

# Luke 20:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

## Analysis

**Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's** (ἀπόδοτε τοίνυν τὰ Καίσαρος Καίσαρι καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῷ θεῷ, apodote toinyn ta Kaisaros Kaisari kai ta tou theou tō theō)—one of Scripture's most quoted verses, establishing dual obligation without conflating the two spheres. The verb ἀπόδοτε (apodote) means 'give back' or 'render'—pay what is owed.

Jesus refuses the false dilemma. Caesar's image on the coin indicates his claim; humans bear God's image (Gen 1:27), indicating His ultimate claim. The answer transcends the trap: honor civic duty while maintaining that God's claim is absolute and final. This is neither theocracy nor secularism but eschatological tension—living in Caesar's realm while belonging to God's kingdom.

## Historical Context

This principle influenced centuries of Christian political theology: Augustine's 'Two Cities,' medieval debates over church/state relations, Reformation theology of vocation, and modern religious liberty. Jesus neither endorsed Roman rule as divinely ordained nor called for revolutionary overthrow—both would have pleased different factions.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. What 'things' legitimately belong to Caesar (civil government) versus God in your context?
2. How do Christians today navigate dual citizenship when earthly and heavenly kingdoms conflict?
3. What does it mean practically to render unto God what is God's—what does He claim?

## Interlinear Text

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τῷ	δὲ	εἶπεν	αὐτοῖς,	ἀπόδοτε	Τοίνυν
the things which be	And	he said	unto them	Render	therefore
G3588	G1161	G2036	G846	G591	G5106

τῷ	Καίσαρι	Καίσαρι	καὶ	τῷ
the things which be	Caesar's	Caesar's	and	the things which be
G3588	G2541	G2541	G2532	G3588

τῷ	θεῷ	τῷ	θεῷ
the things which be	God's	the things which be	God's
G3588	G2316	G3588	G2316

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