INTRODUCTION

Jesus answers a trap set by the religious leaders, teaching that His followers should fulfill their responsibilities to earthly government while recognizing that God alone deserves their ultimate allegiance. From this we learn that Christians are called to be faithful citizens without making politics supreme, giving earthly authorities their due while giving ourselves entirely to God, whose image we bear and whose kingdom will never end.

INSTRUCTIONS

This guide is meant to facilitate discussion which will lead to a response to God's word. Therefore please use it as a tool that best fits the needs of your small group.

OPENING DISCUSSION

- What was the most interesting idea/concept about Sunday's sermon?
- What is your overall impression of Jesus in this passage?

REVIEW

- Have someone read **Mark 12.13-17**
- Who comes to challenge Jesus?
- Have you ever considered a just ruler to be like *the Sun shining on a cloudless day* (2 Sam 23)? Discuss.
- What are the implications of Jesus' words in v17?

APPLICATION

- How do you navigate/balance patriotism and love for God?
- Do you honor our political rulers? What would it look like to honor a political leader whose character or policies you strongly oppose?
- Are you humble in your political participation? How can the gospel help?
- How does knowing that governmental authority comes from God change the way we think about political leaders?
- Why is it important to recognize that government has legitimate authority without treating that authority as absolute?
- Why can political disagreements become so divisive, even among Christians who share the same faith?
- When does political involvement become an unhealthy rival to our devotion to Christ?
- How would your priorities change if you consciously viewed your time, money, relationships, work, and abilities as belonging to God?

PRAYER (divide the group based on gender if desired)

- What action/repentance does God want you to take according to the truths of this text?
- Are there any other prayer needs?