

Tommy Meador / General

The Gospel of Luke / Luke 20:20–26

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## Introduction

- Five year old me - Career day - wanted to be president of the United States - I was ambitious. Now, at 45, there's no way I'd want that job. BUT... this is the year that someone will be elected for that job.
- This year in our country - 2 parties competing to see who will lead our country. Democrats and Joe Biden OR Republicans and whoever is voted as the Republican candidate for President of the United States. In all likelihood, two men running for president who should probably both be thinking about retirement instead of presidency.
- Next few months will be intense - political ads will be everywhere. You'll be told a million times: "This is the most important election of our lifetime." Mudslinging will be in full force. AND we'll choose sides, and we'll passionately choose sides.
- Your social media feed will be full of posts from your friends and family members about which candidate they love and which candidate they hate. You're probably going to get mad at some friends this year. If we're not careful, we'll probably let politics divide us at some point this year.
- Election Day - Nov. 5 - some of us will be excited that our candidate won. Others will be frustrated. Whoever wins, we'll likely all say that our country is heading in the wrong direction.
- There has to be a better way. There has to be a better Kingdom. [Luke 20:20-26](#) IS the better way. Timely passage as we enter 2024. Jesus

talks about politics. We desperately need to hear what the King of kings and Lord of lords says about politics. 2 Challenges from this passage:

## You need the right political perspective in 2024.

- Tuesday of Holy Week - the most significant week in human history. Jesus entered Jerusalem revealing Himself as the long awaited Messiah - but NOT the Messiah the people expected because holy week will end at a cross NOT a throne.
- vs. 9-18 - A parable in which Jesus condemns the religious leaders because of their rejection of Him.
- The religious leaders want Jesus dead (vs. 19). They do not want the masses to follow Jesus. Jesus is a threat to their power. However, the religious leaders cannot put Jesus to death. Only Rome could issue the death sentence - not the Jews.
- The religious leaders need Jesus to transgress against Rome - so they come together to trap Jesus. [Mark 12](#) - Herodians and Pharisees team up. Herodians and Pharisees were enemies. Herodians supported King Herod and Rome while Pharisees did not. BUT... they come together to trap Jesus.
- Vs. 21 - They set the trap with flattery... “You’re a great teacher. Help us to settle a debate. Should we pay taxes to Caesar or not?”
- THIS was a HOT debate over the yearly Poll tax put in place in 6 A.D. - a denarius - a day’s wage. The Jews hated it because every time they paid it, they were reminded they were dominated by another empire. (Imagine Russian militia on every corner and imagine having to pay Russian Rubels every year.)
- At this time, Tiberius was the Roman emperor. If you held a denarius in your hand, on one side you would see an image of Tiberius and words “**Son of the Divine Augustus**” - adopted son of Caesar Augustus - who

was considered a god - Tiberius - son of God - other side - **high priest (Pontif Maxim) - Tiberius god and high priest of his own religion!**

Idolatry! If Jew, you didn't even want to carry a denarius in your pocket - reminder of a corrupt emperor who claimed to be a god!

- If Jesus said pay the tax, he would upset the majority of the crowd who expected a Messiah who opposed Rome. If Jesus said don't pay the tax, he would anger the Herodians who would report Him to Roman officials - He would be seen as a zealot trying to overthrow Rome. Rome would have to stop Him.
- Jesus knows the attempted trap. "Show me a denarius..." **Jesus doesn't even have one... Caesar had coins - Jesus had none... The REAL Son of God has no earthly wealth...**
- Simple question: "Who's image?" Answer: "Caesar." Jesus' mind-blowing answer: "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar." The denarius belonged to Caesar. If your image was on it, you owned it. Caesar's image on the coin - give him what rightfully belongs to him. Implication to religious leaders: "You belong to God! Follow Him!"
- AND give God what rightfully belongs to God - HUGE statement - Caesar's image imprinted on coin - it belongs to him. What is God's image imprinted on? YOU! ([Gen. 1:26](#)) You belong to God!
- If God's image imprinted on you, your ultimate allegiance does not belong to Caesar, it belongs to God! You exist to live for Him, not for Caesar! Caesar, Joe Biden, Donald Trump, congress, etc. will ultimately answer to God, because they all belong to God whether they realize it or not!
- **Only one Kingdom is worthy of your ultimate allegiance.** You must remember that truth this political season. ONE King sits on the throne. ONE King rules over all. ONE King is good, and ONE King is eternal. No matter what happens on Nov. 5 - Jesus will STILL be King. His image will STILL be imprinted on your life, and because of His goodness and

mercy, he will STILL be worthy of your allegiance. You are NOT primarily a citizen of the U.S. You are primarily a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven.

- **Only one Kingdom determines how you live.** This is GOOD NEWS! What happens on Nov. 5 will NOT ultimately determine the direction of your life or how you should live. AND... whoever is in power in our country doesn't ultimately determine how you live or what your worldview should be... You've already been given your marching orders as a citizen of the Kingdom of God. The KING has told you:
  - To Honor God - that's the primary call on your life. If God's image is imprinted on your life, then life is not about you - your success, your dreams, your goal, etc. NOR is your life about living for someone else's dreams, goals, etc. Instead of living to please ourselves or please people, we live to please God. Citizen of God's Kingdom FIRST not citizen of this land or country.
  - To Honor others - After an election, a phrase we hear, "He's not my president..." Knowing who's in charge frees me to honor others. Jesus doesn't tell the Jews to ignore Caesar's laws but abide by them because ultimately, God would deal with Caesar. That was God's job, not theirs. ([Proverbs 8:15-16](#), [Romans 13:1](#)) **The world expects you to treat poorly those who treat you poorly, or to talk poorly about those you disagree with, but the world is blown away when you honor those who treat you poorly.** Honor those who are over you, and trust God to deal with the hearts of those who dishonor you. At school, you might not agree with professors, but you honor. You might not agree with your boss, but you honor. You might not agree with your coaches, but you honor. Why? **God might use the way you honor someone else to open an up an opportunity for you to point them to hope in Christ.** You don't have to talk about you boss behind his back to get even with him. You don't have to give your professor that scathing review because he made your semester so

difficult. You worry about being who God has called you to be and let God deal with those who are over you.

- To live at peace - We tend to like division more than peace. We like people to know that we disagree with them - that we're right and they're wrong. We like to argue, fight, etc. BUT that's not your calling. [Hebrews 12:14](#), [1 Timothy 2:2](#) - When's the last time you prayed for your leaders? Prayed for those you disagree with? Blessed are the peacemakers... Are you making peace or division with your words?
- To live missionally - YES - stand boldly for your convictions. Stand for the unborn. Stand for a biblical worldview of marriage and sexuality. Stand for what we know it's right - Support candidates that will fight for convictions we hold dear BUT remember that the GOSPEL is what changes lives. Reality - you need to talk about the Gospel more than you talk about where you stand on hot button issues because the Gospel is what opens peoples eyes to the truth - not your arguing. You probably talk about what your passionate about (pro-life, pro-family, etc.) but do you talk about why your passionate about it? The Gospel!

## You need the right personal commitments in 2024.

- As the 2024 election cycle begins to consume our nation this year, as followers of Jesus, let's make the following personal commitments:
- **I will talk about God's Kingdom more than I complain about any earthly kingdom.** When you start complaining about everything that's wrong with this earthly kingdom - stop yourself. Why complain about something you know is not lasting? Instead, let's intentionally talk about the Gospel and how God desires to build His lasting Kingdom as we proclaim the Gospel.

- **I will not let my politics ruin friendships and hinder Gospel opportunities.** Be honest - there are some people you don't want to share the Gospel with because of how much you disagree with their politics. There are some people you don't want in our church, sitting next to you, because of how vehemently you disagree with their political viewpoints. You being obedient to share the Gospel is far more important than any political viewpoint you hold.
- **I will pray more for our nations leaders and post far less about our nations leaders on social media.** I cringe this time of year because of what I see followers of Jesus post on their social media feeds. Followers of Jesus will post things that are outright slanderous, false, and hurtful. That's sinful. Be honest: some of us like to complain far more than we like to pray. Reality: no one needs your complaining, slandering, and gossiping, but everyone needs your praying.
- **I will long for better days more than I long for the good ole' days.** A phrase we all say, "I remember when..." When our nation was a Christian nation, more moral, etc. Sin was pervasive in the good ole' days. The good ole' days weren't that good, and reality is no matter who wins the election, the next president won't fix our nation. No one will make America great again because America, and every other nation, wasn't that great. Only God is great, and only His Kingdom is truly great. We long for the days that Jesus points us to in Luke's Gospel - the day that He will return and establish His eternal Kingdom once and for all on this earth. Don't put your hope in any political party or system. Put your hope in the King!
- This morning, place your faith in the ONE who is the perfect King - the King who loves you - who desires a relationship with you. The King who lived the life you could not live, died the death that you deserve, and rose from the dead three days later to give you life. This morning, turn to Him by faith.

- Follower of Jesus, what personal commitments will you make this year that will help you to live out your allegiance to the ONE whose image is imprinted all over your life?