Christian Challenge of Wichita Study Guide
Matthew 15:29-38
10/29/2026

Main Idea: *Render to earthly authorities what they are owed, but give God what is rightfully His—your life.*

The Trap: A Question of Allegiance (v. 15–20)

Read Matthew 22:15–20.

- Why did the Pharisees and Herodians approach Jesus with a question about paying taxes to Caesar? What made their question particularly difficult to answer?
- In verse 16, the Pharisees and Herodians flatter Jesus by praising His integrity and truthfulness. How do their words contradict their actual intentions? What does this reveal about their hearts?
- Although the Pharisees and Herodians had different political and religious convictions, they were united in their opposition to Jesus. **What were they ultimately trying to protect, and what does this reveal about where their allegiance truly rested?**
- Jesus asks, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" Why is this question significant, and how does it prepare the way for His response in verse 21?

Render to Caesar: Honoring Earthly Authorities (v. 21a)

Read Matthew 22:21 and 1 Peter 2:13-17

- What does Jesus mean when He says, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's"? How does Peter's teaching in 1 Peter 2:13-17 help us understand our responsibilities toward earthly authorities?
- In the sermon, we were reminded that **"honor does not equal agreement."** What does it look like to honor a political leader or authority figure whose decisions or beliefs you strongly disagree with?
- How should our allegiance to Jesus influence the way we engage in political conversations, especially on social media or with people who hold opposing views?
- Beyond paying taxes, what are some practical ways that you can demonstrate respect and honor toward those in authority? How might doing so serve as a testimony to your faith?

Render to God: Giving Him Your Life (v. 21b–22)

Read Matthew 22:21–22 and Genesis 1:26–27.

- Jesus points to Caesar's image on the coin when explaining what belongs to Caesar. According to Genesis 1:26–27, whose image do we bear? **How should bearing God's image influence our understanding of who deserves our ultimate allegiance?**
- The Pharisees and Herodians spoke respectfully of Jesus, but their actions revealed that their allegiance was ultimately to themselves. **In what ways might we profess Jesus as Lord while living as though something else has greater authority over our lives?**
- The sermon highlighted politics, entertainment, and academics as things that can compete with Jesus for our worship. Why do you think good things can so easily become objects of misplaced worship? Which of these areas, or perhaps another, do you find most challenging?
- Consider how you spend your time, what you frequently talk about, and what occupies your thoughts. What might these things reveal about what you value most? How can we distinguish between simply enjoying something and allowing it to become an idol?
- **What is something you would be afraid to lose or surrender if following Jesus required it?** What does that fear reveal about where you might be placing your security, identity, or hope?
- The Pharisees and Herodians marveled at Jesus' answer but walked away without any recorded response of surrender. How does the gospel give us both the ***reason*** and the ***freedom*** to surrender our lives to Jesus?
- **What is one practical step you can take this week to demonstrate that your ultimate allegiance belongs to Him?**