



Jesus & Politics

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Mark*, 1975.

R. Kent Hughes, *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior*, 1989.

Timothy Keller, *Logos Sermon Archive*.

Scott Sauls, *Jesus Across the Lines*, 2015.

Head: Understanding the Bible

- 1) Read Mark 11:15-19 & 12:13-17. Why are the Pharisees and Herodians asking Jesus about taxes? What has Jesus just done to instigate their hatred of him?

- 2) Who were the Pharisees? Who were the Herodians? What was their agenda? Who would you compare them to today?

- 3) What is the trap set for Jesus?

- 4) A denarius was a silver coin that had Caesar's picture on it. On the one side it said, "Tiberius Caesar, son of the god, Augustus" and on the other side it said, "High Priest." How does Jesus' answer avoid the trap and go on the offensive? How do people respond?

- 5) Mark loves to use irony to convey truth. What do Jesus' enemies say about him? Who is Jesus claiming to be? Compare Jesus' claims to the claims of Caesar's silver coin.

Heart: Using the Gospel on Our Affections

- 6) Where does Jesus get a coin from? What kind of King has no coin?

- 7) Compare Caesar's method of getting 'worshippers' with Jesus's method on the cross. Both images demand something of us. Which is more attractive and why? (See 2 Corinthians 8:9)

Hands: Applying the Gospel to Our Lives

“Mark’s vision of the moral life is profoundly ironic. Because God’s manner of revelation is characterized by hiddenness, reversal, and surprise, those who follow Jesus find themselves repeatedly failing to understand the will of God...[therefore] there can be no place for smugness or dogmatism...If our sensibilities are formed by this narrative, we will learn not to take ourselves too seriously; we will be very self-critical and receptive to unexpected [demonstrations] of God’s love and power[.]”

~Richard Hays, The Moral Vision of the New Testament

- 8) Jesus makes the statement that we ought to give back to God what belongs to him, our whole being as image-bearers of God. If you owe God everything, how do you measure up? Are you paying your 'taxes' to Your Creator and King?

- 9) Our answer to question #8 ought to bring humility to our discussions with Christian and non-Christian friends across the political aisle. Take time to list the Biblical concerns of the party you wouldn't vote for.

- 10) How should Christians relate their government, in light of the gospel and Jesus' teaching here in Mark 12? What's been challenging or encouraging for you today? Take time to pray for the elections and the growth of the church regardless of who our president is.