

Wisdom Not Worry
Tuesday, April 7, 2020
Mark 12:13-18

“Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s” (14b)

Taking almost 3 chapters and 115 verses in Mark’s gospel, the Tuesday before Jesus’ crucifixion was a busy one. Jesus spent most of the day avoiding traps set by religious leaders who were furious about His temple antics the previous day. On one occasion some Pharisees and Herodian's asked, “Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” If Jesus said no, He would be accused of denying the authority of Rome. If he answered yes, He’d lose credibility with the crowd who wearied under Rome’s taxation. Jesus’ response is brilliant – “Bring me a denarius...Whose image is on it?” “Caesar’s” they replied. “Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is Gods.” Not only does Jesus expose their trickery but He communicates the gospel in the process.

Like that coin, we bear the image of God and therefore belong to Him. Just as they were obligated to return to Caesar what was rightfully his, so we are obliged to return to God what is rightfully His, our lives. Failure to do so is to fall short of His Glory.

As kids we used to put pennies on railroad tracks. Crushed by the weight of the train you could still tell it was a penny, but was it ever distorted! This is what sin does to the image of God in us. But on the cross He took upon himself our sinful image and was crushed by the weight of God's wrath for it (Is. 53:10). In so doing He restores His perfect image in us. The scriptures say, “We are being transformed into His image with intensifying glory...when Christ appears we will be like him” (2 Cor. 3:18, 1 John 3:2). How fitting today’s text ends with the words, “And they were amazed at Him.”

Grateful,
Pastor Ben