But He detected their trickery and said to them, "Show Me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's" And He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were unable to catch Him in a saying in the presence of the people; and being amazed at His answer, they became silent. (Luke 20:23-26)

Once I heard a story about a military unit in a time of warfare that was consistently frustrated by insurgent forces. The insurgents often employed a successful strategy of infiltrating the unit's perimeter. The security forces would set up defensive measures to combat these assaults. One of these measures was to set in place a number of booby traps called Claymore mines. Claymores are horrific weapons of war. These devices could be safely detonated by people inside the perimeter when infiltration was detected. The explosive charges inside each of these mines would send out a deadly spray of bullet-sized projectiles that were designed to disable and decimate an invading force. But in this story, the invaders were stealth warriors, skilled at approaching the mines and turning them around. And when the military unit's security forces (*who believed themselves to be in a secure position*) detonated the mines, they often never knew what hit them. The devastation was intense. Their safe place had been destroyed. Their traps had been turned around.

Jesus was an expert at turning the traps around. Those who perceived themselves to be in a safe position often tried to box Him in. Many times His enemies were suddenly boxed in themselves. What was the point of His question-answering question? I believe it's simply this...Rome owned and occupied the Jewish nation. So if people knew that they should surrender a portion of their hard earned wages to Caesar, then why were they not concerned about surrendering all of their hardened hearts to God? Humanity, especially those chosen as God's people, has the image of God imprinted upon them and the word of God inscribed within them. Therefore, the message is *give yourselves to God.* He owns us! We belong to Him. Don't get trapped by the trappings of the world and its systems. The enemy (*and he does use religious systems and religious people for his purposes)* is consistently setting out traps for God's people. The devil may think his forces are in a secure position. But remember Who it is that has declared this spiritual war. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. Jesus is the Warrior King, engaged in assaulting the enemy's positions. And with God's word inscribed upon our hearts, we can turn the enemy's traps around.
Claymore mines were named in honor of the two-handed Scottish swords of medieval times. I am reminded that the Word of God is the Sword of the Spirit. Have you ever wanted to turn the enemy's traps around? So grab the Word of God with both hands. Wield the sword. Temptations to sin are the enemy's traps. But God has set the believer free from sin because sin's power is broken at the cross of Christ. The believer is armed with the Word of God and energized by the Spirit of God. Surrender your soul to God and get into the battle. The Lord Jesus is the Incarnate Insurgent who invaded enemy ground. Today He calls us to engage our strongholds of sin within, these fortresses of evil. The devil has occupied this ground far too long. The Christ-in-you can turn the traps around. So next time you look at yourself in the mirror, take a good look at who you really are. You bear the image of the Living God...And you belong to Him. Give to God the things that are God's!

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam