

A Tale of Two Economies

Pastor Nathan Carroll

Mark 12:13-17 NLT

¹³Later the leaders sent some Pharisees and supporters of Herod to trap Jesus into saying something for which he could be arrested.

¹⁴"Teacher," they said, "we know how honest you are. You are impartial and don't play favorites. You teach the way of God truthfully. Now tell us—is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

¹⁵Should we pay them, or shouldn't we?"

Jesus saw through their hypocrisy and said, "Why are you trying to trap me? Show me a Roman coin, and I'll tell you." ¹⁶When they handed it to him, he asked, "Whose picture and title are stamped on it?"

"Caesar's," they replied.

¹⁷"Well, then," Jesus said, "give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God."

His reply completely amazed them.

The tax represented 2 things to the Jewish people:

1. _____
2. _____ (Deuteronomy 5:8-9)

Jesus' response has multiple layers:

Layer 1: Submit to the _____ God has put in place
(Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-6; 1 Peter 2:13-17)

Layer 2: God and Caesar are far from _____

- The God of heaven is on an _____ of authority.
(Daniel 2:21; Acts 4:26-28)
- This debunks the idea of a "_____ divide".

Layer 3: The "_____ " are not returning as they were

- God is establishing his _____ in the _____ rather than the _____.
(Isaiah 9:7; Luke 17:20-21; Romans 2:29; 10:9-10)

Layer 4: Focus on what is of greater _____

- How _____ are being spent.
(Genesis 1:26-27; Colossians 3:9-10)
- This will reveal what truly has _____ over you.

Small Group Questions:

1. Jesus' response to the Jewish leaders was neither expected nor what they wanted to hear. How do we respond when Jesus doesn't tell us what we want to hear? Give an example of when this has happened to you.
2. Mark has brought us back to a similar theme time and time again: the kingdom of God prioritizes bringing about change on the inside of a person before changing one's external circumstances. How is this theme brought to bear in Jesus' response?
3. What is the distinction that Jesus makes between God's reign and Caesar's reign? How does this assertion relate to a passage like Isaiah 9:7? What about Revelation 11:15?
4. What did you think about what Pastor Nathan had to say about the sacred/secular divide?
5. Humanity bears the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) and Jesus calls us to "give to God what is God's" - meaning our WHOLE lives. What parts of your life do you find this the biggest challenge with (even as this dovetails the theme of 'ownership' from the previous Sunday's message)?
6. How have you interacted with the fasting invitation at the end of Pastor Nathan's message?