



“The Trap: Challenge #1”

Mark 12:13-17 ♦ Pastor Jim Lennon
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Introduction – Three separate groups within the Jewish Sanhedrin now question Jesus in an effort to trap Him in what He says. The first group to challenge Him are the Pharisees and Herodians.

I. The Question: Whose side are you on?

- A. The Pharisees and Herodians disagreed about everything, making their joint challenge to Jesus unparalleled.
- B. They ask Jesus whether it is lawful or not (according to Jewish law) to pay the poll tax to Caesar.
- C. The poll tax was to be paid using a Roman denarius.
- D. The Pharisees and Herodians knew that whatever side He said He was on, He would discredit Himself.

II. The Answer: Neither Side.

- A. Jesus asks to see a denarius, and then whose image was on it.

- B. Jesus’ answer foiled their trap and left them amazed.
- C. Jesus distinguished between God’s authority and Caesar’s authority.
- D. They are separate, but we are to give each one their due tribute.
- E. Jesus shreds their current theory of government.

III. Practical Applications.

- A. For wisdom in responding to an issue that is not clearly referred to in Scripture, look for a broader Biblical principle that applies.
- B. Human authorities are to be respected and obeyed, but they are not absolute.
- C. Christians will always live in a certain tension with their government.
- D. If we choose to resist a human authority, we are to do so respectfully, peacefully and take the consequences.

Conclusion