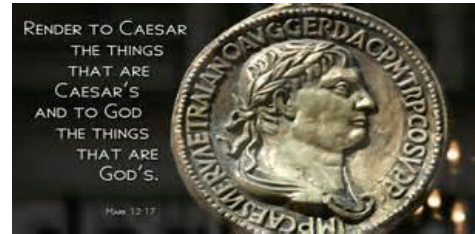


The Answerer

Answering children's questions

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Paying taxes to Caesar in Rome

(Mark 12:13-17)TLB and The Newberry Bible.)

In this story I believe that Jesus had a sense of humour and would have laughed about it later.

Jesus' 'Non-friends' tried to trap him into saying something they could use against him to the Roman occupiers of their land.

Caesar Augustus in Rome ruled, and his soldiers occupied much of the known world then - and everyone had to pay taxes to Rome. (See my Zacchaeus story) They came to Jesus with their 'Trap'. *It did not work!*

"Teacher," they said "We know you tell the truth. You are not influenced by the opinions and desires of men, but sincerely teach the ways of God. Now tell us, is it right to pay taxes to Rome, or not?" (*What smooth talkers they were!*)

Jesus knew their thoughts and said: "Show me a coin and I'll tell you." They handed Him a coin and Jesus said: "Whose picture and title is this on the coin?" They replied: "The emperor's." (Caesar Augustus) "Well," Jesus said: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and render to God the things that are God's." (Mk.12:17 *The Newberry Bible*, 1949)

'Render' means to give or send something. *That last statement is the one I have known all my life. There are many similar ones, all slightly different but I like this one the best.*

They were baffled by his perfect answer and scratched their heads in amazement. I think Jesus would have later had a quiet laugh to himself.

Money and 'things' belong to the king, the emperor, or president ... but our 'heart' and our mind belong to what we worship. Some people worship God. Others worship cars, motorbikes, pop singers and TV stars. ***What do you worship?***

