

June 15th 2008: Mark 12:13-17: Giving to God What Is God's

When buying a house...what is one of the most important things you consider??

Location is also an important fact in this section of Mark's 12:13--13:1

A section in which Jesus is asked **4 questions**

Can someone tell me the location ????

- **This is the last time Jesus stands within the Temple area**

Within that place known as the house of God

And it is here that the representatives of God send.....to try to trap Him

And the way they act is neither godly nor pleasant

("Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words.")

- **Evil makes for some strange bedfellows**

Pharisees → Ultra religious.....Strongly focused on the law.....Anti Rome

Herodians→ Political rather than religious.....Materialistic....Used the Romans....

They work out a strategy for trapping Jesus in His words.....They approach Him

"Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or shouldn't we?"

Their hypocrisy is so evident in their flattery.

They hate Him, but they say all these nice things about Him in order to make it impossible for Him to avoid the question---and therefore cause Him to destroy Himself

And as representatives of God's spiritual and physical rule over His people

They do it in the courts of God's housein order to defame His chosen One

How bad can one get

Jesus sees right through them

Mark tells us that He knew their hypocrisy.....Why are you trying to trap me?

The trap itself was well thought out:

Back in AD 6 Tiberius Caesar had instituted a poll tax

This tax.....could only be paid with the roman denarius

A coin...that portrayed the Emperor as the semi-divine son of the god Augustus

With the inscription: **Tiberius Caesar Augustus Son of the Divine Augustus**

It was a tax that was forced on every Jew and they hated it

The Devout Jew(Pharisees) was opposed to paying it.....

- Because they belonged to God not Caesar
 - And because the coin itself represented idolatry
 - The Jewish Zealots refused to pay it at all.....
- And Judas the Galilean** had been executed by the Romans.....

The Herodians who were favourable to the Romans....because....

- Supported the payment of this tax

By asking Jesus to make a judgment on the payment of this tax

Both groups thought they had Him

- **If He said all should pay it.....**them.....lose the support of the people
- **If He said they shouldn't.....**Then the Herodians would soon.....

The answer Jesus gave absolutely astounded them.....(mouths hung open)

It not only avoided their well set trap.....Put the **spotlight** back on them

- **He asked for a coin.....**He didn't have one.....But it seems that they did
- And there in God's house.....**They pass Him one of these hated coins....idol on it
(*You can imagine the Pharisees squirming*)

Then He asks them: **"Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?"**

What else can they reply.....Caesar's

So if you've got one with you.....such is a sign that you have already accepted Caesar's authority over you by using his coins

You make use of the roads and accept the rule, security and peace Romans bring

- **Whether you agree** with it or not.....
you are under an obligation to pay for**And you're doing that**

& by so doing u show.....**that there** is a requirement to give to Caesar's what is
But an even greater requirementis to give to God's what is God's

Suddenly Jesus swung the focus directly on them

- **There they stood in God's house**
Proclaiming themselves as God's people.....God's special possession

Being challenged about their obedience....devotion...commitment
To the God they professed to love and serve

Left with their mouths hung open.....Wondering how it happened
That they were the ones beginning to feel guilty.....and not Him !!!

For us today who love....His words.... become a command

"Give to Caesar and to God....."

It's quite interesting that we are looking at this today.....**being June & tax**

As Xtians we have an obligation.....to be good citizens

That includes being completely honest and accountable....filling in that tax form
***(Not quite like the new Xtian who wrote to the tax office...cheque for 175
...if my conscience continues to bother me I will send the rest...)***

- **But our prime responsibility is to give to God what is His**
And that is the First claim on our lives.....for in Christ we owe Him our very lives

Ephesians 2:1 reminds us that we were dead in our sinsThen 2:4

***"But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us
alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by
grace you have been saved."***

1 Cor 6:20....."You were brought at price. Therefore honour God with your body."

**So if we are now to give to God what is God's
What are some of the things we should be giving to Him?**

- There are just so many ways that we can give to God:

And I just want to leave you with four T's:

- TIME
- TITHES
- TALENTS

TAKING of the Gospel

*In the Word For Today last Friday story of a family that had recently moved.....The little girl normally caught a bus.....but Dad agreed to take her. The route she took him on was long, complicated.....circles...
But that's the way the bus goes.....*

All of us have been constantly giving to God

- **But do we ever questioned** whether
- what we are giving is what God wants....or the way

We may have been going around the houses.....when He has a better way
A **different direction to take.....**that will achieve what He wants

And that in the end.....will turn out to be simpler....easier.....blessing

So this morning.....hear that command as though it were addressed to you
And see if indeed there are other ways that you can **Give God what is His**

And then ask Him to give you the enabling to do so

