

Discussion Questions – Mark 12:13-34  
Resetting Reality

**Mark 12:13-17** – This passage must be understood in the context of the religious leaders' desire to "destroy" (Mark 11:18) Jesus. Consider how Jesus responds to this question. He understands not only "what" they are asking but also "why." His mission demands he be discerning. This is a famous teaching of Jesus.

What does Jesus mean when he says, "render to Caesar what is Caesar's?" The question was asked in the context of knowing the way of God. How does this apply to way we approach our governmental authorities? Try to find how many times Jesus speaks on the secular authorities over Israel at that time. What does he say?

Jesus does not answer the question directly. He points to a greater principle. What is that principle?

What is God's that we should render unto Him?

**Mark 12:18-27** – Now Jesus is faced with a technical and theological issue. The Sadducees did not believe in resurrection of the dead. If they could get Jesus on the record, it could erode some of his popularity. They come up with an argument of the absurd to make a point. In a few short sentences, based on Jesus' response, how would you answer this question? How does that answer make you feel?

What was Jesus saying about the link between "I am" and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? What is Jesus implying about the status of the "dead?"

How does this teaching influence your understanding of what "life" really is?

**Mark 12:28-34** – Once again Jesus is challenged. First, it is the Pharisees and Herodians. Next, it is the Sadducees. And lastly, it is the scribes. All the religious leadership conspired for his downfall. Consider the question and the response of the scribe. What is different about his interaction from the previous groups?

If the scribe is "not far," what does he still lack?

What is the special sauce of our spiritual life that moves us from good theology to good actions?

Think briefly about each interaction and how Jesus was attempting to reset false ideas in these groups. Which interaction was the most congenial and why? Which was the harshest and why?