

What do we have to 'render unto Caesar?'

The Lord Jesus was once asked a question. *'What thinkest Thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto Him a penny. And He saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto Him, Caesar's. Then saith He unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's: and unto God the things that are God's.'* (Matthew 22:15-21). In these troubling days, when so many perverse Laws are being passed by ungodly Governments, too many Christians believe we must be in complete submission to the Government, because of the Lord's Words above. But this is not true.

The Lord did not tell us to submit to the Government in everything it demands, without question. His Words were, *'Render therefore unto Caesar **the things which are Caesar's.***' He could have said, *'Render therefore unto Caesar **only** the things which are Caesar's: and **only** unto God the things that are God's,'* because that is what He meant. Why was He telling us this? Because, the Lord does not *need* that which is Caesar's, and Caesar does not *deserve* that which is the Lord's.

He was telling us to give to Caesar the things which originated with Caesar, and which Caesar therefore has ownership of. A typical example of this is the network of roads that criss-cross every country. The Government's designed and built them, along with the 'rules of the road' which regulate their use. When we use these roads therefore, we must be obedient to the rules, because, when we break them, we are out of the Will of God. But likewise, any time we surrender to Caesar that which is God's alone, we are also out of the Will of God.

If Caesar demands that you do something that the Word of God tells you not to do, then the only way to stay within the Will of God, is by disobeying Caesar. A good example of this was in Nazi Germany, when all Germans were forced to swear an oath of allegiance to Adolf Hitler, or else...

Many Church leaders told their Congregations to comply, and they would be left alone, even though this put them out of the Will of God. Those who would not comply, were arrested, and many lost their lives. Those who complied may have lost a lot more than their lives, they may have lost Eternity?

The Church Leaders cited Romans 13:1-7 to justify this, which reads in part; *'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.'*

We *should* be subject to the 'higher powers,' but again, it is *only* in those things which 'are Caesar's.' For there is a much *higher* power than Caesar, unto whom we must also be subject.

St Paul writes, *'...and ye are not your own. For ye are **bought** with a price: therefore*

*glorify God in your **body**, and in your **spirit**, which **are God's**.*' (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The Lord bought us, so He owns us, body, soul, and spirit, and we owe allegiance to *none* but Him.

The Lord warned us to, *"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."* (Matthew 10:28).

There are many examples in Scripture, of those who would not render to Caesar that which is God's alone. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar's Golden image, preferring to be thrown into the fiery furnace, rather than disobey the Lord. Daniel refused to stop praying, choosing to be thrown into the Lion's den, rather than offend God.

Others, 'were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy).'' (Hebrews 11:35-38).

This world has never been home to the sons and daughters of God. They are pilgrims and strangers here, seeking a city, *'whose builder and maker is God.'* (Hebrews 11:10).

The essence of what the Lord said can be summed up thus; *'Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesars, in everything else, the answer is emphatically, NO!'*

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