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Living out our God-given calling as we follow Jesus and make disciples every day.

Introduction

In Mark 12:13-17, Jesus is confronted with a cunning question intended to trap him, yet his profound response shifts the focus from political obligations to spiritual allegiance. This discussion invites us to explore areas where we might prioritize worldly distractions over our devotion to God. Consider what truly bears God's image in your life and how you can honor that. Reflect on modern-day idolatries, and assess if your loyalties align with God's intentions. How can we ensure our lives reflect our divine image and commitment to Him?

<u>Disciple Measure</u>

Spirit-led Follow: How does your identity in Christ shape the way you live your day-to-day life?

Notes:

Discussion Questions

Whose Image are You Made Of?

HIGHLIGHT

Have someone read aloud...

Mark 12:13-17

EXPLAIN

Discuss the following questions...

Opening Question: Jesus faced a "trick question" about taxes. How do you handle situations where you feel trapped between two difficult choices?

- 1. What does it mean practically to "render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's" in today's world?
- 2. Why do you think the different and often opposing sects of Judaism unify against Jesus?
- 3. How does the historical context of Roman taxation set the stage for this question to Jesus?

Have someone read aloud **Genesis 1:27**.

- 4. How are we image bearers of God? What does it look like to be the image of God?
- 5. How does this concept of our image being disfigured because of sin relate to our need for Christ's redemptive work?
- 6. How has the history of the nation of Israel been impacted by idolatry? How does this mirror the effect of idolatry on the world today?

Application Questions Notes:

APPLY

Discuss the following questions...

- 1. How does understanding that we are made in God's image impact your sense of self worth?
- 2. Anything you love more than God is an idol. How can we identify idols in our lives?
- 3. Out of all the modern-day idolatries (technology, career, money, appearance, etc.), which do you find most challenging in your own life? Why?

Have someone read aloud Romans 12:1-2.

4. How does this passage help us understand how we should live in light of whose image we bear? What does living this way daily look like?

RESPOND

Force for Good: If what you idolize in life is often indicated by your time, how are you spending daily time with God? How can you consistently spend time with God and help others do the same this week?

Prayer:

Thank God for creating us in His image and for sending Jesus to restore our relationship with Him. Ask for help to identify and remove idols in our lives, and for the strength to give God the devotion He deserves.

Questions for Families

Here are some questions you can discuss with the whole family.

Mark 12:13-17

What do you learn about Jesus from the story he tells about the coin and Caesar?

For younger children, explain that Jesus is wise and sees what people are really trying to do. For older children, discuss how Jesus is teaching us about where our true loyalties should lie.

How does this story show us who we belong to?

Help younger children understand that just like the coin belongs to the person on it, we belong to God because He made us. With older children, explore the concept that we bear God's image and are meant to reflect Him in our lives.

What do you think Jesus wants us to do after hearing this story about taxes and God?

Encourage younger children to think about simple ways they can show they belong to God, like being kind or saying prayers. For older children, dive deeper into discussing how they can prioritize God over the distractions and pressures of everyday life.

NT 260

WEEK: 22

- Mark 15
- Mark 16
- Romans 1
- Romans 2
- Romans 3

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 5:45-46

Resources

Resources to Listen to

The Bible Project Podcast: Image of God Series



Join Tim and Jon from the Bible Project on this 4 episode series unpacking what it means to be

the image of God. (50 min episode average)

Resources to Watch

Bible Project Guide - Image of God



The Bible Project gives an overview of what it means for humans to be made in God's image. (6 min)

Bible Project Guide - Romans



The Bible Project gives an in-depth guide through Romans with multiple resources and videos. (10 min)

Life Group Resources

We have a variety of resources and are continually adding new ones. Some of our resources include group launch guides, on-demand training modules, and curriculum resources. To request a resource, reach out to us at groups@longhollow.com.

D-Group Resources

If you or someone you know would like to start a D-group, we have everything you need, including reading plans, journals, and a launch guide to walk you through the first four meetings.





Commentary

Notes:

What's Going On?

In Mark 12:13-17, Jesus encounters a trap set by an unusual alliance of Pharisees and Herodians, two groups usually at odds. They see Jesus as a threat and pose a tricky question: "Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar?" This question aims to corner Him. If Jesus says yes, He could upset Jewish followers who dislike Roman rule; if He says no, He risks Roman backlash.

Aware of their intent, Jesus asks for a denarius, the tax coin, and inquires, "Whose image is this?" When they answer "Caesar's," Jesus replies, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." This response is clever and profound. By acknowledging the coin belongs to Caesar, Jesus addresses the legal obligation. He then elevates the discussion by implying that while the coin bears Caesar's image, humans bear God's image, and thus our ultimate devotion should be to God.

The brilliance of Jesus' answer leaves His challengers and the crowd in awe. He skillfully avoids the trap and turns it into a profound lesson on where true loyalty should lie, teaching that fulfilling earthly duties is important, but our heart and worship belong to God.

Biblical Timeline



Creation The Exodus from Egypt

A Bit of Background

To really understand Mark 12:13-17, it helps to know a bit about the time and place Jesus lived in. During this period, Israel was under Roman rule. This wasn't very popular with the Jewish people, as they didn't like paying taxes to a foreign power, especially when the coins used for tax had the image of Caesar on them and inscriptions that some considered blasphemous. The Pharisees were a group of Jewish leaders who emphasized following the law, while the Herodians supported Herod and, by extension, Roman authority. These two groups typically disagreed with each other but teamed up against Jesus because they saw Him as a threat to their power and influence.

The denarius, the coin shown to Jesus, had the image of Tiberius Caesar, the Roman emperor during that time. It also had inscriptions claiming his divinity, which was problematic for the Jews who believed in one God. So, when Jesus asked whose image was on the coin, He was making a point about allegiance. Even though the people lived under Roman rule and needed to follow certain laws, their hearts and true worship belonged to God. This scene shows Jesus as both wise and challenging, encouraging everyone to think about where their true loyalties lie. It's a reminder that while we have responsibilities in this world, our ultimate devotion should be to God.

Notes:

Today's highlighted passage and other related passages

Birth of Crucification End of Christ and Resurection Revelation

Sermon Notes

Mark 12:13-17 CSB

Then they sent some of the Pharisees and the Herodians to Jesus to trap him in his words. When they came, they said to him, "Teacher, we know you are truthful and don't care what anyone thinks, nor do you show partiality but teach the way of God truthfully. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn't we? "But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why are you testing me? Bring me a denarius, to look at." They brought a coin. "Whose image and inscription is this?" he asked them. "Caesar's," they replied. Jesus told them, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were utterly amazed at him.

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Living out our God-given calling as we follow Jesus and make disciples every day.

daily, anchoring their lives to God's Word and obediently following the Holy Spirit where He leads.

A disciple who is always looking for ways to care for others and meet their needs. This is a practical way to be present in the lives of those around us.

every opportunity to help people take their next step ::

closer to Jesus. This is someone who is constantly looking
for opportunities to have Gospel conversations and speak
truth into someone's life.

When a disciple lives out their Godgiven calling, they naturally become a force for good :: where they live, work, and play. This type of person is : looking for opportunities to meet needs, heal brokenness, and bring tangible hope to the people in their life and in their community.

