The Unasked Question

**Read:** Mark 12:13-17

**Text:** Mark 12:17 “…Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's,

and to God the things that are God's…”

**Introduction:** We live in two different worlds. There is secular environment around us and there is the Godly environment of the saint of God. Each and every day we encounter remnants of both worlds in the events that we face. In the 12th chapter of Mark we discover what Jesus thinks of each world. The reason that this scripture is pertinent today is in light of recent rulings of the Supreme Court. Major church denominations are rewriting their doctrinal statements to comply with laws that violate the scripture. Their argument is the first part of our text: “Render the things that are Caesar’s unto Caesar.” They shrug their shoulders and say: “It’s the law…what can we do?”

**Rendering unto Caesar:** What does it mean? The Jews were not honest in their motivation for the question but Jesus went ahead and answered it anyway. Is it lawful to pay taxes? The reason that the question is significant is because the taxes, that the Romans assessed, the Jews was patently unfair. The Roman government took advantage of any that they considered foreigners. They showed favoritism to their own. Paul played the Roman card to avoid a beating in Acts 22:8.

Even in America most people would complain a lot less about taxes if they believed that they were fair. For the Jews in Jesus day they were definitely unfair in a huge way and yet Jesus seems to not see that in His response.

He first asks a question that seems childish: “Who’s picture is on the coin? They respond: “Caesar’s.” The implication here is obvious but He goes on and finishes the thought anyway… “give to Caesar what has his imprint on it.”

**Rendering unto God:** He then gives a command that they have not

addressed: “Render to God the things that are His.” Isn’t it interesting

that they didn’t ask about their responsibility to God? But Jesus will

not let them get away ignoring the real issue. There is a troubling

theological question that they now must ask themselves: “*Who’s image*

*is on you*?” the real question here is: “*Do you resemble Caesar or do*

*you resemble God*?” If God’s image is not on you then you have no

responsibility to Him. However if God’s image is on you then there is

a problem that you need to address. In Genesis 1:27 we read: “So God

created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him;

male and female created he them.”

The ones asking this question knew this scripture very well. They are

so eager to note the abuses of Rome that they failed to realize that they

are not being true to the image of God placed on them.

Jesus moved the argument from what Caesar was doing to what they

should be doing.

**The Problem with us:** You and I get our focus on what Caesar is

Doing and tend to be so focused on the errors of Rome that we fail to

live with the image of Christ showing. We can eagerly point out the

failings of Obama and the miscues of Donald Trump. We can be 100%

correct in our views while failing to realize that God’s plan is for us to

be displaying His image. It’s not about gay marriage, it’s not about a

deal with Iran, it’s not about missing e-mails; it’s about the image of

Christ on you and I.

Do others see Christ in me? Oh they know how I feel about the

President, they know what I think about gay marriage, they may even

know who I am supporting for president but do they see the image of

Christ in me?

We can talk about the people and things that are dear to us but do the

people we are communicating with hear about the Christ that we claim

to serve? Is His image so strongly implanted on us that others know

that we belong to Him.

**Conclude:** Satan is not upset when the church is upset with gay

marriage, Planned Parenthood, or the local ordinance that limits our

constitutional freedoms. What really ticks him off is when others see

Christ in us. Colossians 1:27 uses the phrase: “Christ in you, the hope

of glory.” If that is what others see in us then we can call ourselves a

success. If not then our opinions and our life is meaningless.