



King Jesus-Part 6
Living as His Expatriates
Pastor Mike Fabarez

Well perhaps, one of the sassiest lines to be thrown around the playground is YOU'RE NOT THE BOSS OF ME! YOU ARE NOT... YOU ARE NOT THE BOSS OF ME! YOU ARE NOT THE BOSS OF ME! I mean that pretty much says it all right there. The default sentiment of the human heart. YOU'RE NOT THE BOSS OF ME! And we don't have to teach our kids that, they don't come out wanting to NOT be in charge. They want to be in charge. You don't have much elementary school kids saying, "I'm so glad I have so many people bossing me around." You don't have junior highers going, "It's great to have all these authority figures over me telling me what to do." You don't have people in the workforce going, "I'm glad I have so many bosses and managers, you know, dictating my schedule." No. People want to be, as a default position, unfettered and in charge of whatever they want to be in charge of. That's kind of how we are as human beings.

And yet real life is that we have all kinds of people telling us what to do. I mean, you can't get away from, even if you're a kid, you start with your parents, they're always bossing around, telling you what to do. You get into a school, you've got teachers, you get into life, get into sports, you got coaches, and then even in the games, you've got umpires. You go get better at your sport, you've got trainers, you've got things in your workplace. When you start working, you got bosses and managers and you may climb the ladder, you still got stockholders and board members and, you know, people you've got to answer to. In the work world you've got all of that and then in your civic life, you've got police officers, you've got people making laws, you've got, you know, civic authorities, municipalities, you've got governmental officials, you've got the IRS, the list goes on. A lot of people telling you what you have to do.

Then you go to church and you'll learn about God. God's got all of this authority now. The preacher is always talking about he's in charge, he's the ultimate authority, he's the sovereign authority, and as hard as that is for us freethinking sinners to wrap our mind around, it's something, that by God's grace, a lot of you in this room have come to grips with. A matter of fact, you have, by God's grace, willingly put yourself under God's authority and you've said, "I am willing to recognize him as the authority. He's God, I'm not, and I'm recognizing that and I'm going to live in that regard and I'm even going to enthrone his Son, his Christ, he's going to be my King, as we put it in this series, and I'm going to submit to his leadership.

Well he's certainly presented himself that way in the Bible and in the passages we've been studying here in the latter part of Luke. He breaks onto the scene in human history and does all these things to try and verify, clearly in the minds of everyone who sees him, that he is unique and unprecedented in his authority. And then as we've recently been studying here in Luke 19, he comes into the city fulfilling all of this Old Testament prophecy, presenting himself, in light of his Zacchaeus promises as the great authority. He comes to the planet and says, "I'm the world leader."

And all of that, presented to us in Scripture, by God's work in our lives, some of us have said, "That's right. He is our King." But that didn't go well. All that usurping of authority in people's minds, all the people having to get out of the way as people laid down their cloaks in the street and waving palm branches and claiming that he's the King, it doesn't go over well in people's minds. As a matter of fact, they are going to say, this guy has no right having that position, not only in your life, but in anybody's life and we certainly don't want him thinking that he is the authority, and



certainly I'm not going to recognize him as the authority. It became the charge that got him crucified. That's what they say in Luke Chapter 23, it says that he is being reported to the authorities as usurping and being an insurrectionist of the Roman Empire. He's telling people not to be obedient and submissive to Caesar and that's not right. Matter of fact, the sign they put over his head, they scrawled over the cross and tacked to the cross, said, "Here he is, here's your king. I mean that's his claim. Of course he's not. We're killing him right now. But he claims to be the King of the Jews."

But again, you sit here and sing songs as though he is the King. And you and I have recognized, "Yeah, that's the truth. I can't deny it anymore. He's hunted me down in my own heart and I realize he's in charge. And I recognize he's not only the King of the Jews, but according to the promise of Abraham in Genesis 12, he's the King of the Gentiles as well, and now that he's come and established his authority and verified his position, we live under his authority."

And yet, much like when we were kids, we realize we try to march into the world as Christians trying to submit to the ultimate authority of Christ and we still have all kinds of people telling us what to do.

As a matter of fact, they tell us what to do and it seems to have teeth. Right? It's not just the bark, they got a bite, because if we don't do what they say, we lose our job. We don't do what they say, we get in trouble, we get a ticket, we get thrown in jail, we get lawyers calling us and suing us. We have people who seem to have a lot of authority in our lives and we've got to figure out how to untangle all of that, at least in our thinking. I know one day the kingdoms of the world become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he's going to reign at that point, but right now, we claim to be marching to the beat of Christ's drum, he is my King and yet we live with all these authorities, less than perfect authorities, actually a lot of rotten authorities. How do we do that?

Jesus gave us three profound statements in the passage that we get to hear. In the middle of this week where he's about to go to the cross and be crucified on Friday, he gives us a teaching here when people were trying to trip him up with a question. Well, that may have been the context for what he says, but in these three sentences he gives us profound information and guidance for us trying to think through how do we live in this world, claiming to be followers of Christ, if in fact you are, and deal with all of these demands on our lives.

And nothing is more painful than April 15th when it comes down to recognizing that we've got to do what our authorities say or else we get in big trouble as tax evaders. So that was the question, the question on the table in the middle of this week between the Triumphal Entry and the crucifixion of Christ.

I want you to turn there and look at it with me and see if we can't leave... My goal is to have you unburdened by some of the things that may be balling up your heart right now. Because we live in a world filled with a lot of demands and things that frustrate you and frustrate me. Well, let's see if we can leave in better shape than when we came.

Turn with me to Luke Chapter 20 beginning in verse 19. You remember he just told this parable. We even kind of ventured into verse 20 last time we were together because we looked at the fact that the chief priests and the scribes were offended by what he said because they recognize this parable was told against them. So let's pick it up there again in verse 19, Luke Chapter 20 verse 19. "The scribes and the chief priests, they sought to lay hands on him that very hour." They were

offended by all that "stone that the builders rejected" and they knew, "We are the people rejecting Christ," and then he saying, yet he's the cornerstone, the most important stone, and so they're frustrated with all of that. They wanted to kill him right then because "they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people." So they thought, as we'd seen earlier, we go and try and drag him off the Temple Mount right now, they might drag us away and kill us. So all these people who are hailing him as King, we better figure out how to do this another way. In verse 20, Luke gives us their strategy.

"So they watched him and sent spies, who pretended to be sincere." Now remember what you've got is two groups, people seething in the background seeing Jesus here after the palm branch parade and everyone hailing him as King and now they, remember that line, "they hung on every word that he said." So, you've got all these groupies under Christ hearing everything that he says, taking all of his teaching to heart, and then you got all of his enemies in the background seething how to take him down. Well, some of people who wanted to take him down, they sent the spies into act like they were the people in the front row, the groupies of Christ, saying, "Hey, we hang on every word you say." But really they were trying to catch him, because they wanted to go down the street and tattle on him, they wanted to deliver him over to the authority and the jurisdiction of the governor. That's what they wanted and they had a plan to do that.

"We know we can get him in trouble, either with the crowds or with the governor." The governor, by the way, is Pontius Pilot, he'll end up there in two chapters standing before him, but right now it's all a plan.

Verse 21, "So they," that is the scribes and the chief priests, look at this carefully, "they asked him," a question, starting with a little flattery, insincere flattery, "'Teacher, we know that you speak and teach rightly.'" You're a good teacher, you always tell the truth, "'you show no partiality,'" so we know you're going to answer this question straight up, as they wink at each other. But truly, "'you teach truly the way of God.'" You're not going to lead us astray here. "You're all about God and all these people who you're teaching, all these Jews on the Temple Mount, they can't wait to hail you as King. They're saying that word, 'Hosanna'. Save us. They think you're the King of the Jews, so we know you're going to answer this right, but we've got a question." It's one of those, "Do you still beat your wife" questions. Right? There's no good answer here. Can't say yes, can't say no, without somebody getting mad and it's going to be misunderstood, and that's exactly the way they pitch it, and they ask him the question. Very simple, verse 22, "Is it lawful..." Right? Is this the right thing, speaking as a rabbi, a teacher? I mean you're not an authorized rabbi but you're teaching a lot of people the ways of God. Would God want us to, "is it lawful," is it the thing that the Lord would want in heaven "for us to give tribute," which is not, you know, writing a poem about him. This is paying taxes, giving the poll tax, "to Caesar or not?"

Now Caesar, of course, is a Roman emperor. He's in charge. He's the one that the Roman governors are all looking to as the ultimate authority. As a matter of fact, they deified them as gods. Matter of fact, the current Caesar, his name was Tiberius, he was the son of Caesar Augustus, the Great Caesar, and they'd already deified Augustus thinking he was a god and they tried to, in Tiberius' day, to deify him. They were naming cities after him. Matter of fact, the Sea of Galilee, that Jesus did so much of his ministry on, was named the Sea of Tiberius, you can look it up in your Bibles. They even call it that in the Gospels, the Sea of Tiberius, it was named after the emperor, the current emperor who sat on the throne right here. And they said, "Oh, Caesar, a Roman, wants our Jewish hard work, that has been now translated into our hard-earned money, he wants some of that as tax." Now, that's the poll tax. Everyone was to give a denarius, which is one day's wage of the

common worker, which if you want to modernize that, that's about \$100. So they need \$100. You come, when the tax man shows up from Rome, and you give him \$100 silver coin called a denarius. "Now should we do that? Is that what God would want us to do?"

Now why is that a trick question? Because if you say, "Yes, you should," you've got all these people wanting Jesus to be the savior of the Jewish people, they're nationalists, some of them are zealots, they can't wait to overthrow Rome and get them out of the way. "You are our hope. Our Jewish hope, our Messiah." Now if you tell them that they're all supposed to pay that \$100 to Rome, they're going to hate you. We know you're not going to be the popular teacher anymore right now. I mean, here we are to celebrate Passover, our Jewish festivals, and you want them to pay money, which we know is going to, you know, this summer home in Jericho and this high resort they're building at the top of Masada, and over in Perea you're building all kinds of..." I mean, they're not fixing potholes in Jerusalem. "You're wasting this money, so that the kings of the Romans and the client kings of the Herodians can all live like gods, and you want our hard-earned money?" Now, that's not going to go over well. "So, go ahead and tell your people that we should give money to the Romans."

Or say, "no". Which they thought that that's what he was going to say. Matter of fact, because it says up there in verse number 20, they wanted to "deliver him over to the authority and jurisdiction of the governor." The governor at this time was Pontius Pilot. As I said, he will end up there, but they wanted to say, "OK, you say 'no' because we know the nationalism is strong here for the Jews, you want to defy Rome. Well, go ahead and defy Rome, we're going to go down the hall and talk to the principal about that, and the Romans, who sit there and all their Roman garb, they're going to come down and they're going to nail you to a cross as an insurrectionist. So, you are either going to lose with the people and you won't be popular, or you're going to lose with the government officials and they're going to kill you. At least lock you up as a rabble rouser, fomenting some kind of rebellion against the Roman officials. So go ahead, give us an answer. We just think you're such a great teacher."

They knew exactly what they were doing. Jesus masterfully, in three sentences, solves the problem. Verse 23. "He perceived the craftiness and he said to them, 'show me a denarius.'"

That's what they require of all you. Right? \$100 silver coins. "Show me the denarius." Now let's take a look at that. "Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" It's got some words on it, it's got a picture of somebody's face. And "they said, 'Caesars.'"

Now at this particular time, in this particular area, you have Caesar, not Augustus, Caesar Tiberius, who's reigning and he has his coin out circulating at this point and that's whose face is on it. Matter of fact, if you have the worksheet, you can unfold it, look at the bottom, I put a little replica of that, a little picture of that. It's called a Tiberius Denarius at the bottom. More on that in a minute, we'll look at the inscription in a minute. But right now, you've got that, or if you got the downloaded PDF worksheet, that's good, you can expand it and get real close to the details of all that, you got the denarius with the picture of Tiberius' face. He's also known as the Caesar, Caesar Tiberius.

Okay. Why was that important? We'll see that. We'll see this is a masterful response by pointing out whose picture is on it. And he says, we're going to look at both sides of this this morning, "He said, 'Render to Caesar,' " give to Caesar, "the things that are Caesar's." Oh, it's got his picture on it, give him the coin. "Oh, wait a minute, that's my money." We'll figure out what that might have meant to them and how they were going to sort that out. Then Jesus says, "Oh, and I got more to say." And there's a great parallelism here, a great analogy. "And to God, the things that are God's." Now, he

doesn't tell us what that is but everybody there knew what that meant.

"Oh, there's an image stamped on a coin, but there is an image stamped on every human person standing here listening to me teach, including you scribes and chief priests. A matter of fact, even the Roman governors and the jurisdiction of all those leaders and the Sanhedrin and the high priest and the priests and everyone else, everyone's got this image stamped on them, they're made in the image of God. We should be giving to God what's God's." Great. And they knew it was great.

And they knew because of the way he said it, they weren't going to catch him. The crowd was not diminished and they couldn't run to Caesar and say, "Oh, he's telling them not to pay the taxes." He didn't say that. As a matter of fact, he said pay the tax. Verse 26, "They were not able in the presence of the people to catch him in what he said, but marveling at his answer they said..." I've got nothing to say. "They became silent."

If you could think for a minute of Jesus here, in essence, giving the answer, "Pay the tax." Isn't that, I mean, look at it. Right? Interpret the text, "Pay the tax," is actually what it is. But it's the way he does it, that's so masterful, that defuses the situation. But "pay the tax" is the answer. Why? Because he recognizes he's got authority here over his life, authority they didn't want to have, they didn't want the Romans to be their authority. But if you go back to Jesus' life, you can go back to his life, like our lives, when we think about our lives, he had Mary as his mother, his step-dad Joseph, they were authorities in his life. We see the showdown about that, early in the Gospel of Luke, as he deals with his responsibilities and the distinction he feels between loyalty to God, his Father, in the temple. Remember that? And then Mary and Joseph who were mad at him because he was there too long in the temple. He also had, I don't know if he was on Little League or soccer or anything, but he certainly had other people teaching him and leading him and coaching him in his life. But then I know this, he would go every year to the Temple Mount and what would he do? He would bring the sacrifices that were required as he submitted himself to the priest. He would do what the priest said. If the priest said, "Line up here, get in line." He would do that.

Then there was the chief priest, then there were the scribes and he sat there even submitting himself, it looked like though he was asking great questions and teaching them, he put himself under them, and not only that, this was a time when you have layers of leadership. You have the client kings, if you know that phrase, they were there as a buffer between Rome and the Jewish people. Not only did you have the priest and the high priest and the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court of the Jews, you had on top of that the Herods, Herod the Great as it started in Jesus' life when he was a little boy. At this point we had Herod Antipas, the son, and he was in charge right now. And then you had, as Herod Antipas ran so much of Israel, but you had Pontius Pilot, who was also now a Roman official who had jurisdiction over Jerusalem in this big swath of Judea. And then on top of that, of course, you had the Romans who were collecting taxes for the emperor, and the emperor at that time with Caesar Tiberius.

I mean, if you wanted to look at Jesus living under authority, it's not much different than your life. You have multiple layers of authority. Jesus had multiple layers of authority and, in essence, the whole point of this parable is he's saying, in a way that they didn't think he would say it, pay the tax. You have authority, that authority needs to be recognized and that's a hard thing for us to do. But let's just start, before you even think about the specifics in regard to your authority, let's just think about the fact that you're going to live that way between now and heaven, even though you have said, "I'm stepping out to be, now, no longer governed by myself or this world, I'm stepping out from the world, I'm submitting myself to the lordship of Christ." That does not mean that all these



other authorities go away. Just like for Christ, the authority himself, is under authority.

Therefore, let's just get used to, number one, "Get Used To Overlapping Authorities." If you're taking notes, that's number one, get use to overlapping authorities. You've got authorities over authorities over authorities, even in human life, but above that all, you've got God. So you understand, if you are a Christian, that just because you became a Christian 2 years ago, 15 years ago, 25 years ago, you still have a boss, you still have managers, you still have stockholders, you still have policemen, you still have judges, you still have lawyers, you still have assemblymen and senators and congressmen and presidents. We have these authorities who are our authorities.

Now jot this reference down and let's think about the governor they were going to go tattled to, and they ended up tattling to him. But there's a great exchange that John records when Jesus is standing before Pilot. Write the reference down, you can look it up later. John Chapter 19 verses 10 and 11. Now you can imagine Pilot, who happens to be there at Passover week because this is where he worked, he had his own palace there, the place where he worked. And Jesus is in town and everyone's making such a fuss about him because he's got massive crowds giving him parades. And now you got all these jealous chief priests and scribes thinking he's some kind of usurper of the authority of them, and therefore they're going to go say, "Hey, he usurps the authority of Rome." And so you've got all this going on, and he ends up before Pontius Pilot, in our Gospel, in Chapter 23, but in Chapter 19 of John he has this exchange. Pilot is not getting the answers coming through as clearly or passionately as he wants, although Jesus is responding.

And so Pilot says this, listen. "Do you not know," Pilot says to Jesus, "that I have authority to release you and the authority to crucify you?"

I mean you can see this. Right? It's like a cop, you know, questioning some, you know, 19-year-old who's being interrogated. "Don't you realize I got power here? Jesus, you don't seem as concerned about this interrogation as you ought to be. I have authority to let you go. You can just go home. I could decide that or I could decide to put you on a Roman execution rack."

And Jesus responds, verse 11, Jesus says, "You're not the boss of me!" That's what he says. No. As a matter of fact, it is surprising that he doesn't, because isn't he the boss? Jesus is the boss. He's in charge, he's the Lord, he's the King. Here's what he says, "Jesus answered, 'you would have no authority over me.'" Oh, turn that sentence around. "You WOULD have no authority over me." What does that mean? You have authority over me. But you wouldn't have it "unless it had been given to you from above. Therefore..." that's a warning from Christ, not defying that he is in charge, but reminding him where he got that authority from. "Oh, I know, you have authority to release me. You could say a word and I could walk away. And these Romans would let go of me and if they bound me here before you they'd have to unloose me and I could walk away. They'd loose me and I'd walk away. Or you could say, 'No, you're going to be crucified,'" which is what happens, he sends him to Herod Antipas, and he ends up having him crucified.

But he says, it's not that you don't have authority it's just that your authority comes from God. And he ends up submitting to that authority and being crucified. And he actually said at one point, "I could have called down 10,000 angels and gotten out of this," but he didn't.

This is hard for us to process, I understand that. I put a bunch of resources in the back of your worksheet including four messages from a series I did on Romans 13, which is a passage you need to work your way through. Romans 13 reminds us that the authorities who you have over your life,

and I want you to think about what those are. Let's start, if you're a kid, it's your parents, let's move beyond that, your teachers. Let's get down to where they are right now. Picture your boss, your manager, your supervisor, the people you report to at work. Think about the person that pulled you over, the person who's trying to make laws about your taxes and how much money you're going to get to keep from your paycheck. All of those people are authorities over your life and the Bible says this, let me just read a little bit, you can study it on your own. Romans 13:1, "Be subject to those governing authorities." I try not to use Greek words unless they are helpful and here's a helpful one, "governing authorities." That's great. What's the verb? Here's the command: be subject to. Subject to, in Greek, the original language of the New Testament, "Hypotasso" a compound word. "Hypo" means "under", "tasso" means "to line yourself up underneath."

There are a lot of lines that I might see as I go through this place or that place or next to the theater. I don't get in those lines. I'm not interested in getting in those lines. Well, here's a line, under the authority of a person and tasso means "to line up or arrange yourself." Hypo says "to line yourself up underneath that authority." Even as I did the gesture early on about you lining yourself up under Christ, I mean, I naturally do the gesture of what this word means. I'm lining myself up underneath the authority of Christ. Here's the command, "Oh, and line yourself also up under the authority of every human governing institution." No authority is there except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God, whether it's in government or family or whatever it might be, in your workplace. Therefore if you are going to resist the authority that God has appointed, you're resisting God, and you're going incur some judgment.

Now, here's their marching orders. They're supposed to be a terror, not for good conduct but for bad conduct. That's what they're there for. Now they may not be doing that like Pilot wasn't doing that. Here he had an innocent man who had never done anything wrong and he's threatening him with crucifixion and actually ends up crucifying him. So, he's not doing it, in Pilot's situation, for Jesus, and maybe your boss is not doing it, maybe our government's not doing it. Nevertheless, that's their marching orders for which they will be held accountable.

He's supposed to be a servant from God with a sword that is supposed to be used to be a servant of God and bringing God's vengeance on those who do wrong. The whole point and upshot of this gets down to where we are always most concerned, our money. Verse 6, "Because of this you also pay taxes." But the authorities are supposed to be here from God, they're "ministers of God, attending to this very thing," trying to do these things that God has called them to do as poorly or wrongly, or in Pilot's case, as antithetically as they may do them sometimes. Therefore, "pay taxes to whom taxes are owed." They give you a tax bill, pay it. "Revenue to whom revenue is owed." Maybe it's the governor, maybe it's the Herods, maybe it's the palaces they're building, maybe it's some kind of, you know, taxation or excise tax you have to pay, pay it. And not only that, "respect to whom respect is owed." "Well, I don't think they deserve it." "Honored to whom honor is owed." Well, I don't think they deserve it." I don't think they deserve my tax money. Oh, I know, we're looking at the tax thing that went on in the news this last week. You think, "Oh, look at that, government funding for the military," whatever. "Look at the pork in this stuff." You understand, when we get down to the issue on this passage that's right here, our money, you do understand that when you start looking at the things that the lobbyists get those legislators to put in those budget deals so that they can have this nonsense, you know, funded, you and I start to think, "You know what, I don't want to give you any of my money." But that sword verse reminds us that they've been given, in civilized society, by God, whether you like the way they spend your money, like I'm sure the Jews didn't like the way the Romans spent their money, or not, they've got the sword.



Because if I said to you, "How much tax do you want to spend?" All that stuff in the news. Forget it. Don't even worry about, how much tax you want to spend? It will be like the offering, we'll just pass a bag, put in whatever you want for your taxes this year. How much are you going to put in? "Don't look when the bag goes by me, because I'm put nothing in. I don't want to pay for anything." Let's say I was sure it would go exactly to what I want it to go to.

Well, let's just all do that this year. I came to church, what did you learn? "No, we're not going to pay taxes anymore." What happens April 16th? What happens? Well, probably nothing on April 16th. April 17th? Nothing. How about by September? Maybe I'll get a call. How about by next year? How about the year after that? Well I know this, in a couple of years I'm certainly going to be labeled a tax evader. And then I'm probably gonna have some liens put against my property. I may try to get some money out of the ATM and all the sudden my accounts are going to be seized, because are going to seize my assets.

And then they might even send me a lot of letters that seem really official and I don't want to bother with those. You know, it's like the Kohl's thing, I just throw it in the trash. Don't tell my wife I threw the Kohl's thing in the trash. But let's just say I do that.

Then what happens? Eventually I get a knock on my door and they're there with the badges, and I say, "I don't want to pay it," and I shut the door. I guess their foot's going to go in the door, probably. Right? I say, "Get off my porch, man. Get off my property." Well at that point it may be their property, right, at this point. They've seized my property. And let's say they want to arrest me. "Well, I'll resist." Well, they're going to wrestle me. "Well, I wrestled in high school, I might get out of that." No, they'll bring three guys, really big, maybe they'll bring tasers. "Well, I'll try to run." Go ahead and run. They're going to get you. They're going to put you before a tribunal. They might throw you in jail. And I would say, if you really don't want to pay your taxes, eventually that's where you will end up. "But once they try to put me in jail, I'm going to run." Go ahead, try it. Everyone there is there to make sure you don't run. "Well, I am going to run." Well, they've got guns. "Well, I'm going to take one of their guns and point it at them." Well great, then you'll be dead.

OK, so if we all say I don't like taxes, I'm not going to pay them, where does this go? I know that was many links in the chain, you will end up dead. That's the point.

And what's going on in Romans 13? That's the point. They don't bear the sword for nothing. Now, they don't do their job the way we want them to do it, but if I don't do it, they have teeth. It's not just bark, it's bite. They are able to enforce their authority and make my life miserable. Go to your work and tell your boss you don't want to do what he says. Well, in our day you may get away with that for a couple months, but you will be fired. Eventually, you'll be fired.

And what's the point? The point is that God says all of those authorities need to be seen much like Jesus saw the authority of Pilot. You only have authority over me because God has given you that authority. But invert that statement: because God has given you that authority, you are an authority over me.

Therefore, I need to recognize all these layers of authority are providentially from God. He's put you in places, beginning with your parents, where they were your authority. And according to our passage, to get back to it, he says, "You see the coin? What does it have? It's got Tiberius Caesar. Pay it."

Number two on your outline, to get all the way down to our pocketbook we need to realize this: we need to, number two, "Honor All of Our Earthly Authorities." Honor all of your earthly authorities. Honor is a big word because I can't narrow it down to just paying your taxes or doing what they say. It's all the things that go with that, including the respect in verse 7 of Romans 13 that says, "You need to give the honor, the revenue, the taxes, and the respect. Honor your earthly authorities." Well, that is the upshot of what Jesus said. But you know how hard that was for these people to do? They worked hard for that money and now they were giving it away.

Now, if you would, look at the coin I printed there for you or put on that digital worksheet. One of the reasons this was so hard for them is not because it's like our money. If I said, "Pull out your dollar bill." You'd go, "Oh, there he is, the founder of our country, George Washington, right there, man." Get the \$5 out. "Ah, honest Abe. That's our man." I mean, that's one thing. That's not how they were dealing with the money of the first century. In the first century they had Caesar Tiberius. These were chief priests who, number one, many of them didn't even see that there was any way to justify putting an image of a person on a coin, because they saw that as a violation of Exodus 20, the Ten Commandments. You weren't supposed to make graven images. They saw that as a graven image. They didn't want to do that.

Worse than that, he said, "Whose inscription is that?" Now the inscription, if you look really closely or if you have the digital version, you might be able to get in there and see it. These are Latin letters and Latin words and, unfortunately, the way they used to abbreviate in the ancient world, because they only had so much coin to work with, is to abbreviate in weird places. So, it would be hard for you to figure it out based on what's there. But you can see like "t-y-c-a-e-s-a-r". Let me just give you the abbreviation, or let me give you the words of the abbreviation "Ty" is Tiberius Caesar, "d-i-v-I", that's from "Divinitas". Does that sound familiar? "God." Right? "Augusti," dative form, "Augusti." "Filius," just an "F" there on the coin, "Augustus." So, in essence you've got, Tiberius Caesar, we know that, Caesar is the title, Tiberius is his name. Then you've got the word "divine", "august," "son," the "divine august son." Now, what is that? Augustus was dead. Augustus had been deified as a god, they worshiped him in the emperor worship of Rome. They worship him as a god. And then it says the last word, "Augustus", who is Augustus. So, let me smooth it out. Tiberius Caesar, the "august," which means respected, the "august son," the respected son, of the Divine Augustus. Whoa.

So what you've got on this coin is, here you have the son of god. The Son of God? Yes, the son of the god Augustus, who himself is august, and they even said in history, they wanted to make Tiberius a deified god before he died. He resisted it. He's an interesting character, but he didn't want to be. And yet, even here on the coin that they minted for his money here, he's already kind of god-in-training.

And I put the backside, just so you know what's on the back. Look on the back, what do you got there? You've got a woman in a dress on a throne, on a chair. This is "Livi," Livia is her name, Livia is Tiberius' mother. Right? So this is one of the wives of Caesar Augustus. She's carrying in one hand an olive branch, and in the other she's got a stick, which is their scepter, as she sits in this throne. And then here are the words on there. If you just read the Latin letters, it would be "pontif maxim" which is "Pontifex," it's an abbreviation for "Pontifex Maximus", pontifex maximus. Those words, maximus, you might know, "the great". Right? And what is pontifex? It's the priest, the great priest or the high priest. And it's a woman, so the high priestess. So Livia's on the back, her name is not there, but this is the mother of Tiberius, and she is the high priest. They called her the "Pax," "p-

a-x" in Latin, "The Goddess."

Now just think about this. Matter of fact, the other Gospel writers say when Jesus said, "Bring me a denarius," they had to go find one, because the high priests weren't going to say, "Well, I got one." They didn't even like carrying these things. And on one side, you had an image, which most people stumbled over already there, and then he's the son of god, god-in-training, and on the other side is his goddess mother, and she's the high priest. The Jewish high priests don't like this coin.

And that's why this defused the situation. You got enough people, as you thought about the inscription and the image to say, "Yeah, the filthy money of our corrupted government." There was an immediate detachment from it, this sense of "ughh, yep, yep, I see whose image is on it. I don't like him. I see what it says about him. What heresy, what rank blasphemy." He's getting them to think about it. You pull out your money, it's Abe Lincoln, you know, it's Benjamin Franklin. I mean, it would be like you pulling your money out and on and having like ISIS warriors. Right? Osama bin Laden is on your \$5 bill. Right? Saddam Hussein is on the \$100 bill. You'd be like, "Yep, it would be like pull your money out, take a look at it. Yeah. Here is your money. Look at it. Part of this fallen, messed up, filthy world that you guys are a part of. Oh, the world's calling and wants some of its money back. Fine." This was a statement of detachment. This was statement to get you to say, "Honor them? But you know who they are."

This is the whole point of trying to unburden our hearts this morning. When it comes to the leadership and the leaders of the world, this is the balance, here's the struggle: to get you to see that all the materialism of your corporate job, all the foolishness of the political world that we live in, all the nonsense of where your tax money goes, there's a sense in which you detach your heart from that and say, "Yeah, that's the world we live in." And because I became a Christian, I didn't become detached from all these things. I still live under the authority of these things, and, you know what, they want a few more hours in this company. Fine. They want a few more dollars for their weird metropolitan art display of a crucifix of Christ inverted in urine, whatever. Right?

"Whatever?" Yeah, this was so appalling to the Jews and Jesus said, "Look at it. They want more of that? Render to Caesar what is Caesar's, give them what they want."

Now, even as I portray it that way, just to give you a sense of what it was like to be in the sandals of those people who carried around that money, I want you to realize, here's what the Bible says. Matter of fact, I'd like you to turn there, in First Peter Chapter 2. Let me just inject this thought. Can you recognize that our world is messed up? Can you realize that the corporate world, the political world, the things that go on here, really are messed up, people living for themselves, the idolatry of it all, that you still can submit to these leaders and to the system in many ways in your own life, as you go about your work and your labor every day, you can do it with a good attitude, not because your heart is in it, but because your heart is somewhere else.

Take a look at this text with me. Start in verse 13. Here's our hypotasso word again. "Be subject (hypo) under (tasso), align yourself, for the Lord's sake," let's make that clear, "to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme." Now, when Jesus carried around that coin or when he called for that coin, it had Caesar Tiberius on it. Tiberius died 17 years later when Peter is writing, many years later, a couple of decades later, the emperor on the throne now, and he was minting his own coins, you can look at some of the Numismatic catalogues and there are great resources out there about the coins they minted in the Roman government, you've got Nero now printing his own coins. Nero is now the leader, the governor, the supreme leader of the Roman

Empire. "Or to the governors." Right? You had the Tetrarchs and you had guys like Pilot, the "governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and praise those who do good," although they do it really poorly, sometimes. But hypotasso yourself under them, "for this is the will of God, that by doing good..." What's the good in this passage? That I subject myself to them. They say pay taxes, I pay taxes, they want revenue, I give revenue, they want honor, I give them honor. "This is the will of God, so that by doing good you would put to silence the ignorance of foolish people." What's the ignorance of foolish people? Luke 23 verse 1. They thought Jesus was mounting an insurrection to dethrone Caesar. They said of the early church, "I know what all you guys want. You won't give a pinch of that incense and say, 'Caesar is Lord'. See there, your insurrectionists. You want to foment some kind of rebellion. The leaders should be scared of you. Look at your growing numbers. Thousands of you. I know what you're going to do. Much like the Egyptians thought about the growing numbers of Hebrews. You just want to over throw us." "No, we don't want to overthrow your government, we're not interested in your government. The Kingdom of God, whole different thing. We're not here to foment some kind of rebellion."

Well, you're going to silence them if you just hypotasso yourself, you would align yourself under the leadership and do what they say. Now, live as people who are free. You're not their subjects, you're not their slaves. They don't own you. You are God's people. But you don't use your freedom as a cover up for evil. What's the evil in this passage? Being rebellious against the authorities. You're living as servants of God. You're looking through the authorities of this earth, through your boss, through the assemblyman, through the congressmen, through the senators, through the president. You're looking to God, you're servants of God.

Honor everyone, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the emperor. "Honor the emperor?" It's hard enough in our day in Orange County to say, honor Donald Trump. It's hard for me to say that when you're thinking about him paying off porn stars to shut up about his escapades. Right? I'm not here to bash him, I'm just saying that's the reality we're dealing with. And here's a passage saying honor the leaders. Honor, align yourself under them. And I could go back, I mean, I go back to... Barack Obama, almost forgot his name, Barack Obama. I could get up here on a Sunday morning and say honor Barack Obama, as the supreme leader, at least in our democratic republic here. Or I can go back - George Bush, honor him - Bill Clinton, honor him. Or think if Hillary had won. Hillary Clinton - honor Clinton.

I mean, you're thinking all kinds of crazy things. Why I can't honor, honor, honor. I mean, you think about Monica Lewinsky. You'd think about going back to Iran-Contra. You think of all these things, it's hard for me to honor, I can't imagine the stuff that these people do. I can't imagine giving them my honor and respect.

They were being asked to honor Nero. Look this one up on Wikipedia, Sporus. Sporus was one of the two men who Nero married. He was a young boy he used to have sex with, talk about NAMBLA member. Right? Nero was having sex with a young boy. He castrated Sporus so that he would maintain his boyish looks, so he could have him as a sex toy in the palace. He married two men along with the wives. He killed people in his family. And Reverend Peter stands up on a Sunday service, if you will, and says, "Honor Nero."

What are you talking about? I'm saying this: align yourself under the providential leaders of your life. And when you're stuck with those leaders, you're stuck with those leaders. Honor them and do it even with a good attitude.



Next verse, let's get down to where you live, where you work. And don't think of American slavery when you read verses like this. The Greco-Roman world was filled with slaves. You could be a lawyer or a professor, all kinds of people being purchased, if you will, to do the work in society. This is really, it's a decent equivalent, though I know there are abuses, even in the Greco-Roman world, of us thinking about the people who have us in contract to do work for them. "Servants, be subject to your masters," here it is, "with all respect." Now look at the next phrase and highlight it, "only though to the respectable." Highlight that part. Is that what it says?

No, you're not looking at the passage apparently. First Peter Chapter 2 verse 18, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. This is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, you endure sorrows while suffering unjustly." That's a good thing. "What credit is there," by the way, if you're thinking about suffering and you're suffering because "you've sinned, you were beaten for it, well then you endure that." Well, what good is that? "But if you do good and suffer for it, and you endure that suffering, that's a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called."

"No way. I'm called to that?" Well, that doesn't preach well and Joel Osteen's church. But here is the idea. You and I are called, as long as we step out, align ourselves under the authority of Christ and we realize this, "I still got all this stuff. I got bad parents, I got a bad job, I got bad leaders, I got lawsuits here, I've got laws here that are stupid, I got taxes that are exorbitant. I've got all these things I don't like."

Submit yourself, all respect, live under that authority and do that, here in this passage it says, because that's what Christ did as he stood even before Pontius Pilot. Christ also suffered for you leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps.

He committed no sin, neither was there deceit found in his mouth, and yet, there he stood before Pontius Pilot, when he was reviled, he didn't revile in return, when he suffered, he did not threaten. He continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly and that seeped through the cracks when he said, "Yeah, you have authority but you only have authority over me because it was given to you from God."

Every unjust thing that we suffer, every problem that you see in politics, every time you look at someone and you say, "I can't believe you're doing, I can't believe I have to submit to that, I can't believe I have to pay that, I don't believe I got that ticket."

Whatever it is that you have to do that seems so unreasonable, the Bible says, every one of those authorities who demands things, not only from you as a Christian, but non-Christians, they'll be judged. Right now, though, we endure this, not just with biting the bullet, "I'm going to do this with a bad attitude," but it started in verse 18 in this context, "with all respect."

I know Pastor Bobby quoted this at the conference yesterday. But if I can just have you jot down First Timothy Chapter 2, I'd like to remind you the first, I don't know, four, five, six, seven verses of this passage, make very clear something, and I got to make a distinction that many people don't make. Here's the passage. "First of all," it says, "I urge you that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for all people." So you ought to be people of prayer. Then he starts with this, "For kings and for all in high positions." Right? The king, Nero. You going to get worse in Diocletian and others, it may not have been worse, but you've got a lot of bad kings and client kings who are in high positions. Why? "That we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in



every way." Peaceful, quiet, dignified. That sounds so genteel. What is that all about? I thought Paul's going to tell Timothy, "You're a soldier of Christ Jesus. You're running in a race, you're fighting the good fight." It doesn't look like it here, because that's not where the fight is.

Let me make this super clear in this passage. "Pray for your leaders." Already been told consistently, "submit to those leaders on this earth," submit to those leaders and just try to keep everything copacetic, peaceful, quiet, dignified. Don't want to cause a problem here. No problems here. Taxes? - pay them. Revenue? - pay them. Respect? - yes sir, all of that. Why? Because we've got a job to do. God, it says, "is pleased by this and he is our savior." Oh, that's the one "who desires for all people to be saved and everyone come to the knowledge of the truth." There's only one God, only one mediator between God and man. He gave himself as a ransom for us. Now Paul is starting to get excited. Why? Because we got to fight. We got a job to do. We got borders of the kingdom to expand.

Do you understand that the mentality of fighting and military motifs is all about us doing our job as Christians? When it comes to the government, when it comes to leaders, when it comes to unjust inequities in our authorities, it's like, "Oh, let's just make it peaceful here. Can we get through this without any problem?"

I'm not saying you shouldn't vote for the best candidate. I'm not even saying there's not time to make your voice be heard, maybe in a way that you ensure that it's heard. But I'm just talking about the fact that when it comes down to it, and Christians have learned this the hard way by venturing into things they shouldn't have been into, to get back to the point that we're here to win people to Christ, to make a difference in God's economy in the Kingdom. Not to try and sit here and make sure that every human institution is completely redeemed by our own action or activism. That doesn't sit well with some people because they understand it's a clear choice between good and bad in some situations, and I'm all for trying to make that clear choice for good, don't misunderstand me, but I am saying this. When Jesus had a coin in his hand he said, "Look at this corrupted fallen world, they want some of their money back, give it to them." But the real issue is you need to never forget who you are. Give to God what is God's.

Let's finish this up, bottom of verse 25, give "to God the things that are God's," render that to God. Now what is that? That's my whole life. I'm made in the image of God. I look in the mirror and I say, "That is a person who thinks, reasons, intellect, emotion, will, volition, I am made in the image of God." You know what God wants? Romans 12:1, "Living sacrifice, present yourself to God, I'm yours, I'm your servant."

So I stepped out in my life when I became a Christian and said, I'm going align myself under the authority of God. Christ is my King. I didn't get rid of my boss, didn't get rid of my parents, didn't get rid of the leaders in my life, didn't get rid of all that stuff. I still have to pay taxes. But I live for God. Caesar is going to demand things from me, but I know whose I am. And I live for that. I give myself completely to God. That distinction is so important.

And unfortunately, you may take out of this message a focus on all the exceptions. I don't want you to think about the times that you clash. I mean, we have to think about it, but don't dwell on the fact that sometimes Caesar asks me to do things that God does not want me to do. That's true and it may get there. But what's my default position? First Timothy Chapter 2. That is, I just want peace. Just please let me do my job. My job is to fight for the Kingdom. Can I have peace in the upstream of the authority figures in my earthly institution? That's all I want. But know this, if ever there is a call



for me to defy my ultimate authority, I will never do that.

Number three on your outline, "Never Defy the Ultimate Authority." And you know who that is, Christian. Your ultimate authority is God. And what he says cannot be, in any way, EVER defied, resisted or turned from. That may be hard, because it's coming in our day.

Right now we struggle with the fact that we live in a country that doesn't have the kinds of affirmations toward Judeo-Christian ethics or biblical principles that we want. I understand all that. But one day when they turn, like they do in many parts of the world, and say, "You cannot do that," then we need to stand with Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, aka Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. And you know how they did it? They didn't do with protests, they didn't do with signs. When King Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "I made this idol, you bow down to it." They simply said, "With all due respect, no." That's what they said. "We just can't. Sorry." When Peter, James and John were told, "You cannot evangelize anymore," they responded "Oh, the King said, 'Make disciples of all nations.' I'm sorry. I have to respectfully disagree and I'm going to keep doing it."

There's a way for us, I think with civility and respect, to recognize that when authority says to us we have to do something that would make us disobedient to God, we say, "No".

I am so glad that I see this at work in people in our lives. I glad I see it at work and in my own home. My 15-year-old daughter proved this to me, in a very dramatic and interesting way this week, when we sat and watched a movie. I was so proud of her that she knew the difference between her dad telling her to do something that was sinful and disobedient and something that God would want her to do. She's young and all that, but she made a profession of faith. She knows God is her God, and she did that so clearly when we sat and watched this movie this week. We never watched one quite like this with a spy who had to kill himself with a pill. You've seen that, right? The spy takes the pill because he gets caught and cornered and he takes the pill and it forms up in his mouth and he dies. My daughter was sitting next to me on the couch and she said. "Dad, what was that?"

Oh, I love those moments just to be the teacher. Right? Pause... "That's potassium cyanide. Potassium cyanide was a pill that they put for the spies and for people who worked undercover and whatever, espionage, you had this because if you ever got caught and you might get information that's valuable. Or maybe you got captured, you going to be tortured, you could take that cyanide pill and it would kill you. That's what it was."

Now, at the same time we've been watching this movie, my daughter had been struggling with a little bit of a cold and because of that her eyes were watering and I was looking in her eyes watching, "Oh yeah, that's right." "I've heard you sneezing a lot during this movie." I just noticed all that while I'm explaining potassium cyanide to her. And so as long as the video was stopped, I thought, "Give me a second." I walked down the hallway, completely not aware of the context of what we had just said, to go into the medicine cabinet to get her a little antihistamine pill so she wouldn't have watery eyes. Completely innocent on my part. It was an act of love. When I walked into the dimly lit room and I said to her, "Take this," my 15-year-old daughter snapped her head around at me.

I just told her, this is the pill to commit suicide, we just explained it. She looked at that pill, she looked at me, she looked at the pill, she looked at me, she goes, "You want me to take that?" And she stopped herself before "that" came fully out of her mouth and she said, "Why do you even have one of those?"



It had been a long day. My mind was working slowly. I thought, "Why do I have an antihistamine? I don't know, we just have those. We have those." And then I realized. My wife is sitting on the other side of her and we all start to bust up laughing. But perhaps not for her loyalty to God's prohibition against self-murder, my daughter said, "I ain't taken that pill, Dad." That's kind of the essence of what the response was that I got from her. And she realized, as I realized, of course, that's not what I meant.

But the reality of it is, there may be a day when the government says to you what they said to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. There may be a time when your boss says, "I need you to lie for this." There may be a time even in your marriage your husband says, "we're were going to do this," and you know is absolutely not allowed in God's economy. Do you have a time, you teenagers, when your parents are going to say, "We're going to do this" and you know you cannot be obedient to your parents and be obedient to God at the same time? And I'm not asking for you to revolt, I'm not asking you to carry a sign, I'm not asking you to start some protest. I'm just asking you to say, respectfully, like the people in the Bible have always said, "We cannot do that and we won't."

God is your ultimate authority. It's like a babysitter. Every leader in your life is the babysitter. It's not your parents. You know what the parents say because you read their note, you read their book, you read their instructions every day. And you're living under the authority of all of these surrogates, who seem to be telling you things and some of them you may not like, here we're going to eat this food for dinner, here's the schedule, here's what time you got to go to bed, here's what we're going to watch on the television, here's the volume, what it's going to have to be, and you don't like those things, but they are the authorities. Submit yourself, hypotasso, respectfully defer to that leader in your life. All those leaders in your life, respect them, honor them.

But at some point if they say, "Eat this, watch this, do this, go there, say this, and you know that would be a violation of what your parent, your Father has told you, well then we respectfully decline. We willingly receive whatever punishment the babysitter wants to give us. If we can, if you're in a job, we say, "Well, I guess I'll look for another job." Some of our leaders, we can't remove ourselves from, I understand. But God would have us understand whose we are.

As the subtitle of this message tries to depict, we need to live as expatriates. I saved that to the end because I want to show you a passage of Scripture that I think may help us adjust and pull all these elements together that we've talked about. Hebrews Chapter 11, let's end there, go with me, if you would.

After Jesus silences his critics with a wonderful, three sentence description of the distinction between the world's commerce and my life that belongs to God, Hebrews Chapter 11 gives us the mindset that we need. Speaking of great English words, expatriate is a great word. If you look it up in the dictionary it will say it comes from Latin and that's true. It comes through Latin, it really comes from Greek. It's a transliteration of a Greek word, a compound set of words. "Ex" is of course, in English we understand that through Latin and Greek, it is "to come out" or "to be out of, taken out of."

"Patriot", I mean you know that from English and how we utilize it, but it comes from "Patris" in Greek. Patris is the word "home, homeland, one's own country, the country of one's birth." The patris. We are to understand that our homeland is not here, just like there are expats or expatriates living in Costa Rica who are Americans. There are Americans living in the Czech Republic, in

Peru, in Germany, in Uruguay, there are Americans everywhere who are citizens of the United States but they live under the foreign country and leadership, with all the rules and regulations of another country, and they submit themselves to that country's leadership. But they're expats, they don't really have their loyalty there. It doesn't mean they're bad citizens of Uruguay, it just means they're not loyal, ultimately, to that country. They're expats, their homeland is somewhere else, it's out of the place where they are.

Drop down to verse 13. This is a great, one of my favorite passages of the Bible. "All these died in faith." Who are all these? Just glance back up: Abraham, Noah, Enoch, Abel, all these people we've just talked about.

"Not having received the things that were promised," at least not in the temporal sphere. Right? Abraham didn't get to have the Promised Land, you know, all those issues of promise, the temporal realities, that's not what they got in their lifetime. "But having seen them and greeted them from afar," they realized this goes beyond this life. This goes somewhere else, this goes beyond the present. "And having acknowledged that," when it comes to the present and this earth, "they were strangers and exiles on the earth." They're aliens. This is not their home. "For people who speak thus." What does that mean? They see themselves, they consider themselves stranger, exiles, aliens on this earth. They know that this is not their home.

They "make it clear that they are seeking," here's our Greek word, "patris". I love the translation in the English Standard version, "they're seeking a homeland" where their real home is. That's the Philippines 3:20, "Our citizenship," it isn't here. It's not in Philippi, it's not in Macedonia, it's not in a Roman colony, "we are citizens of heaven." But people who see themselves as strangers, exiles, aliens, expatriates, they make it clear that they're seeking a patris, a homeland, the home of their birth.

"They'd been thinking of the land from which they've gone out." You stepped out, I hope, from the world and said, "Really, my authority is Christ." And you thought that might be an either-or proposition, "I live for Christ and I don't live for the world." Well, the world's still got its tentacles all over your life. You have to honor them and respect them and pay their taxes. But as you live with all the Costa Rican rules, if you will, of this world, remember whose you are, remember where you belong, remember your homeland isn't here.

I suppose you could go back and live for the world if you wanted to. That proves you never had it right to start with, but nevertheless, you could think that way, you could do that, don't be worldly.

"But as it is, they desire a better country." It isn't about this life, it's not about keeping more of my paycheck in this world, it's really not about having everything go well at this job. This is not real life. "They desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God..." One of my favorite phrases in this chapter. "God is not ashamed to be called their God." I guess you could flip that over if you wanted to, it's got some teeth to it that way. I would hate to be so attached to this world and so complaining and balled up about my taxes, about the California Senate, about the congressmen in DC, and I'm so frustrated with my boss and my parents, I'd hate to be so balled up about that stuff, that God says, "Oh, I'm ashamed that I'm his God. I thought he was one of mine but he's acting like he belongs to that planet. It's all about those coins in his pocket. All the commerce from the, you know, the Federal Reserve. That's all he cares about."

But as it is, these guys weren't concerned about that. They were expats. "Therefore, God is not



ashamed to be called their God." You know, you want to talk about the desire of their heart, a patris that they want, a homeland. Yeah, "he has prepared for them a city."

The book of Revelation says that city's going to come down one day for people who have been seeking it all their lives. "The city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven like a bride adorned for her husband." Don't mix up the metaphor. The metaphor usually in the New Testament, we think about us as the bride and Christ as the bridegroom, that's not the picture here.

The city, our patris, our homeland, "will come down out of heaven like a bride" and like we're at the end of the aisle as the groom. Here comes the city, adorn beautifully, for the Christian, the husband.

Only expats feel that way. You and I need to think, perhaps, more affectionately about our next life, a homeland. If you do that, you're going to think a lot less about your attachments here, even your attachments to your money. It's not about you being rich, famous or powerful in this world. It's about you and I living for the King of kings and realizing it doesn't mean life's going to be simple, it'll be messy, it'll be complicated, but we render under God what's God's. And that's the whole of our lives, holding loosely to everything else.

Let's pray. God help us in a world that makes this very difficult to live out. It is difficult, but it's nothing compared to what it's been for the early church, nothing compared to what it's like for Christians right now in Syria or in Iraq or Iran. Nothing, really, compared to those who tried to live for the truth and live and be faithful to God in the medieval days of church history. God, in that regard, we know we're part of a band of brothers and sisters who went before us and even live right now around the world suffering great things because they are being faithful, longing for their homeland. Let us in our own hearts live for that. Let us know that this world is not our home. Let us be willing to see ourselves as expatriates in this world, so that you would not be ashamed to call us your God. God, thanks for this reminder from your Word. The brilliance of Christ being able to give us a great example as to how to diffuse this problem here. More importantly, the lesson that it teaches us.

Thanks for giving us this feeding of the Word this morning. Dismiss us now with a heart for the next life and a detachment, in many ways, from all the things that make us anxious about this world.

In Jesus name, Amen.