

The Gospel of Luke

The Penetrating Wisdom of Jesus

Luke 20:19-26

1. **A Deceptive Infiltration** (v.20)
Jesus had publicly chastised the Jewish leaders in the temple when they confronted Him directly (v.19), so now they have concocted a clandestine operation in order to create a reason to accuse Him. This required that their operatives have every appearance of being sincere followers of Jesus.
2. **Some Dishonest Homage** (v.21)
Before they ask Jesus a question which they believe will finally allow them to be rid of Him, the false disciples flatter Jesus with compliments which, while given insincerely, are absolutely true. He spoke and taught directly so that the substance of His teaching was clearly understood (Jn. 6:66-68), and He did not change His message depending upon His audience (Lk. 9:60; 13:32; 20:19).
3. **A Duplicious Question** (v.22)
The emissaries of the Sanhedrin attempted to do to Jesus what He had only recently done to them (Lk. 20:4-16). Whether Jesus answered in affirmation or in denial, He would declare Himself an enemy of the mob or an enemy of Rome (cf. Lk. 16:13).
4. **A Display of Understanding** (v.23)
Jesus saw through their deception and perceived their malicious plan (Mt. 22:18) which their hypocrisy enabled them to carry out (Mk. 12:15). He was not fooled by the deviousness of men (cf. Eph. 4:14), and His answer would expose the light of God's truth into this area of cultural blindness (cf. Jer. 29:4-7).
5. **A Dazzling Answer** (vs.24-25)
The Jewish leaders expected an answer that would either satisfy the crowd or satisfy the Roman authorities, and either option suited their wicked schemes. Jesus' answer affirms the obligation for the faithful to be good citizens of civil government (1 Pt. 2:13-17; cf. Dan. 3:17-18; 6:12-13; Ac. 4:17-20) while emphasizing everyone's duty ultimately to honor God in all things (Dt. 6:5; Mk. 12:29-30; Lk. 10:27; cf. Rm. 12:1-2; 13:1-7).
6. **A Deafening Silence** (v.26)
The religious leaders' hopes were thwarted by Jesus' glorious answer (cf. Lk. 11:31), and they will soon stop attempting to corner Him like this at all (Mk. 22:46; cf. Lk. 20:41ff). But Jesus' answer would not stop them from officially accusing Him of insurrection in order to have Him killed (Lk. 23:2).