

From Taxes to the Gospel - Sunday

(How Jesus turned a question about taxes to the Gospel)

“15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. 16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. 17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? 18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? 19 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. 20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? 21 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. 22 When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way” (Matt. 22:15-22).

The Pharisees and Herodians gathered together. But rather than taking counsel with Christ upon hearing His warnings against them, they took counsel among themselves how they might entrap Him, how they might take Him and kill Him. Their intent was only evil. They opposed their own salvation (2 Tim. 2:25). Evil men will not believe no matter what answer of truth is given. *“Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him”* (Prov. 27:22). Neither the warnings of eternal damnation nor the melodious tunes free, sovereign grace will turn the heart of man. Only God's almighty Spirit of grace can turn a sinner from the error of his way (Paul, Acts 9:1-6; 1 Tim. 1:13-15; Acts 5:31; Jer. 31:18-19; Rom. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:25). *“I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn”* (Zech. 12:10). This is God's promise to turn His people though they had killed His Son.

Pharisees opposed paying taxes to Rome. Herodians approved of Roman taxes because Herod benefited from Caesar's rule. These two opposing factions joined forces in an attempt to catch Christ in His words. If Jesus tried to placate the Pharisees, He would say men did not have to pay taxes. And the Herodians would have Him arrested for rebellion and sedition. If Jesus appeased the Herodians, He would say men should pay taxes, but this would alienate the people from Him. Thus, these men thought they had Him trapped either way. If He refused to answer, they could accuse Him of concealing the truth by avoiding a straightforward question, or they could say He was without understanding. But the wisest among men are no match for the Wisdom of God, the Lord Jesus Christ (Col. 2:3)! Satan himself could not entrap our Savior (Matt. 4). At every attempt, Jesus overcame Satan with "It is written, it is written, it is written!" Jesus told His disciples, *the prince of this world cometh; he...hath nothing in me*" (John 14:30). How much less do Satan's children have no power over Christ (John 8:44, you are of your father the devil)?

These men asked about paying taxes to Caesar. Should we pay taxes? What does the Bible say? Though evil men rule and the taxes they impose require us to labor to pay those men, yet rulers and taxes are ordained by God. God uses rulers to accomplish His will: "*The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men*" (Dan. 4:17). God told Israel when they were carried away to Babylon not to rebel against the Babylonians, but to build houses, plant gardens, give their sons and daughters in marriage, have children and seek the peace of that people in that place (Jer. 29:4-11). Under captivity in a foreign land, Israel was not to rebel against the government but to wait on the Lord's deliverance. So should we, even though throughout history, the pattern of professing believers has been to rebel against governments (U.S. History). Paul wrote in Romans 13:7, "*Render therefore to all their dues: tribute (taxes) to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour*" (Rom. 13:7). "*Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king*" (1 Pet. 2:17).

These men came to Jesus pretending that they wanted to be His disciples to lower His guard that they might entrap Him, to get Him to make a mistake and expose what was really in His heart. So they flattered Him, even though in their flattery they admitted He was immune to man's praise. They said, "*We know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men*" (v16). Christ spoke the truth to all, regardless of their position or authority among men. He did not seek to please men. He did not fear man's frowns or man's wrath. Christ knows the hearts of all men, even those who determine to hide their thoughts from Him in pretense (v18, Acts 1:24). Jesus did tell the truth. But in all of their collective wisdom, these men proved what God said in Psalm 14:2-3, "*They are together become unprofitable.*"

I have often admired the perfect wisdom of Jesus' answer. He did not avoid the question. He did not appease one or the other of these groups of men. They thought they had Him trapped. But His question to them and His answer silenced them instead! With their own trap, they entrapped themselves. Jesus said, "*Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's, but to God the things that are God's*" (v21). The greatest and most memorable truths are concise and full of wisdom. "*The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times*" (Ps. 12:6).

When Jesus said, "*Render to God the things that are God's,*" He proved these men guilty. Pharisees did not render anything to God. They stole from Him. They robbed Him of His glory by turning men from the Gospel to their own commandments: "*teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*" (Matt. 15:9). Paul told Titus, "*Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth*" (Titus 1:14). Pharisees turned men from God by their self-seeking, self-righteous ways! These Herodians were like them.

No man by nature renders to God what is God's due. "*Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness*" (Ps. 29:2). All men, by nature, seek their own. "*We have turned everyone to his own way*" (Isa. 53:6). **It is only when we are converted that we, with God-given faith in**

Christ ascribe all things to God. Only then do we see that He loved us when we did not love Him. Only then do we see that Christ died for us when we were without strength, when we were yet ungodly, when we were sinners and when we were the enemies of God (Rom. 5:6-11). It is only when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as our all before God, that we worship God in Spirit and in truth. Paul described all believers in Christ this way: *“We are the (true) circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh”* (Php. 3:3). To worship the Father, we must see ourselves for what we are, nothing but sin, and see Christ for what He is, our sovereign Lord and only Savior! Jesus told the woman at the well, *“You worship you know not what. We know what we worship, for **salvation** is of the Jews”* (John 4:22-23). We only worship God when we understand and come to Him in the Lord Jesus Christ by the salvation He has accomplished (Heb. 10:19; John 14:6; Php. 3:3). It is only then that we know we are not our own, when we see and believe Christ. It is only then that we know we have been bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20; 7:23; Hosea 3:1; Acts 20:28; Matt. 20:28). Because we have been bought out of the greatest love and grace with the price of Christ's own blood, therefore, by the Spirit of God dwelling in us, we love Christ (1 John 4:19). It is only by the Spirit of God showing to us what Christ has done from scripture, and giving us faith in Him, that we know, worship and love the Lord in truth. *“Give unto the LORD the glory due His name”* (Ps. 29:2). We owe God our love and worship and praise. Yet no man by nature renders to God His due. No man by nature gives God what is God's. How can we render, how can we give to God His due?

How can we “render to God what is God's?”

What belongs to God? What things must we “render”, what must we give to Him?

- **Obedience.** God is sovereign. He is sovereign in His requirements. He requires all men to obey Him, to obey His law. He is sovereign in His judgments. He holds all men accountable to His justice. We owe God joyful obedience with a heart full of gladness, obedience with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Not only because God is sovereign, but because He is holy. There is none holy as the LORD. Therefore, it is to Him alone that

we owe all obedience, for to do otherwise is to give obedience to the unholy. God's justice demands punishment for every failure to keep His law with joy and gladness from our heart. True obedience is a heart matter. God deserves our comprehensive, all-inclusive obedience: not in action only, but in our thoughts, our motives and our words, in all that we are, with all of our strength. Yet our obedience cannot earn anything from God. Our obedience is due to Him because He is God, because He made us, because He is worthy of all of our obedience, even our very lives. Therefore, because obedience to God is His due, when we have done all those things which are commanded us, we have done only our duty (Luke 17:10)! We cannot earn from God by our obedience, because it is our duty. If we serve God half-heartedly or begrudgingly, we do not serve Him at all, but bring a curse upon ourselves from Him (Deut. 28:47). We must obey with joy and full of gladness of heart (Ps. 100:1-4).

- **Faith.** Not only obedience, but we owe it to God to believe Him. Without faith it is impossible to please Him. To doubt God, to mistrust Him, is to hold Him suspect as a common liar. Unbelief is the root of all sin. It was the first sin. Eve doubted God's word. When satan asked, "*Yea, hath God said*" (Gen. 3:1)? And when he denied God's word and said, "*You shall not surely die*" (Gen. 3:4). Eve exchanged the truth of God for a lie. In her unbelief, she doubted His goodness. Satan accused God to Eve, saying, "*God doth know that in the day you eat thereof, your eyes will be opened to know good and evil*" (Gen. 3:5). By nature, we do not believe God's testimony of Himself (Rom. 1:18-28). Apart from His grace, we do not believe God's testimony of ourselves (Rom. 3:9-20). And until we are raised from spiritual death to spiritual life in our souls by the Spirit of God in the preaching of the Gospel (Eph. 2:4-6; Titus 3:3-6), we do not believe God's testimony of His Son (John 1:10-11). It was for unbelief that Israel fell in the wilderness (Heb. 3:17-19). It was for unbelief that Israel was cut off from Christ (Rom. 11:20). For unbelief, men are under the wrath of God (John 3:36). God is true. His word is truth (Ps. 119:89,160; John 17:17). He Himself is truth (Ps. 31:5; John 1:17; 14:6). Therefore, failure to believe Him is the root of all sin and the greatest evil of all.

- **Worship.** God alone is worthy of all our worship. Jesus said, “*Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve*” (Matt. 4:10).
- **Love.** Who but God who alone is good is worthy of all of our love? Why wouldn't we love God? God is love! He is holy! He made us! He gives to all life and breath and all things (Acts 17:25)! The first and greatest commandment is this: “*Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*” (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-39). Therefore, we owe God exclusive, most ardent love and devotion.
- **Praise, thanksgiving, and our own selves.** Not only is our obedience, faith and love God's due, but our joyful praise and thanksgiving is due to Him alone. Ps. 100 says, “*1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name*” (Ps. 100:4).

But here is the big question. How can we give those things that are due to God? All men have failed to give God His due. “*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God*” (Rom. 3:23)! We have not glorified God with all that we are. We have served ourselves and our idols instead. We are therefore great sinners! Our sin is not our failures only. Our sin is the core of who we are! We oppose God by nature. “*The carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*” (Rom. 8:7)! The Pharisees and Herodians asked if it was lawful to give taxes to Caesar. Their question had an evil intent. They wanted to entrap and take and kill Christ. But even if they had asked sincerely, their question was not the issue! The issue is what not “Is it lawful to pay taxes to men?”! The issue is: what is due to God?! What is His due? What are we to give to Him!? Jesus said, “Give to God the things that are God's!” **There is only one way we can fulfill this command. That way is revealed in the Gospel!** The only way any man can give God His due is by faith in Christ who fulfilled God's law and satisfied His justice. Christ established everlasting righteousness when He fulfilled the eternal will of God in His obedience unto death (Heb. 10:5-14; John 19:30). No one ever fulfilled

God's will before. And no one has ever fulfilled it since. There is only one righteousness: it is Christ's. The Psalmist said, "*I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only*" (Ps. 71:16)! "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. He is the perfection of the law, the fulfillment of it, and the end of it as a covenant by which men are to come God. We only give God His due when we believe Christ as He is revealed in the Gospel.

What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is given in 1 Cor. 15:1-4. Paul told the Corinthians that he preached to them the Gospel. He said by the Gospel they stood established in the truth of God's salvation. Paul told the Corinthians that in believing the Gospel they were saved, not a one-time act of faith, but faith that continually comes and finds in Christ all obedience, all cleansing from sin. Paul said that the Gospel he preached was "*How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that He was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures*" (1 Cor. 15:3-4). From this we learn first that the Gospel is about Jesus Christ. "*It is Christ that died*" (Rom. 8:34). The Gospel is according to scripture. Scripture declares Christ to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead (Ps. 2:7; Acts 13:32-34; Rom. 1:4). Scripture declares Christ to be God's chosen, anointed Mediator for His people; His anointed King to rule over them and give them salvation; their Priest to bring them to God; and their Prophet to make God and His will known to them. Scripture declares Christ to be the covenant Head and Husband of His people, who acts for them in all things pertaining to God. In 1 Cor. 15:3 we see that the Gospel is about Christ's substitutionary death for God's elect, His people (John 6:39; 10:11,15,17-18). Paul said it is "*how that Christ died **for** (substitution) **our** (those who believe, who are the elect of God ordained to eternal life - Acts 13:48) sins according to the scriptures.*" And the Gospel is "*how Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.*" He fully took them, bore them, paid God's justice for them, and made satisfaction to God. He cleansed all of His people of all of their sins by Himself when He suffered and died in obedience to God on the cross, as He cried in those most momentous of all words, "*It is finished!*" (Heb. 1:3; Lev. 16:30; Heb. 9:26; John 19:30). The Gospel is according to scripture. It is not new.

It was promised by God from eternity to Christ and His people with Him (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 3:11). It is not new because scripture reveals the Gospel throughout. Scripture tells how God clothed Adam and Eve from the skins of an animal. Abel offered a lamb. Noah was saved in the ark. God saw the blood of the Passover lamb for those in the house. Sacrifices and offerings were made in the tabernacle day and night all the years and centuries of the Levitical priesthood. All of the prophets tell of Christ's sufferings and death (Isaiah 53; 1 Pet. 1:11; Psalm 22, 31, 38, 40, 69, 88, 89, 110). Thus, the Gospel is what Christ accomplished and obtained in His death, burial and resurrection. "*How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the scripture.*" He did it. He did it alone. He did it once. It was done. And it took place outside of our personal experience, at a time in history, on a place outside the walls of Jerusalem, 2,000 years ago! The Gospel is glad news from heaven to sinners about what Christ did in His life and death. His life and death is history. The Gospel is not about what God is doing in your life or my life today. The Gospel is not about miracles. The Gospel is not about life-transforming experiences. The Gospel, which is the power of God, is not about what we experience at all (Luke 10:20). The Gospel is about what Christ did 2,000 years ago. It is about what He accomplished according to the promises and prophecies and types and historical accounts God gave throughout OT and NT scriptures. **The Gospel is about what Christ has accomplished and obtained because by Himself He fulfilled and finished the eternal will of God to save His people from their sins. The Gospel is the glorious achievements of the God of heaven who purposed from eternity to have a people for Himself, and how that in time He came in the person of His Son, took their nature, and bought them from all that His own justice required at the price of His own blood (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:18-20)!**

Why the Gospel is good news

The Gospel is good news because **it** is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth (Rom. 1:16-17). The Gospel is good news because it tells what Jesus Christ accomplished for chosen sinners, what He obtained from God for them in His own person as a Substitute in their place and on their behalf. The Gospel is

what Christ did by His death and resurrection. Listen to the testimony scripture gives concerning the accomplishments of Christ in His death, burial and resurrection:

- First, He **reconciled** His people to God (2 Cor. 5:18-21; Col. 1:21; Rom. 5:9-10; Ps. 85:3; Isa. 12:1-3). He died the Just for the unjust to **bring us to God** (1 Pet.3:18).
- In reconciling His people, **He took away the wrath of God** from His people (Rom. 5:9-10).
- **He made full payment for their sins** by the offering of Himself, bearing their sins under the wrath of God; He **gave His life a ransom** to God's justice for all of His people (Matt. 20:28; Gal. 3:13). Having **paid the full, compensation to God that their sins deserved in His death**, He made full remission of their sins. God no longer remembers their sins (Heb. 10:15-18), no longer sees their sins (Num. 23:21; Jer. 50:20). The debt has been fully and forever paid by Christ. Therefore, God has forgiven all of the sins of all of His people (Eph. 1:7; 4:32; Col. 1:14; 22; 2:13)! Think about it! One man, the God-man, the Son of God in our nature, for all of God's people, paid the price God required to full satisfaction!
- One man, the Son of God in our nature, for all of God's people, offered Himself once, and paid all that God's people owed! **He obtained their eternal redemption** (Hosea 3:1; 1 Pet. 1:18-20; Heb. 9:12, 15; Titus 2:14)! Payment having been fully made, the lawfully imprisoned debtor is set free. All their sins are forgiven (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Ps. 85:2-3; Rev. 5:9). There is absolutely nothing left. Their past sins, their present sins, their future sins are all washed from them by the blood of Christ. *"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness"* (Zech. 13:1)!
- He not only set them free from the guilt and condemnation of the law, from sin and death and the devil (Gal. 3:13; Rom. 8:34; Titus 2:14; Gal. 1:4; Rev. 20:3; 2 Cor. 4:6; Acts 26:18), but **He made them holy to God**. By the death of Christ, all of God's people are without spot, without blame, without sin and without iniquity (Num. 23:21; Jer. 50:20; Col. 1:22; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 1:5; Heb. 10:10; 13:12). *"21 You, that were sometime alienated and enemies in*

*your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled **22** In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight” (Col. 1:21-22).*

- He **established their everlasting righteousness** (Dan. 9:24; 1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 10:4; Php. 2:6-8; Rom. 5:17,21). **He justified them by His death.** God justified Him and His people in **His resurrection** (Rom. 4:25; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 5:9; Gal. 2:21; 3:21; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:34).
- He **perfected them forever** (Heb. 10:14).
- **He secured their eternal inheritance, eternal life** in Himself (John 11:25; 14:6,19; Eph. 1:11; Heb. 9:15).
- **He Fulfilled every condition required to put God’s everlasting covenant of grace into force**, that covenant in which God committed Himself to be our God, to make us His people, to write the law of the Spirit of life, this Gospel, on our heart (Rom. 8:1-4), to put His Spirit within us, and to no longer remember our sins, but never leave and never forsake us, no, never (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:10-12; 13:5,20; Matt. 26:28; Hosea 11:8). He **saved them from their sins** (Rom. 11:27; Matt. 1:21; John 19:30; Gal. 1:4; Titus 2:14; 2 Tim. 1:9).

Thus, the Gospel is good news because Christ has done all and because God has received all that He did from Him for His people! Oh, do you find this to be the best news in all the world?! I do!! **Christ, by Himself, did all to save His people** and bring them to God! We did not do, and we cannot do one thing (Heb. 1:3; Isa. 59:16; Titus 3:5; 2 Tim. 1:9). He did it **a long time ago**. It is therefore **done** (John 19:30)! It is **perfect** (Rom. 10:4; Heb. 10:14)! It is **eternal** (Heb. 10:12-14)! His resurrection and ascension and enthronement in glory told to us in scripture is God’s proof that Christ has obtained our reconciliation, atonement, redemption, justification, sanctification, even our perfection (Col. 1:21-22; Heb. 9:12; 10:10; 13:12; 10:14; Rom. 4:25; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12). It is good news indeed! Not only because Christ did it a long time ago outside our personal experience and without our personal contribution, and not only because He did it by Himself, but it is good news because His work is complete and perfect. Nothing can possibly be added to it, and nothing can be taken from it (Eccl. 3:14; Gen. 1:31; Heb. 1:3; 10:14). This is what the Gospel declares to us! And it is good news

because what our Lord Jesus did He did with eternal benefit; He forever perfected, forever justified, forever redeemed, forever put away the sins of His people! And, it is good news because all that Christ did, He did for those without strength, ungodly, sinners, even the enemies of God! It is good news because there is nothing in salvation that depends on me, the sinner! From first to last and everything in between, God has done all in Christ! Christ died for those God chose. The Lord Jesus chose His people; they did not choose Him (John 15:16). Salvation does not depend, therefore, on my will, my choice, my work, or my anything! It is in spite of my sin, in spite of my unbelief (Ps. 106:7-8)! This salvation that Christ has finished and which is declared to us in the Gospel is declared to us as a perfect, finished, eternal work that we might believe Him, that we might look to Him and come to God in Him in confidence, in trust, in hope and in assurance that Christ is everything in our salvation! We come, we stand, and we will be presented before God perfect in Christ, without spot or wrinkle any such thing, because God sees Christ and is well pleased with Him, and He sees all of His people in His Son (Rom. 5:19; 1 Cor. 15:22; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Cor. 1:30; Philemon 1:12,17-18)! He sees us not as two, but as One! We are One with Christ! One in eternal election: we were chosen in Him. One in His covenant headship: what He did and what He suffered was our doing and our suffering (Rom. 5:19; Gal. 3:13; 2 Cor. 5:21)! God justified His people for what He received from His Son!

Jesus said, “Render to God the things that are God’s.”

We owe Him joyful obedience with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Christ rendered this obedience to Him for His people. Believing Christ, we have rendered to God what is God’s: perfect, joyful, loving obedience with the whole heart, soul, mind and strength of our Redeemer (Rom. 10:4; 2 Cor. 5:21)!

We owe God our most ardent love. But believing Christ, we learn how that He loved us from everlasting in Him (Jer. 31:3; Eph. 1:4). We learn that God so loved us that He gave His Son for us. That Christ loved us and gave Himself for us. And that the Spirit of God loved us and raised us from the dead (Eph. 2:4). Believing Christ, we learn what love is. It is not that we loved God, but that He loved us and

sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:9-10). It is because we believe the love that God has for us as revealed in the Gospel that we love Him (1 John 4:19). “*We have known and believed the love that God hath to us*” (1 John 4:16). We can only love God if we see that in Christ He first loved us (1 John 4:19; John 15:9).

We owe God our worship. But we can only worship God if and when we worship Him in Christ: “**22** *Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him” (John 4:22-23; Eph. 1:13; Ps. 25:5; 69:13). “*We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit (His revelation of Christ makes the Gospel good news in my heart), and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*” (Php. 3:3).*

All our praise is due to God. But we can only praise God in Christ. “*In that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. 2 Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. 3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. 4 And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. 5 Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth” (Isa. 12:1-3). “*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood...be glory and dominion for ever and ever*” (Rev. 1:5; 5:9; 15:1-4).*

We must come before God with joy and singing. But we can only come to God in Christ, only please God by faith in Him (Heb. 10:19; 11:6). “**33** *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? 35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen*” (Rom. 11:33-36)!

We have been bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20). We are not our own (Ps. 100:1-3). Therefore, we are to glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's. We owe our whole self, body and soul, to our faithful God, Creator, Sovereign, gracious Savior! These things are God's. Therefore, may God give us grace to look to Christ as He is declared and revealed to us in the Gospel. May God give us faith to see Him, embrace and trust Him, know and love Him, and find our all in Him! And may we thus praise and thank our great God and Savior from our very heart and soul! Render unto God the things that are God by looking to Christ and giving your all to Him in worship and praise. *“1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”* (Rom. 12:1-2).

The Pharisees and Herodians wanted nothing more than to entrap, take and kill the Lord of glory. So they asked Him if it was lawful to render taxes to Caesar. But Jesus, the Wisdom of God, silences their entrapment. He direct them to the Gospel, **for it is only in believing Christ as He is revealed in the Gospel that we can render to God the things that are God's!**

We know that we render to God the things that are God's because our answer to every question and requirement and command of God is Christ and Him crucified! Knowing Christ completely, perfectly and eternally has fulfilled the will of God, and that God is well-pleased with Him for sinners, knowing that God commands us in the Gospel to look to Him and come by Him, we therefore cast the weight of our eternal souls on His promise and truth in the Gospel!