

CHAPEL May 20, 1930

-- President Wright

Scripture reading: Matthew 22, Verses 15-22.

I know the lesson I read this morning is part of your Sunday School lesson, but I don't know that you got last Sunday the picture I want to leave in your minds with reference to this case.

There were three parties, you might say, of Jews in the time of Christ. One believed in the resurrection, one did not. One believed it better to continue with the Roman government. These saw through Herod a possibility of preserving Jewish national existence, notwithstanding the Roman control, and were called Herodians. They and the Pharisees were really opposed to each other ordinarily, but got together to send a delegation and ask Jesus what they considered an important question--important because they thought to entangle him. If a person wanted to be popular with the Jews at that time he was not in favor with the Roman government. Any man among the Jews who dared oppose Caesar got into trouble. But the Pharisees and the Herodians got together because this man Jesus had such a multitude of people following him. The Pharisees, Herodians and Sadducees were all willing to unite differences that <sup>they</sup> might in some way cut off Jesus' popularity. He came unto Jerusalem with a multitude of people shouting and talking about making him King. If He came out against the Roman government they would have a good case against Him. They came to him with flattery as people so often do, and said in effect, You are a good Teacher and you do not care what people think about you, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? --is it lawful to pay taxes

to the Roman government? Jesus knew what they were doing. He said, Show me a piece of the tax money. Said, whose image is written on this? They answered "Caesar's", of course. (They had to pay the tax money in the Roman coin. I imagine He stopped and looked at them, before he said "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things which are God's." They marveled at the answer. They could find no fault with it.

That is one statement that runs through the ages, that applies to all people everywhere, regardless of their religion or anything else. To have an organized government it is necessary to support it, to pay taxes. This Roman government was giving the people protection. The government of North Carolina is giving you protection, the government of the U. S. is protecting us, the people and must be supported by us. It is the obligation of everyone as a good citizen to pay taxes to support the government. His second obligation is to support his Church. "REnder unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things which are God's!" To be a good citizen one must support government, he must also support his religion. This fundamental and universal truth applies to people through all the ages. To me that is one of the most significant statements in this book(the Bible). It is one of the fundamentals of good citizenship. It is at the very foundation of good government and right living.

It is a splendid lesson.