

Taking it Home

- Based on Mark 12, Romans 13:1–7 and 1 Pet. 2:13–17 when is it ok to participate in civil disobedience? What other Biblical characters come to mind when you think about disobeying government?

- Having read the scriptures, listened to a sermon, and now put some time into study what are the character qualities you aspire to based on this study?

- Reading about a group of people who started off so well (the Pharisees) now wanting to trap Jesus and destroy Him should give us pause. If people who once loved the idea of God now hate the requirements on their lives that risk is just as real for you and me. We are purchased with a price and the expectation is that we will respond to God's love by faith and repentance. Ask the Lord to reveal areas you may be partnering with the world rather than with His Spirit.

- Pastor Matthew made the case that we are God's coinage; we are created in His image (Genesis 1:27). When we trust Christ we are being formed more and more into the image of Jesus (Colossians 3:10). Where do you see God forming you to be more like Jesus?

Recommended Resources

- *Politics According to the Bible* by Wayne Grudem
- *Culture Shock* by Chip Ingram
- *Counter Cultural* by David Platt

For a restatement of Pastor Matthew's sermon points, visit pastormatthew.net and click on the "Write This Down" tab.

Things That Are God's
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Mark 12:13-17

Dr. Matthew St. John
Bethel Church
February 22, 2015

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Notes:

For more information about Growth Groups, the At Home Study Guide, and a podcast of sermons with study guide, visit www.bethelhc.com.

At Home Study Guide

For the week of February 22, 2015

Mark 12:13-17

Quick Review

When Jesus was a toddler a group of zealous men rebelled against the Roman government believing that when they paid taxes they were violating the commandment that no one should make an engraved image of God. The “Zealots” as they became known, were quickly stamped out. By the time Jesus was in his 30’s the Zealots were heroic in the minds of many Jews wanting to live the spiritual life while suffering under Roman oppression. Knowing this reality, the Pharisees teamed up with their much hated enemies, the Herodians to seek to destroy Jesus. If they could trap Jesus saying the Zealots were wrong the super spiritual would label him a Roman sympathizer. If Jesus says don’t pay taxes then he will face the same death of the Zealots. Setting the scene, the Herodians and Pharisees asked Jesus if it was lawful for one to pay taxes. The tax they asked Jesus about in Mark 12 was a reaction set in place by the Romans as a reminder the Zealots were put down. In fact, the language on the coin was so inflammatory that a “true” Jew would hate to carry it in his pocket. Jesus foils the trap and pronounces judgment on those who believe themselves spiritual elite while following the ways of this World.

My Story

- What surprised you or stood out to you as significant in the message on Sunday?
- Why do you think many people believe it is unsafe to talk religion and politics?
- How are Christians in America portrayed in political culture today?

Growing Deeper

- All three of the synoptic gospel writers include this story about paying taxes: Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:19-26. Read and summarize the story according to Mark. Who are the main characters? Why is there a sense of urgency in Mark’s account?
- What do Mark 3:6 and Luke 11:53-54 tell you about the urgency of Mark 12? How long has this been in the works?
- Why are Jesus’ last words in 12:17 so important to the story? What does it reveal about the hearts of the Pharisees and the Herodians?
- How do these passages help us understand the concept of being an icon/or image of something: 1 Corinthians 15:49; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:15?