

SERMON
OUTLINE

Mark 12:13-17 takes place during growing opposition against Jesus in Jerusalem. The question about paying taxes to Caesar was not sincere. It was designed to trap Jesus and force Him into a dangerous answer.

The Pharisees and Herodians were sent “to trap him in his talk.” The Pharisees emphasized religious law, tradition, purity, and Jewish identity. The Herodians supported the Herodian political order and the Roman power behind it. Their convictions were different, but their resistance to Jesus brought them together. (Mark 12:13)

They approached Jesus with respectful words, calling Him “Teacher” and saying He was true, impartial, and faithful in teaching the way of God. But their words were not sincere. They used the language

#RealTalk 5

STAND FOR TRUTH: LIVING OUT OUR FAITH IN A DIVIDED NATION

MARK 12:13–17 I REV. LITO VILLORIA

of honor to hide the intention of entrapment. (Mark 12:14)

Their question was politically charged: “Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” If Jesus answered yes, He could be portrayed as supporting Roman oppression. If He answered no, He could be accused of rebellion against Rome. Jesus knew their hypocrisy and refused to be controlled by fear, flattery, pressure, or political manipulation. (Mark 12:14-15)

Jesus asked for a denarius and drew attention to its likeness and inscription. The coin bore Caesar’s image and inscription, representing Roman authority and civil order. Since the coin belonged within Caesar’s earthly sphere, it could be returned to Caesar as a civic obligation. (Mark 12:15-16)

Jesus said, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s.” He affirmed

rightful earthly responsibility without making earthly authority ultimate. Christians should fulfill civic requirements, honor rightful authority, and practice public integrity because earthly authority has a rightful place under God’s sovereign rule. (Mark 12:17a)

Jesus also said, “and to God the things that are God’s.” Caesar’s claim was limited, but God’s claim is complete. The coin bore Caesar’s image, but human life bears God’s image. Therefore, God deserves our worship, obedience, allegiance, and whole life. (Mark 12:17b)

The purpose of this sermon is to assure believers that in a divided nation, we can stand for truth with wisdom, responsibility, and faithfulness by fulfilling our earthly responsibilities while giving God our supreme allegiance and whole life. ✱

PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION FOR HIS GLORY

REV. LITO VILLORIA

Last week, I shared that in the coming weeks, I would say more about how we can continue to prepare together for Vision 2037. Vision 2037 is not merely about buildings, budgets, facilities, or expansion. It is about asking what kind of church God wants us to become as we heed His call, strengthen our disciplemaking mission, steward the school He has entrusted to us, and reach people of all generations for Christ.

As we look toward our **30th Anniversary** in 2027 with the theme, “**Built for His Glory,**” we must remember that God is not only preparing us to build outwardly. He is first building us inwardly. Before facilities are strengthened, disciples must be formed. Before structures are expanded, hearts must be aligned.

This is why one of the most important parts of preparing for Vision 2037 is preparing the next generation. Psalm 78:4 reminds us, “We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.” The faith entrusted to us must not end with us. It must be taught, modeled, lived, and passed on faithfully.

We cannot assume that our children and young people will automatically follow Christ. We cannot assume that because they attend church, join activities, or grow up around Christian language, they will become faithful disciples of Jesus. The next generation must be prayed for, loved, taught, discipled, encouraged, equipped, and journeyed with.

This is directly connected to Vision 2037. If we desire to become a global

disciplemaking and leadership center, then we must ask whether we are faithfully discipling the young people already entrusted to us. If we want to reach all generations for Christ, then we must not overlook the children, youth, students, and young adults God has placed within our homes, families, ministries, school, and community.

By God’s grace, this coming Saturday, **July 18, 2026**, our Next Gen Ministry here at GCF South Metro will host the **NextGen Conference** entitled, “**The Uncommon Life: Living Out the Kingdom in Every Space.**” This conference is designed to challenge and equip young people to live out their faith wherever God places them—in their homes, schools, friendships, workplaces, online spaces, and communities.

Our prayer is not simply that they will attend another event. Our prayer is that they will encounter God through His Word, deepen their convictions, embrace their identity in Christ, and learn to follow Jesus faithfully in every sphere of life. The uncommon life is a kingdom life lived before God in ordinary places with faithful obedience.

So I encourage our young people: please make every effort to attend. Come with an open heart, ready to listen to God’s Word and ask how the Lord wants you to follow Him more faithfully in your generation.

I also encourage parents, grandparents, guardians, titos, titas, teachers, Growth Group leaders, ministry leaders, and all who have young people in their lives: please invite them, help them register, and consider sponsoring them if needed. Sometimes a young person takes a

PARSON TO PERSON

step toward Christ because someone cared enough to invest.

The registration fee is only P250, inclusive of food and conference materials, but even this amount may be difficult for some students. If the Lord leads you, you may sponsor a young person from our church, another church, a campus group, or a community where young people need to hear God’s Word and experience Christian fellowship.

This is not merely support for an event. It is investment in eternal fruit. It is part of preparing the church for the future and stewarding the next generation for the glory of God.

As we prepare for Vision 2037, let us remember that the building of facilities must serve the building of lives. The strengthening of structures must serve the strengthening of disciples. The expansion of ministry must serve the mission of making disciples who will make disciples.

May the Lord make GCF South Metro a church that does not merely speak about the next generation, but faithfully invests in them. May He raise young people who love Christ, obey His Word, live out the kingdom in every space, and carry the gospel into their generation.

Let us continue preparing together for Vision 2037 by praying, partnering, providing, and investing in the lives God has entrusted to us.

May the Lord build us before He builds through us. May He prepare our young people for His purposes. And may every generation of GCF South Metro be Built for His Glory. ✱

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