

## It All Boils Down to Honor and Glory

29<sup>th</sup> Week of Ordinary Time – Matthew 22:15-21

As the Church Year winds down, so does the Gospel of Matthew. Or more correctly, the gospel for this year ramps up towards the climax and showdown between the religious leaders and the authority of Jesus as the Son of God.

**“The Pharisees went off and plotted how they might entrap Jesus in speech.”** Jealousy, greed and power are the driving forces behind their evil intentions. They hope to catch Jesus in the middle between two opposing loyalties. **“Tell us, then, what is your opinion: Is it lawful to pay the census tax to Caesar or not?”**

For the Pharisees, and those listening, Jesus cannot answer this question and remain loyal to Caesar and to God. However, Jesus does not fall for their scheme. Instead, Jesus turns the table on them asking for the very coin in which they use to pay taxes. **“He said to them, ‘Whose image is this and whose inscription?’ They replied, ‘Caesar’s.’”**

Jesus’ answer is very simple, **“Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.”** In other words, Caesar’s reign will only last for as long as Caesar is alive. Eventually, Caesar’s power and authority will diminish and be gone. While he is in power, one must pay the civil tax.

With God, the opposite is true. God’s reign lasts forever. God is the ultimate authority. God is not demanding gold or silver. God demands our hearts. What belongs to God is honor and glory. Our payment to government, civil authorities and the like are as fleeting as the grass that grows, dies and then is burned away for the next season. God is the authority that lasts forever.

Our loyalty all boils down to getting up every day to give God honor and glory. As Christians, we understand this most completely in our relationship with Jesus Christ, giving Him honor and glory in all that we do.

Blessings!



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