

### What Has Caesar to Do with Jesus?

Luke 3:1-6

C.S. Lewis once reminded Christians that *human beings live forever*, while the state only temporal. To spend time altering the state instead of sharing with people eternal salvation is a very bad bargain, at least according to C.S. Lewis. Yet, in our text we see salvation (Jesus) and the state (Rome) side by side.

**(1). Tiberius Caesar** - (42 BC to AD 37) is referred to by name only once in the Bible (Luke 3:1). He was the adopted son and sole heir of Augustus Caesar. He was 'co-princeps' (Roman head of the state) from **AD 12 to AD 14**, and upon Augustus Caesar's death, he became sole princeps (Caesar) until his own death in AD 37. When Jesus says, "*Render unto Caesar what is Caesars*" (Luke 20:25) He is referring to Tiberius.  
**(2). Pontius Pilate** - Governor of Judea. Appointed by Tiberius as regional governor of what we call the Holy Land. He was the one man before whom Jesus stood during his trial and crucifixion. Pilate's headquartered in Caesarea Maritime. He was the most powerful Roman official in Judea in Jesus' day.

**(3). Herod Antipas** - Tetrarch of Galilee and one of the sons of Herod the Great ("King of the Jews"). Tetrarch means "*ruler of a fourth.*" After King Herod (the Great) died, his kingdom of the Jews was divided into fourths among his sons. The Jordan River, the region of John the Baptist's ministry, was in Herod's tetrarchy. Herod Antipas killed John (Luke 9:9) and also desired to kill Jesus (Luke 23:8-12).

**(4). Philip** (or Philip the Tetrarch) - Tetrarch of Ituraea and Trachonitis, brother of Herod Antipas. He's referred to only in Luke 3:1. He headquartered at Paneas and renamed it Caesura Philippi (Matt. 16:13).

**(5). Lysanias** - Tetrarch of Abilene. Only mentioned here in the Bible, and is a little known political figure.

**(6). Annas and (7). Caiaphas** - High priests of Israel. Annas served high priest from AD 6 to AD 15, but was deposed by the Romans. Afterwards he reigned through his '*five sons,*' as well as through his son-in-law **Caiaphas**, who served as high priests consecutively after Annas. During Jesus day, **Caiaphas** was the high priest, but Annas was the power behind him. Jesus was first brought before Annas, and after brief questioning (Jn. 18:19-23) was sent to Caiaphas where the first trial of Jesus took place (Matt 26:57-68).

"**The Rich Man and Lazarus**" is a parable about **Caiaphas** (Luke 16:19-31). The priest sought to kill Lazarus (Jn. 12:10) since many were believing in Jesus due to Christ's resurrection of Lazarus. God told the Rich Man who was in hell and asked to go to "his father's house (Annas) and tell his five brothers"- "*If they don't listen to the Scriptures, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.*"

#### I. You have an obligation to know the kings of your state

*"I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all, for kings and all who are in authority, that you may live a quiet and peaceable life"* (I Timothy 2:2). We have the example of Luke who was able to date the beginning of John's ministry based on civil authorities.

#### II. You have an opportunity to show the King to your state

"Preaching a baptism for the repentance of sins" (v. 3). John's entire ministry was as a 'forerunner' of the Messiah, 'making ready the way of the Lord.' Not all are happy with the message of repentance. Herod had John put to death (Luke 9:9) for challenging the king's 'unlawful' marriage to his niece.

#### III. You have an occasion to grow the Kingdom in your state

"And all flesh will see the salvation of God" (v. 6). This is the promise of God through the prophet

Isaiah. When God's people make known the King of Kings, fearing no earthly king, eventually the entire world will 'see the salvation of God.' The gospel of Jesus Christ transforms the earth.