silence one.

VII. TWO DISTINCT ROLES

- The church proliferates the gospel; it does not install rulers.
- Government enforces morality; it does not define it. **Romans 13:4**
- When a law changes, the standard behind it has not.

VIII. WHERE THIS TOUCHES US

- The sanctity of human life **Psalms 139:13-16 · Gen 9:6**
- God's design for marriage **Gen 2:24 · Matt 19:4-6**
- God's design for male and female **Gen 1:27 · Rom 1:26-27**

IX. TRUTH, AND THE TONE IT REQUIRES

- Truth without fear. Love without flattery. **Ephesians 4:15**
- People, not positions - and always as those who needed mercy.

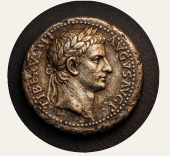
X. CONCLUSION

- The coin bore Caesar's image. We bear God's. **Gen 1:27 · Matt 22:21**
- Render to God the things that are God's - Monday included.

TO CARRY INTO THE WEEK: *What is one area of your life you have been rendering to Caesar that belongs to God?*

Render to Caesar, Render to God

MATTHEW 22:15-22 · TAKE THIS HOME



THE TEXT IN THREE MOVES

1. The question was a trap. Say no, and Rome hears rebellion. Say yes, and the crowd hears compromise.
2. Jesus refused both horns. He asked whose image the coin carried.
3. Serving the government and serving God are not competing claims of the same kind.

Government does not author morality. It administers it.

Romans 13:1-7 · Isaiah 5:20 · Acts 5:29 — we submit, until submission would require disobeying God.

ABOUT THE PHRASE ITSELF

“Separation of church and state” is not in the Constitution. It comes from Jefferson’s 1802 letter to the Danbury Baptists, written to reassure a church that the government would not interfere with it.

WHERE THIS TOUCHES US

The sanctity of human life

Psalm 139:13-16 · Genesis 9:6

God’s design for marriage

Genesis 2:24 · Matthew 19:4-6

God’s design for male and female

Genesis 1:27 · Romans 1:26-27

HOW WE SPEAK OF THESE

Truth without fear. Love without flattery. People, not positions — and always as those who have needed mercy. (Eph 4:15)

TO CARRY INTO THE WEEK

The coin bore Caesar’s image, so it belonged to Caesar. You bear God’s. What is one area of your life you have been rendering to Caesar?

Scripture references for further study at home · Genesis 1:27