

# (Independence Day) Show Honor 3-06-C

**W**hile Jesus was teaching on earth there were always those who tried to discredit Him. One day two groups joined forces in a plan to trap Jesus and end His popularity. The Pharisees were strong nationalists that struggled under Roman rule and tried everything possible to regain the nation of Israel. The second group was called Herodians, who honored the Roman rule of Herod. What would normally have been bitter enemies became partners in planning a trap for Jesus. They devised a question about paying taxes to put to Jesus in a public place. If he approved of these taxes the Pharisees would convince the crowd that He was a disloyal Jew, a traitor. If he disapproved of the taxes the Herodians would have Him arrested for being disloyal to face execution for treason. They believed they had a perfect plan to place Jesus in a public position with no correct answer.

Jesus understood the trap behind what appeared to the crowd to be a simple yet important question. Jesus was not surprised by the plot of the Pharisees and the Herodians, but He understood the bigger picture or consequences of His answer far better than those deceitful men. Jesus was not going to become involved in the politics of His day for He came to begin a spiritual kingdom for eternity, not a political overthrow of an earthly government. Jesus knew that it was important to obey the laws of the land, but it was even more important to obey the Heavenly Father. He had the perfect answer.

Jesus asked someone to hand Him the coin that was used to pay taxes. They handed Him a denarius which He held up before the crowd that had gathered to hear His reply. Jesus asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?" Everyone knew the answer to that simple question. They replied, "Caesar's." Jesus used a common object that everyone recognized to teach a lesson they would remember every time they handled one in the future.

Then Jesus stunned them with the words, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." This strong and clear answer spoke volumes and caused the people to leave in amazement. Jesus had simply reminded them that the image on the coin deserved the honor belonging to political leadership. But these people also knew that the Word says we are created in God's image, and our lives are to be given back to God who deserves the spiritual honor.

Today we celebrate our national government and its leadership. It is fitting, as Jesus taught, to honor that with obedience to the laws, payment of taxes, and respect for its leadership. At the same time it would be wrong to do that and ignore the fact that we are to also show honor and respect by giving our lives to the God in whose image we are all created. Let us show honor to our God and our nation today.

## Teacher's Notes.

- I. **The place.**
  - A. A religious trap.
  - B. A national trap.
- II. **Jesus understood.**
  - A. Politics of His day.
  - B. Knew the real problem.
- III. **Illustrated lesson.**
  - A. Asked for a coin.
  - B. Asked a question.
- IV. **Giving honor.**
  - A. Pay your taxes.
  - B. Give to God.

## Activity

Students will create banners with today's verse. They will decorate the banner with the national flag and coins around the first phrase. They will draw or apply pictures of people around the second phrase. We show honor to our nation but we also show that our lives are to be given to God.

## Teacher Growth

Do some preparation before today's lesson on the history of your country. Bring in some items or materials that will help you explain your nation's flag, history, and coins. Talk about the symbols selected for your country's monetary system and how they have meaning related to history.

## Scripture Passages

Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26

## Memory Verse

Matthew 22:21 "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."





