**What Belongs To God?**

Hope Chapel Honolulu

Luke 20:1-47

 “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly, and show no partiality, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?” But he perceived their craftiness, and said to them, “Show me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?” They said, “Caesar's.” He said to them, “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.”

(Luke 20: 21-25, ESV)

**Introduction**

While these oft-quoted words from Christ—“render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Luke 20:25)—are well-known, I’m not sure they are well-understood. Why Christ made His accusers show Him the silver coin bearing the image and inscription of Caesar Tiberius and what threads of meaning He intended to make regarding the creation of mankind recorded in Genesis is difficult for us to know. However, Christ referencing this coin of the Roman Empire when His loyalties are questioned is too important for us to ignore. What really belongs to you and me, or any other person for that matter? Who or what belongs to God?

**1. The authority of Christ. (Luke 20:1-8)**

 a) The precarious position and privilege of Jewish religious leaders under Roman rule.

 b) The unified witness of the Law, Prophets and John the Baptist regarding the authority of Christ.

**2. The significant difference between faith in creation or evolution. (Luke 20:9-26)**

 a) Seeing God as the landowner and everyone else, including Caesar, as merely His tenants.

 b) “…Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (v.25).

**3. The resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. (Luke 20:27-46)**

 a) Christ’s elementary teachings about the resurrection of the dead and eternal life.

 b) The marked difference between faith leaders and the true Object of our faith.

**Conclusion**

The elementary teachings or first principles of Christ—repentance from acts that lead to death and faith in God, baptisms and laying of hands, the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment (Hebrews 6:1-2)—provide a framework of meaning which argues for a very different understanding of life and existence than capitalism, communism, socialism, evolution or Critical Race Theory. While we are surrounded, perhaps even overwhelmed by the number of faiths and thought leaders today, their conflicted teachings do not exclude the possibility of absolute truth. If Christ really is who and what He claims to be, then not only is His life the most significant in human history, but also His Person and Message are the most important ideas to understand and practice.

**For our prayerful study, discussion and application:**

1) Read Luke 20:1-8. Why are the baptism of Christ and the testimony of John the Baptist so important?

2) Read Luke 20:9-38. Which of these teaching of Christ are most significant to you and why?

3) What are the Word and Spirit of God showing and telling you about the Person and Message of Christ?

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