## Giving to God and Government MATTHEW 22:15-22

Insofar as God is the foundation of all authority, He exercises that foundation because He is the author and the owner of His creation. He is the foundation upon which all other authority stands or falls. -R.C. Sproul

I. The Challenge

II. The Correction

## Into the Bible

 In v.16 his opponents characterize Jesus as "a man of integrity", and "one who teaches in accordance with the truth", and "not swayed by men". This could be seen as empty flattery, but did they have this right about Jesus? Why lead with this before asking their question?

 James gives us a pretty clear example of being "swayed by men" in James 2:1-13. Paul also calls out the willingness to show favoritism in I Timothy 5:21. Why is favoritism specifically identified as a sin by James (v.9)? (Deuteronomy 10:17, Job 34:17-19)

## Application

3. As Americans we are fiercely protective of our personal liberty. Our rights as citizens are very important to us and highly valued. So, the issue of obedience to governing authorities can pose challenges for us. Christ's command to "render unto Caesar" is given a fuller exposition by Paul in Romans 13:1-7. Why are we to submit to earthly authorities? Read also I Peter 2:13-17.

4. Is our obedience contingent on the government's legitimacy, or its moral qualities, or the "proper" political stance? Remember who these admonitions were written to and the government ruling them at that time. I Peter 2:18 also is a nudge in this direction.

5. Where do we set the limits to our obedience to authorities who command us to something which is wrong (Acts 5:29, Daniel 3), or command us to stop doing something which is right (Daniel 6)? How does Jesus' statement before Pilate in John 19:11 apply to this question?

## **For your Families**

6. Talk with your children about how and why we respect and obey those in authority over us.