

**Remnant Life Church**  
January 22, 2017  
**Jesus and the Political Question**  
Matthew 22:15-22

- On Friday this past week we experienced something that is becoming more and more unique in our world today
  - An orderly transfer of power at the highest level of government
  - 194 recognized nations in the world
    - Less than half have fully free elections
  - Power in most countries is not left to the people to decide
    - Royalty
    - Military
    - Dictatorship
    - Communism
- Presidents
  - At 70 Donald Trump is the oldest ever to be inaugurated to the office surpassing Ronald Reagan who was 69
  - The youngest was Theodore Roosevelt – age 42 (Kennedy was 43)
  - James Madison (4<sup>th</sup>) was 5’4” and weighed just over 100 pounds
  - William Taft (27<sup>th</sup>) tipped the scales at 335 pounds getting stuck in the WH bathtub the first time he used it
  - Theodore Roosevelt (26<sup>th</sup>) apparently craved attention so much that it was said he wanted to be the bride at every wedding and the deceased at every funeral.
  - Not all were verbose and eloquent – Calvin Coolidge (30<sup>th</sup>), nicknamed “Silent Cal” because he spoke so little was told that a reporter made a wager that he could get Coolidge to say more than 2 words – the President’s response upon meeting the man was, “You lose!”
- George Washington was the only president to be elected unanimously so there has always been opposition.
  - With social media, however, every word spoken, every thought, every reaction by every person regardless of their experience, their wisdom, their maturity, or capabilities has the potential to be instantly known around the world.
  - All this, may I say, to our great detriment
  - Today Hollywood and the entertainment industry has been christened the melting pot of conventional wisdom – in reality it is neither conventional or wise
- But there is certainly a sense of entitlement that pervades our culture has brought us to the place where every person thinks what they want they should have and what they believe or say is truth
- But what is the role of the Christian in a time like this?
- First we must know who and what the Bible says we are in relationship to the world...

- **John 15:19** - *If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.*
  - **Rom 12:2** - *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*
  - **2 Cor 2:12** - *What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.*
  - **2 Corinthians 10:3-5** - *For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*
- Jesus had the question of politics put before Him

**READ - Matthew 22:15-22**

What is happening here?

- The Pharisees have held a meeting and have decided they have been embarrassed by Jesus for the last time
- It is Tuesday of the final week of Jesus' life
- Among his teachings that day Jesus tells the parable of the wedding feast and it is obvious to everyone listening that He is speaking of the Pharisees and their hypocrisy
- The plan is pretty direct and simple: kill Jesus
- The idea was to trap Jesus
  - They believed they had created a question that even Jesus could not answer without putting Himself into trouble
- Dirty politics makes for strange alliances even in biblical times
  - The Pharisees and the Herodians were usually against each other
    - Pharisees – Jewish sect who lived in strict and rigid adherence to the traditions and laws first given by Moses; most who Jesus encountered were corrupt, egotistical, and being anything but a godly example to the people
    - Herodians – a public political party of Hellenistic Jews (Greek influence) who were friendly toward and supporters of Herod the Great (also those who believe it is more related to Herod Antipas – oversaw the executions of Jesus and John the Baptist)
    - The Pharisees were against taxes because they were put in place by the Roman government to support their system which was oppressive to the Jews

- The Herodians supported taxes because it funded their efforts on behalf of the Roman government
  - They thought if they could get Jesus to speak against paying taxes, against the law of Caesar, they could have Jesus arrested, possibly even have Him executed on the charge of treason
  - On the other hand if He supported the paying of taxes the Jews and the Pharisees would rise up against Him
  - Either way they thought they had him trapped
- What was Jesus' response?
  - First – he saw through their vain and insincere flattery
  - They were approaching Jesus in the same way that they required others to approach them
  - Second – he brought to their attention the truth
    - Denarius was a silver coin minted by the Roman government
    - It was expressly for the purpose of the tax and the only acceptable form of currency
    - This is what the money-changers did at the temple during tax time
  - The coins minted by the government had an image of Caesar on one side and a written inscription on the other
  - Jesus' answer was very simple – give to Caesar what belongs to him and give to God what belongs to Him
  - “Render” or “give back” is to return what rightly is another's
    - Jesus was saying you should give back to the government what is theirs to begin with (the tax)
  - As Christians we live in the world but we are not to be of it – meaning to live as the world does
    - This is why at RLC we provide giving statements to take full advantage of what the government allows in easing our tax burden today
    - This is not cheating God it is, like the Christians of Jesus time, living within the governmental system of the day
- Since Jesus endorsed living within the system of government of the day how should act in these volatile times?

### 1. Be a peacemaker

- a. **Matt 5:9** – *blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the Children of God*
- b. Our actions speak to who we are
- c. Has a political argument ever changed another person's stance?
- d. Are you a mature enough Christian to walk away?
- e. If not, why not?



## 2. Refuse to speak negatively

- a. It is easy to pile on but resist the desire
- b. Social media is a dangerous thing because of anonymity
- c. **Matt 15:18** - *But the things that come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them.*
- d. We must guard our hearts so that it does not become an opening for Satan to bring more in that leads us away from God
- e. **I Peter 5:8** - *Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*
- f. Sober – calm and collected in spirit; under control; aware

## 3. Earnestly and honestly pray

- a. **I Tim 2:1-4** - *I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people — for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.*
- b. There is a blessing attached to this command
  - i. Live peaceful and quiet lives
  - ii. Prayer impacts our surroundings and changes what is happening
- c. There is a glimpse of the character of God
  - i. It pleases Him when we do this
  - ii. He wants ALL people to be saved and know His truth