

HONORING AUTHORITY +++

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Well, good morning, and before I jump into message today, I want to kind of dispel the rumor mills because it might pop out a little bit here in just a second, but I preached last week about Micaiah, how he stood strong, didn't buckle under the pressure, and yesterday I didn't do that. I hung out with friends, I was drinking, and I did something I'd never done in the first 41 and a half years of my life. I got a tattoo. And because it might show on my, I just want to kind of show it to you real quick. I don't know if you can zoom in. Can you zoom in on that? That's my brother-in-law, Peter Bay. He turned 40 last week. Come on. Happy birthday, Peter. Yeah. Marked my tricep with Peter for whatever reason. I was drinking water, by the way, so what were you thinking? Anyway.

Also, you might notice a set design back here like we're in the wild because we're getting ready to celebrate Vacation Bible School, but let's get on with today's message. This is a coin, and our modern-day coins have heads and they have tails, and so when someone flips a coin, like what's your go-to? Are you like always heads, always tails, or do you mix it up a little bit? How many of you are like, I pick heads every time? Decent bit. How many are in the tails never fails group? Yeah, they got a whole hashtag for that behind that powerful group, and how many just mix it up because you want to try to get it as many times as possible? Yeah, statistics show that it literally is a 50-50 split.

This last week, though, I read something that if you want to increase your chances a little bit, you can, and you need to look at the coin first. First to like make sure that nobody's doing like a trick coin, like it really does have a heads. It does have a tails, but statistics show that if you know what side the coin is up when it's flipped, that it has a 50.8% chance of landing on that. So let's just try it. So heads right here, right? Heads, heads is the top side. So let me see if this pans out. We flip, heads, incredible. A prophet is known by if their words come true or not. I'm one for two today on that. What are the odds? Exactly that, by the way.

So why all this about flipping a coin? Because sometimes life feels like that. You feel stuck in the middle, like there's two outcomes, two sides, and you're not sure which way things are going to land in your world. Thankfully, Jesus was in situations like this and we can learn from him. And what we're going to learn today is not just what he stood for, but how he stood made all the difference.

Today we're in our second sermon in the honor code sermon series. We're looking at honor in the month of June and we're really focused on two words. First word is reputation. Everybody say reputation and all campuses come on, say respect. The definition we're working with is honor is pursuing a good reputation and at the same time showing proper respect for one another. Last week we really honed in on that reputation piece, especially what's your reputation before God. And now we want to talk about this week and the coming. How do we show proper respect for others?

Next week is Father's Day, one of the greatest holidays of the year, by the way. We're going to talk about how to show honor, how to show respect in the home. And then the week after that, really, I think important message of how do we not tear down other generations, but build all generations up

for the glory of God. But today, a really important message, I think we're going to talk about how to honor, how to show proper respect to authority, but I'm not going to talk about how to respect authority that looks like you, thinks like you, acts like you, votes like you. I think we already do a pretty good job of that. I want to talk about how do we honor authority that's different from you, maybe even different from what God's word says.

And the truth I want to kind of flesh out over the course of the whole message is that how you stand matters just as much as what you stand for. Because I think we've all been in situations, whether it's political debates or theological discussions or social media controversy or Thanksgiving dinners, where it feels like a battle. And what are you going to do? Because you may believe that you have truth on your side, but again, how you stand matters just as much as what you stand for. And so how do you stand in an honoring way that doesn't tear down someone else, even if they think differently than you, but how do you also stand for truth like Micaiah did last week, no matter what others are saying? That's where we're going today.

We're going to be in Mark chapter 12, and we're going to feature a section of scripture that has a coin in it. Starts this way. Later, they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch him in his words. So we can tell they're coming with bad intentions from the beginning, and it's kind of interesting who's coming at them. Two groups, the Pharisees and the Herodians.

The Pharisees are probably the most prominent, well-known group of Jewish people in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus has his harshest words to share against and to the Pharisees. And the Pharisees were rule abiding, law following, strict adherence to the Jewish law. And actually on the outside, many of them were really good people, which is why I think Jesus was so angry because like, gosh, your works are good on the outside, but their inside was so messed up and they became super self-righteous. Super self-righteous. And they really valued rules over relationships.

They also were close. They were looking for the descendant of King David to rule and reign over the throne of Israel to restore it back to the good people. And Jesus is in the line and descendant of David, and he is a ruler, but he was less interested in ruling good people, but ruling broken people back through grace and ruling not just a nation, but the world. So they missed it. They were close. They missed it.

The Herodians, you don't hear as much about them. They were also a Jewish group of people, but rather than strict adherence to the Jewish law, they affiliated themselves with the Roman government and became political allies with King Herod. Likely they did this because they wanted to have a good life. To be friends of Rome, which was the government of that day, was likely going to result in a better day to day experience for them. And so a lot of the Pharisees viewed the Herodians as traitors.

So these two groups don't like each other, but amazingly they come together in a plot to try to trap Jesus with bad intentions. What's that phrase? The enemy of my enemy is my friend. Their dislike of Jesus outweighed their dislike of one another. And they plotted together. And Sam Levinson along these lines once said this, that the reason grandparents and grandchildren get along so well is they have a common enemy. My dad is clapping here. Sure what that means, but anyway, I shouldn't have called you out publicly. I'm actually going to talk against what I just did, but there you go anyway.

Every now and then though that that is true, even in our world, even in our nation of America lately, a couple of weeks ago, Netflix put on that man hunt for Osama bin Laden. And I watched and I was reminded of the egregious, horrendous terrorist attacks of 9-11 and like, we're going to get justice. And it was a rare time. Of course, there's outliers in everything, but a rare time when the majority of the American people, no matter what you believed came together in unity because the common, the enemy of my enemy is my friend.

And so these two groups came to him and said, teacher, we know you're a man of integrity. That's that reputation piece we talked about last week. You're a man of honor. This was by the way, a very much an honor and shame culture more so than our day today. Everything was about your reputation, your name with your name came opportunities with your name came power with your name came wealth. And so we know that teacher, you're a man of honor. You're a man of integrity. And they just keep buttering them up. They say, you're not swayed by others because you pay no attention to who they are. But what do you do? You teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.

And so they've buttered about, you're a man of honor, you're a man of integrity, and you're going to speak the truth. That was the bait. Here's the trap. So question, is it right? This is what they'd worked for. This was the question to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not. Should we pay or shouldn't we? And again, they were under Roman occupation and the Romans really taxed their people, including the Jewish people.

And some of these taxes, they went to some good things, some things that we read about in the history books of how the good, this Roman rule was at certain things, things that paid for roads and mail and aqueducts. And even that military is known in that time as the Pax Romana, the peace of Rome. But it also funded some bad things, some evil things. It funded the temples of false gods. And it actually just kind of made the pockets of the already really wealthy, including the Caesar on down even more wealthy. And the tax collectors also took a cut. And that's why they were so hated in that time as well.

And so this is a good question. You're a man of honor. You're going to speak the truth. I'm giving you a yes and no question. This is the trap. And Jesus has to be real careful in what he says next. Now any of you that have been around church or Jesus know that traps don't work with him. So spoiler alert, but he's got to be careful. But how does he do it?

If, I mean, if he says, pay your taxes, well, then he sides with the Herodians and that angers the Pharisees plus all of the other Jewish people that were around. And keep in mind, this was, this was Passover. All the people are gathered thousands upon thousands upon. There's a large crowd of people that are following. And so if he says, pay your taxes, the Herodians, rather the Pharisees are really angry as well as many of the Jewish people.

If he says, don't pay your taxes, well, now he's going to anger the Herodians and they've got the voice and the ear of the king and the emperor. And they can go right back in that moment after a chapter late earlier, where Jesus just flipped tables in the temple courts, he's already like the man of public interest in that moment. And all they need is one more thing. And so that's all they need. If he says the wrong answer, we'll go just report to King Herod. You've got an insurrectionist down there, a rebel that's whipping the crowd into another frenzy. It's time to take him down.

So Jesus has to be really careful in his answer. Let's see how he gets out of it. Next verse says, but Jesus knew their hypocrisy. Why are you trying to trap me? He asked, bring me a denarius and let me look at it. A denarius is a coin. Now our modern day coins have two sides, obviously there's heads and there's tails. A denarius has a prominent figure of someone in our nation's history and tails features a landmark, a symbol, a building, a state in our nation.

Interestingly, back on the head side is the phrase and on our bills is the phrase in God we trust. And honestly, in a pluralistic society, kind of surprised that's still on there in the newly minted money that we have, because there are a rise in people that have no religion, no atheists, nothing in particular. And at the same time, I also find it ironic because I think perhaps there's nothing in our nation that displays less of a trust in God than the way we use our money. But that's not a sermon for today. I'm going to write a book. Actually, I already wrote a book. It's coming out in October. We'll do that in October. Come back. It's going to be great.

But two sides, Jesus said, show me the coin. Now he already knew what was on the coin. Similar to ours, there was a heads and a tails. The heads was the emperor, the Caesar imprinted on one side and on the other side was printed Caesar is the son of God. Emperor, Caesar is the son of God. And denarius is way more valuable than our coins that are in our usual currency. It actually was worth a day's wages.

And so if you think about minimum wage, \$15 an hour, it was eight hour day. It was worth at least \$120, this coin, it's significant value. And the Jews hated paying this tax, not only because it was a lot of money and it went to inappropriate things, but now they've got to carry in their pockets the idols of Rome with them. So, two sides, Caesar on one and Caesar is the son of God on the other.

Caesar is so prideful that while he's alive, he's minting the image of his coin, of his on the coins. And so they brought the coin and Jesus asked them, whose image is this? And whose inscriptions? Caesar's, they replied. And then Jesus said, maybe you've heard these words before. Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God, what is God's. And they were amazed at him. And the story just ends like that. That's it, he got out.

And the next section of verses, another group of Jews tries to trap Jesus, the Sadducees. And they also can't get him, which is why they were sad, you see. Thank you, that means a lot, really does.

But I kind of love, I kind of love that these two enemy groups, like we're plotting, I can't imagine for sure hours, if not days, weeks or months of like, hey, let's get Jesus. I can't imagine these two groups coming together, the blood's already boiling because they hate each other. But like, let's put that aside and let's figure out how are we going to get them. Let's wait till Passover when everybody's around. What's something money that everybody thinks about? And let's do it.

Then the hours, the weeks, the months that might've went into this. And in 10 seconds with a prop, Jesus gets out of it. That's awesome. How did Jesus get out of this trap? Because I believe that many times as Christians, we feel trapped. Maybe you don't have two large groups of enemies colluding behind closed doors of what it looks like to trap you. Maybe you do. I don't know. You probably don't have that, but I believe that sometimes we're trapped in this world knowing what to say and what to do with all the different beliefs out there that are infringing upon what we might believe.

How do we get out of this trap? How do we stand? Well, how do we honor one another and yet still stand on truth? I want to look at what Jesus did, not only in this story, but in the totality of how he lived. I want to look at four takeaways that we can learn from Jesus and how you can honor others, even those in authority that you disagree with.

Number one, that you can respect others by speaking with grace and truth. Has anyone ever won an argument, but you lost a relationship? Maybe not a full relationship. Are there any spouses that like you crushed it and you won that argument and yet you're sleeping on a couch that night? That doesn't feel like a win anymore. Or maybe you've hit post and it's just left behind a trail of broken trust. Maybe it's not even like government authorities. Maybe it's just authority at work and you're just kind of like your boss just keeps making bad decisions and you've got all the right answers, but for a reason, the boss just keeps going with Jan's ideas.

And so you and Jan and the rest of the team come together in a decision-making meeting where she's going to present her side, you're going to present your side, and you know what's right. You've looked at the data from every side. You've got testimony. Like, you know beyond a fact that you're right, but you're also walking into that meeting salty because you know the last time they picked Jan and you think they're going to pick Jan again because Jan's the favorite. And so when Jan speaks, you interrupt, you're snarky, you're just mean, you demean or you demone everything she's saying. And at the end of it, like you haven't even shared your idea yet and your boss decides to go with Jan's idea, even though you were more right than Jan. Why? Because it's possible to be right in content, but wrong in character.

Maybe even say it a little more simply. It's possible to be 100% right and 100% wrong. Because how you stand matters just as much what you stand for. And Jesus had this amazing ability, offers us a masterclass in this and through the Gospels that he did not dodge hard questions, but he also responded with what the situation needed most.

And we learned this about Jesus from the very first chapter we're introduced to him living in this world. John chapter one, verse 14, it says, the word became flesh. The word capital W is Jesus and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only son who came from the father full of what? Full of grace and truth. Full of what? Come on all campuses, grace and truth.

Now you might think that a leader or someone on the other side is full of, you know what? But you have a call to be like Christ, that you would be full of grace and truth. And so here's something to check for you. That when you are speaking out or about others, especially those in authority that are different than you, do you tend to jump to truth or do you tend to jump to grace? Because I believe honor is a combination of the two to show proper respect. I believe that truth, grace alone can become compromise and truth alone can just be cruel. But Jesus remarkably stood on both. Are you standing with grace and truth?

If you can't say that what I'm about to say is kind, it's graceful, it's loving. And at the same time, it's true. I don't know that it's worth saying. Number one, we're going to speak with grace and truth, but number two, we're going to respect others by, especially those in authority, by praying for them.

So when you speak, I believe that God's word calls you to do it privately before you do anything publicly. And sometimes I think we look to the mob before we actually give that person, that man or woman on the other side, a chance to have a conversation with us.

And if you want like a modern day example of what the mob looks like, your challenge this week is to download the next door app. Like if you want to just read six hours of complaints, pop popcorn and read. And if you want to stir the pot, just, just start throwing stuff in and everyone will go off. It's crazy. It's never been, how about this? It's never been easier to get a mob behind you these days. Social media, internet, comment boards, message boards, YouTube.

It was harder to get a mob back then, but that's why the trap was so good is because it already had the mob with them. It was a few days before Passover and everybody's there. So it was good planning on the Pharisees and the Herodians part. Now the situation we read earlier, obviously it was a public setting. And so Jesus responded publicly, but there was another place in Jesus's ministry where he said these words, especially for those who are brothers and sisters in Christ, that Matthew 18, 15, that if your brother or sister sins, that you were to go and point out their fault just between the two of you. And if they listened to you, you've won them over.

I was talking with a friend that I have great respect for a couple of weeks ago, and he talked about a situation that I was talking about this sermon and he talked about a situation where he was publicly and loudly called out at a sporting event as a fan by someone else that he knew. And he believes that that person either misheard what he said in the heat of the moment or mistook his words to be somebody else.

Nevertheless, he stood up publicly and loudly kind of hit against his reputation. He didn't escalate the situation in the moment and raise it to a level that it needed to get to. He didn't later bash him, but rather after the fact, he went to him and talked with him and said, hey, let's talk about that situation.

And after talking about that situation, I don't know that they even still saw eye to eye on that situation. But what they did agree to do is to, if we have an issue with one another, we respect each other enough to know to have a working relationship that we will talk with one another privately and not publicly.

I don't envision these two hanging out on weekends or planning vacations together, but they've figured out a really honoring way to talk about disagreements if they might have one in the future. And you can't always privately talk with somebody with authority. You may disagree with, you might be like, well, Zach, that's awesome. I tried calling the president of the United States of America.

It's pretty busy. I wanted to talk to him about the tariffs, in my opinion, he didn't pick up. What do I do? I'm not saying you never go public with what you ought to say or think, but I do believe you ought to attempt every possible chance to speak with authority you disagree with privately first. And if you can't get an audience with someone you disagree with, you can always privately pray for them. And that's your first step. One of the most powerful and honoring things you can do with someone you disagree with is to take that person before God in prayer and hopefully talk privately.

Lately, I've been challenged on this. I don't usually post things on my social media accounts, but I felt like a friend of mine was really got a bad rap, they threw him under the bus in a way that wasn't fair to

him. And so I wanted to stand up for him. And I did. I posted a video to stand up for my friend. And there was all sorts of comments and shares because that's what happens when you stand up for someone or something.

But there were some people that saw me standing up for someone and there were others that saw me standing against someone else. And I had people that I love and people that I trusted that actually on the side said, hey, we actually totally agree with what you said, but I just want to challenge you that have you prayed for that person on the other side? Have you talked with him? Have you attempted to?

And in full transparency, I had to say, no, actually, I hadn't. I believe what I said was right, but maybe I didn't do it in the best way. And so I've been lifting up those people in prayer that I disagree with more so in the past few weeks and even have reached out to a couple and had somewhat decent conversations. We're not going to agree. It turns out people are pretty stubborn with what they believe, myself included. But we're going to do it in an honoring way. And I've just found that when you pray for someone, even someone you disagree with, you have a harder time demonizing them. And so I need to be reminded of this just like you.

So we're not going to speak grace and truth, but we're going to, we're going to pray for this person. We're going to seek a private audience before we posted on next door app.

Number three, we're going to respect others by being a good and productive law abiding citizen. When Jesus looked at the coin, Jesus said to them, give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and give back to God's what is God's. And the Greek word is render. It doesn't mean give. It means give back, give back. And so since Caesar minted his own image on the coins, give it back to him.

This was Jesus really bringing up the Christian ethic of Christians being, we don't like this word, submissive to governmental authority. And this is not only something that Jesus taught in this moment, but it's also taught in the word of God. In other places, the apostle Paul would expound on this in Romans chapter 13.

And though I think we, I have a difficult time living this out, that the text reads pretty easy. So let me read what Paul said to us about this. He said, let everyone that includes you, by the way, be subject to the governing authorities for there's no authority except that which God has established doubles down on and says the authorities that exist have been established by God.

Consequently, whoever rebels against the authorities rebelling against what God has instituted and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right. But for those who do wrong, do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you'll be commended for the one in authority is God's servant for your good.

But if you do wrong, be afraid for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to, here's the word, submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment, but also as a matter of conscience.

We do this two reasons, not only to avoid punishment, but because it's the right thing to do. And I think there's times where the law hits at us like that. Like this week, I'll be driving out to peak challenge with my boys to do the hiking trip out in Colorado.

And when I'm out in Western Nebraska, Eastern Colorado, I think the speed limit should be a hundred. I'm not following the speed limit or getting close to it because I have a good conscience. I'm doing it because I don't want to get punished solely the reason because I want to get there because it's just a tough drive.

And there's other times when it's like, no, I'm doing this because it's the right and it's the good thing to do. This is six and seven. This is also why you pay taxes for the authorities are God's servant who give their full time to governing, give to everyone what you owe them, render, right? If you owe taxes, pay taxes. If revenue than revenue, if respect, then respect. Look at this last word. If honor, then what honor.

Hey, just by living in our nation doesn't mean you agree with everything that our nation and its leaders do or say, but does it mean you as a Christian pay taxes and follow the laws of the government? Yeah. It's why you stop at stoplights and obey speed limits and pay taxes and wear seatbelts and helmets with your on motorcycles.

The laws are, some of them are more tough than others. Some of them are more difficult than others. It may not be how you would write them, but we have an obligation to submit under those laws of the land.

Does that ever mean we can't stand against if like the laws are against God's word? Of course we can. And I just mentioned the chapter prior to this, that Jesus is literally standing up against injustice. He's not, he's not flipping coins. He's flipping tables in front of thousands. He's standing up against the injustice of them, of them doing this money exchange stuff in the temple and the house of God.

So clearly there's a time even Jesus teaches that we can stand against, but again, how you stand matters as much as what you stand for.

Some of you may remember in our neighboring state, December of 2023 when in the state capital building of Des Moines, this public forum, there were Christmas lights and set up that was around and there was a satanic public display next to it.

And you would expect Christians lost their mind. They lost their mind like a decade prior when Starbucks just put out a red cup at Christmas. Like where's our holiday, where's our Christmas stuff. And many of them were in uproar and, and they were aggressive and they had mockery and there was outrage and there was vandalism.

One congressman from Mississippi drove to Iowa and dismantled the setup and was charged with a felony hate crime. Others, Christians voiced their concern through peaceful prayer gatherings and legal petitions.

One pastor led a group in reading scripture and worshiping in the rotunda. Why? Not to escalate, but to elevate the name of Jesus in a spiritually dark place.

And to me, it was a beautiful reminder that as we live in this pluralistic society, which is challenging, that we are called not to match darkness with darkness, but to bring light into dark places.

And the difference between what happened here and what happened with Jesus, a chapter before is this in Iowa was in public setting.

Do I wish as a pastor and as a Christian, as a citizen of America, that that would have never gone anywhere? Of course I do. But it was in a public place, whereas the money exchange was happening in the temple courts where God is worshiped. We'd have a different response if there was a satanic display here in one of our campuses at King of Kings than in a public space.

But we aren't called to match darkness with darkness, but rather to bring light into the darkness.

Speaking of which, the beautiful thing about what Jesus's answer kind of landing the plane is to remind you that just as a coin has an image on it, Caesar made it, give it back to Caesar.

Do you also know that you too are minted with an image? Not of your brother-in-law on your tricep, but of God on your heart. I mean, this is Genesis 1 stuff. In the very beginning, you were made, created in the image of God.

And so what many people miss about this story, they hear only the Caesar and the tax part of it, but they forget that at the end, God says, give back, render to God what is God's. I want your heart.

And you know what? You can keep paying taxes to Caesar because his face is on it. But you know, the thing Caesar wants the most that he can never get what's inscribed on the back of it, which is your worship, your praise, and your adoration and your declaration that he is the son of God.

Caesar can't get what I minted on your heart from the beginning, which is a reminder to us final point today, that in all of this, we can stand well today knowing that Jesus is seated well, that the one that imprinted his image on your heart is in full power and control in the heavenly realms on his throne.

I bring you back to that beautiful image that the New Testament authors shared more frequently than any other image, that Bible verse from Psalm 110, verse 1, where the Lord says to my Lord, God the father says to Jesus, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

And this is the moment when Jesus ascended back into heaven after, you know, we talked about a trap with Pharisees and Herodians and a coin today that Jesus got out of.

But don't you know that that trap was just a foreshadowing of a much more developed trap, a trap that threw Jesus onto a torture instrument called a cross, where he would give his life.

And then they would take that body, that dead, lifeless, bruised, bloodied body, and they would throw it in a tomb and trapped behind a 3000 pound stone, which nobody had ever gotten out of before.

That's a good trap. But didn't I say earlier, you can't trap Jesus? Because on the third day, Jesus got out of that trap so that you and I who have been trapped in our sin have a way out called grace through faith.

And that's what we are marked by. We're marked by the grace of Jesus Christ.

And so you live differently than those who aren't marked by the image of God.

And so we can, we can stand well and speak well, because we know that God is seated well on his throne right now.

And that God's present day posture defines our everyday posture.

We need to remember that no matter what happens in this world, that God is not, he's not like wondering what happened up there now.

That God has dealt with bad kings before, and he's dealt with good kings before.

He instituted government after all, for our benefit, and even with his institution, God's people have broken it and have made it bad and have made it good and have made it in the middle of times.

And God is not threatened by anything that government does.

He is seated.

He's fine.

He's not nervous.

He's not mentally unwell.

He's not shaking.

He's not biting his fingernails.

He's not pacing back and forth.

He's not reading self-help books.

He's not checking into therapy.

He's not terrified about the tariffs.

He's not worried about what will happen in the next generation.

He's just fine because he's already been trapped.

They threw their worst at him and he came out the other side so that you and I could come out the other side of our trap and not live according to the lies of this world anymore, but be living by the image that we're marked with from the beginning.

And so you can give your coins back to the president or to the king or the emperor or wherever they might go.

Because what those in authority most want, they can't get, which is your heart, which is your worship.

And so I would invite you right now, all campuses, will you stand?

This is a time to not just learn the Christian ethic of what it means to be a good citizen, but to remember that we are forever citizens of heaven and to remember the second half of that phrase may be more important than even the first half, that this is the day to give back to God what is God's.

And this is the day to give and to render his heart and your worship to him for he alone is worthy.

And so if you're ready to do that, I'd invite you to raise both hands, all campuses.

If this is the day where you're like, I am marked by God, I am marked by God, I am marked by his grace through the trap that he got through.

I received that today in my own life.

Surrender to you, God, Jesus, we come together in prayer right now and we do admit this world is hard and it's confusing and there's times that we just want to spout off and stand up for what we feel is right.

Sometimes you call us to do that, but may we remember that how we stand is so important.

Forgive us for the times we do it incorrect, without wisdom and forgetting that you're on your throne and give us grace again.

God, we receive that grace.

Our hands in the air signs that we're rendering our hearts back to you and only you.

Caesar can get our coins, but only you get our heart.

So we give it back to you.

We place it back where it belongs.

We're sorry that we've been given it away in other places.

And we're looking forward to the day when we can join the angels and archangels around you, heavenly seated, and where your light will shine bright enough to fill the whole world.

We're grateful that we're standing there in worship and not entrapped with the enemies underneath the footstool.

We love you and we love your justice, even if we don't understand it or see it in this day.

And we trust that you'll make all things right.

And even those in authority that make bad decisions, give them grace, Lord.

Give them wisdom.

We love you.

It's in your name we pray, and together all campuses say, amen.