

## **Christian Allegiances (Mark 12:13-17)**

- There are two different powers which can bind people together: love and hatred
- Love is to be preferred by far; it is the glue of the Trinity. God commands it of us
- Hatred, though ultimately destructive & fragmenting can cement opposing groups
- Such was the case with the Pharisees & the Herodians: usually fought one another
- The Pharisees were right wingers and the Herodians were the left wingers
- The Pharisees were against the Romans, the Herodians were in support of them.
- But when it came down to it they were united in their hatred towards Jesus
- The continued presence of Jesus threatened their monopoly on religion and politics
- Jesus was not an easy opponent, He turned their questioning back on them (11:27-33)
- There had to be a way to trick him. They thought they had the question (12:13,14)
- They were right about one thing, Jesus would always answer with the truth (12:15)
- They hoped to either pit Jesus against the Empire or to get the people to turn on Him
- Jesus' answer was brilliant & it is renowned for its wisdom on submitting to authority

### **I. The Christian's Earthly or Temporal Allegiance (Mark 12:17a)**

- "Give to Caesar what is Caesars'" was Jesus' validation of the institution of the state
- Jesus assumes the validity of a secular state & its demands though its leader claims to be a god. A poorly run state is better than no state at all.
- There are of course limits upon the authority of the state: **3 areas we can resist** are:
  - 1) *When we are asked to violate God's command:* i.e. forbidden to preach the Gospel
  - 2) *When we are asked to partake / endorse immoral acts:* Abortion/ same sex unions
  - 3) *We must never go against our conscience to obey government*

### **II. The Christian's Eternal and Heavenly Allegiance (Mark 12:17b)**

- Jesus' amazing brilliance continues: "Give to God what belongs to God"
- Jesus recognized only 1 God thus putting Caesar in his place & none could respond
- When Jesus said, "give to God what is God's"—he stated God's ownership over us all
- As the coin bears the image of Caesar, so we bear the image of God (Gen 1:27)
- We bear His image in many ways, the awareness that we were created in his image
- Being created in the image of, we have a moral sense of right and wrong.
- We are moral beings due to His impress no matter how much we attempt to efface it.