

# God and politics

## GOD-CENTERED

Matthew 22:15 – 22 (ESV)

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### MESSAGE NOTES

*Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle Him in His words. And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and You do not care about anyone's opinion, for You are not swayed by appearances. Tell us, then, what You think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put Me to the test, you hypocrites? Show Me the coin for the tax." And they brought Him a denarius. And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." When they heard it, they marveled. And they left Him and went away. — Matthew 22:15 – 22 (ESV)*

*"... give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." — Matthew 22:21 (NIV)*

#### **Jesus invites us to be God-centered by:**

- **Having a conviction about ownership**

*"Show Me the coin for the tax." And they brought Him a denarius. — Matthew 22:19 (ESV)*

- **Giving a call to worship**

*Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness ..." So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. — Genesis 1:26 – 27 (ESV)*

*I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. — Romans 12:1 (ESV)*

*Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name; worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness. — Psalm 29:2 (ESV)*

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- **Giving a caution concerning our deepest identity**

*For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.  
– Hebrews 11:10 (ESV)*

*For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.*

*But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city. – Hebrews 11:14, 16 (ESV)*

*Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the Lord!*

*The Egyptians are man, and not God, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit ... – Isaiah 31:1, 3 (ESV)*

*Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God. – Psalm 20:7 (ESV)*

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Discussion Starter: Read Matthew 22:21. Why do you think this verse is so well known both in and out of the church?
- How do we strive to live with grace and truth as God's people during such a charged and divided political season?
- Read Matthew 22:15 – 22. What was your biggest takeaway from the passage this week?
- Read Genesis 1:1 – 2 and Romans 12:1. Why is being "*made in the image of God*" so central to Jesus' interaction with the Pharisees in this passage and His message for us?
- How is Jesus' statement to give "*to God what is God's*" connected to living a life of worship?
- Read Isaiah 31:1, 3. Why is prayer and being led by the Spirit always such an important part of finding strength and wisdom?
- Why does Jesus caution us about misplacing our ultimate hope and identity?
- Read Psalm 20:7. What is the message of this verse and why is it so relevant for today?
- Pray for our nation, for our elected officials and for God's hope through the Gospel to be proclaimed to the nations.