

### I- The Trap:

**Mark 12:13** And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words. Notice they began with fake complements to Him. **Mark 12:14** And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but *teachest the way of God in truth:*

If they knew this then why did they not follow His teachings and become a disciple. By the way a test of if we are a Christ follower is not what we say but what we do. Our actions speak louder than words.

The question they asked regarding paying taxes to the government represented by Caesar. **Mark 12:14b** ....*Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not? 15 Shall we give, or shall we not give?* In the way that Jesus often did He asked them to bring Him a coin and turned the tables on those trying to trap Him. **Mark 12:15...** *But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.*

### II- To Each His Due:

Imagine the scene of Jesus standing in the temple holding the coin. **Mark 12:16** And they brought it. And he saith unto them, *Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's.* With the image of Caesar on the coin He tells them His answer about paying taxes and giving into the temple for the support of God's work. **Mark 12:17** And Jesus answering said unto them, *Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.*

What is due Caesar and what is due God? Let us focus on the last phase, "*and to God the things that are God's.*"

### III- Our Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength:

Next we find another question poised to Jesus. **Mark 12:28** And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, *Which is the first commandment of all?*

What would you say is the greatest commandment? Now notice Jesus reply to him. **Mark 12:29** And Jesus answered him, *The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:*

This is a direct quote from **Deuteronomy 6:4** *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.*

Jesus tells the scribe recorded in **Mark 12:30** *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.* This is the next verse in **Deut 6:5** *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

So what is due God? What does it look like to give our all to God?

**Heart-** *...the sincerity of both the thoughts and the feelings; in other words, uprightness or true-heartedness, as opposed to a hypocritical or divided affection. (JBF)*

**Soul-** *This is designed to command our emotional nature: Thou shalt put feeling or warmth into thine affection.(JFB)*

**Mind-** *The faculty of thought: understanding, especially the moral understanding.(Vincent)*

**Strength-** *This word is also translated in the KJV might, power and ability.*

What does that look like in your life? Are we loving God and giving to God all that is required from Him? Tithing is one way we do this as we worship Him in giving back to Him who has given all to us. Giving our time is another way. However, if we only tithe and give our times God still hungers and demands more. He wants us first and then all these things will follow. By the way if our dog knows we love him or not how much more does God?

### IV- Loving Others:

Don't you wish everyone was as easy to love as you? Another thing involved in loving God is loving those in His image. **Mark 12:31** *And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.* John in the Epistle of First John touched on this as well. **1 John 4:20-21** *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? 21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.*

Jesus said in **John 13:34-35** *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

### V- The Response:

As I read these verses in closing I wish to pose this question. What is your response to loving God and giving Him all of us? **Mark 12:32** *And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: 33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. 34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.*

Are you in the Kingdom of God or are you close. Do you need to come and surrender your life to Jesus? Christian do you need to respond to His desire to have more of you?