

Sunday, May 7, 2017 Confirmation Sunday, Holy Communion

Confirmed: Maxibillion Thompson, Ian Bautch, Conner Keintz, James Richter

Message: Whose Image?

Scripture: Mark 2:14-17

Text: Ephesians 4:23-24 “Let the Spirit renew your mind and make you into a new person, for you were created in God’s image in true righteousness and holiness.

Wednesday Blurp: “Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.” This famous proverb comes straight from Jesus. And it has to do with money and faces! What does it mean? How do we live this way? Come this Sunday and hear it from confirmation students. It's the first of two Confirmation Sundays. Ian Bautch, Conner Keintz, James Richter and Max Thompson will give their faith sharing, and we as a congregation will bless them and pray for them. We who follow Jesus live with God's image in us, restored and reflected to others.

GATHERING SONG: *Even So, Come* - Sanctify

WELCOME: Pastor David

Kids stay in worship

HC - open to everyone, can switch sides and receive from the student you came for

PRAISE WORSHIP: Sanctify

Magnify

Be Thou My Vision

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

Worship Prayer - Andrew

SCRIPTURE: Mark 12:14-17

PP#1: Mark 12:13-17 (CEB)

13 [The Jewish leaders] sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch Him in His words. 14 They came to Him and said, “Teacher, we know that you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not? 15 Should we pay or shouldn’t we?”

PP#2: Mark 12:13-17 (CEB)

15 But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “Why are you trying to trap me?” He asked. “Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.” 16 They brought the coin, and He asked them, “Whose image is this? And whose inscription?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

17 Then Jesus said to them, “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were amazed at him.

PP#3: *Image of two “widow’s mite” coins.*

Not many of you may know this, but I am a bit of a coin collector. My preference is US coins minted for circulation, but as a pastor I also have an interest in the coins of the Bible. I have in my collection, for example, what the Bible calls “The Widow’s mite,” the two copper pennies that the elderly widow put in the temple offering, giving all she had. Some of the biblical coins are rather rare and expensive, so I don’t have them all...yet!

PP#4: *Image of silver Denarius of Tiberius at*

<http://bibleandarchaeology.blogspot.com/2011/02/coin-with-image-of-caesar.html>

This passage from Mark 12 mentions a coin. It’s a silver denarius, about the size of a dime. A denarius was the standard issue coin of the Roman Empire, and was the pay for a day’s work by a skilled laborer. What would that be today? \$100?

When Jesus was an adult, Tiberius was emperor in Rome. Tiberius was the second Roman emperor, taking over from Caesar Augustus, the emperor of Jesus’ birth, in 14 A.D.

Now, one of the great problems for Jews was that, starting with Augustus, the Roman emperors claimed divinity. You can see it on this coin, here. On the right, starting on the bottom. Ti, is abbreviated for Tiberius. Then Caesar. Then Divi, meaning divine. The coin had the name for God on it. So, could faithful Jews use such coins, when they claimed that the emperor was god?

This is what some smart-thinking Jewish experts used to try to trap Jesus. The story, as we read it in Mark 12, is that some of them come to Jesus and at first, ever so innocently, try to butter Him up. But then they lay the trap. Should we pay the tax to Rome?

Now, this was not the ordinary tax. This was the special tax that the Roman Empire levied on all non-Romans within of the empire, one denarius once a year, as a way for them to help pay for all the benefits they, as conquered peoples, receive by being subjects of the superior Romans. The Romans taxed everyone, and then they had this extra tax for non-Romans.

Of course the Jews hated it. And they hated it all the more because they had to swear allegiance to the Roman emperor, who considered himself divine. And they had to show their allegiance by paying a tax using a Roman coin with the word “god” on it.

So, Jesus, do we pay the tax, and support the idolatry of the Roman Empire (breaking Jewish law), or do we not pay the tax and breaking the Roman law? Which is it, oh very wise and noble Jesus?

Well, Jesus doesn’t answer their question directly. He first asks to see a denarius. Then He answers the question with a question: “Whose image is on the coin?” Well, it is Caesar’s.

Then Jesus makes that amazing answer: “Give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.”

PP#5: *Last/fourth image from:* <http://www.altarandthrone.com/render-unto-caesar/>

Max, Conner, Ian, and James. I think this answer that Jesus gave, is a way for you to live the rest of your lives as Christians.

Today you are swearing your allegiance to Jesus. You belong to God! But you also live in this physical world, and you have to follow it’s rules, too. Being a Christian in this life means giving to the world what belongs to the world, and to God what belongs to God.

Christians, every day, have to discern what this means in order to live faithfully for God.

So, I'm going to give you each a reproduction of the denarius that Jesus talked about.

[Give reproduction coin to the students.]

I hope it will remind you, from now on, to live for God, in this world.

You see, God wants you here, involved in this world, on purpose, to live for Him while you are in it. When you give yourself to God, God then uses you to make the world better through you, by what you do, and how you live.

Now, how we live this out is not just figuring out how much to pay in taxes and how much money to give to God's work. You will soon find out that God is far cheaper! Taxes are about 25%. And we learned last week that God expects you to give only 10% to His work. God's a bargain!

But this really isn't about money.

Jesus, if you notice, asks about *the image* on the coin.

Emperors put their image on coins to remind everyone that everything actually belonged to them, and that they deserved the people's allegiance. Everything people did with money, they did in Caesar's image. It belongs to Caesar.

PP#6: Genesis 1:26-28 (NIV)

"Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness ... So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them"

But Jesus digs deep back to the beginning of the Jewish Scriptures, back to creation, where it describes how God created people. Again, it's about the image. The Bible says that in the beginning God created people in God's image.

Every coin was made with the same image of Caesar, but every person is made in the same image of God. We belong to God! And everything we do, we do as God's image.

PP#7: *Fifth image down at:* <https://hereistandobservations.wordpress.com/tag/religion/>

You can almost imagine how Jesus did this.

Jesus holds the coin and asks, "Whose image is on this coin?"

Answer, "Caesar's."

Now it doesn't actually say it, but it is implied here. Perhaps Jesus even physically put His arm around the shoulders of one who questioned Him, implying the question, "And whose image is on *this* coin?" Mental answer, "God made people in God's image."

Then Jesus says, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's."

PP#8: Whose Image?

This is why the people who came to test Jesus quietly walked away. It is no longer about the tax. It's about being God's image, and living as God's image in the world!

It's not about giving the tax, it's about giving your whole selves to God. "Give your whole self to the One who has imprinted His Divinity on you!"

We live in Caesar's empire, and so we follow those rules. But we belong to God. And when we choose Jesus, we live for Him, and that means differently than the rest of the world.

Because God rules over all rulers, because God calls out of each of us God's very own image, each of us must follow God, not Caesar.

Max, Conner, Ian, and Armando. Today, on your confirmation, I call you to live out your image of God on you. I call you to live differently, following God, not Caesar.

To help you remember this, I'm going to give you a very unique Confirmation Cross. Each confirmation class I've ever confirmed, I've given a different confirmation cross to wear. This year, I will hang around your neck something special as your confirming pastor, and as a coin collector.

PP#9: *Image of the bronze follis (both sides) that is their confirmation cross.*

Your Confirmation cross is a coin, a reproduction of a bronze coin from the Eastern Roman Empire, dating back a thousand years. A thousand years after the Tiberius denarius, the Eastern Roman Emperor John I, who was a Christian, began striking coins with the image of Jesus, as a way to mark that his empire didn't belong to him, but to God.

Can you see the cross on the coin? It's the halo behind Jesus' head. That's your confirmation cross! And just as this coin was made in Jesus' image, may it remind you, that as confirmed Jesus-followers, you have Jesus' image on you.

On the back, in Greek, is are the words, "Heasus...Christus...Basilieu...Basile" "Jesus Christ, King of Kings."

Today, as you choose to make Jesus your King of Kings, I pray that you would live, from now on, not just in His image, but *as* His image."

Amen!

So, it's now time to hear from each of you.

Today, you are making your public declaration of your allegiance to Jesus. You are claiming your identity as made in God's image. And as you do, you also share with us, this hope joy we all can have.

Max, you're first.

FAITH SHARINGS: May 7: Max, Ian, Conner, James
May 14: Michael, Erik, Armando, Nathan

PP#10: Maxibillion Craig Thompson

Baptism: At Red Rock Camp later this summer

Confirmation Mentor: Jim Letourneau

Favorite Bible Verses: Romans 12:21 (Also Deuteronomy 31:6 and Isaiah 43:2)

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Favorite Christian Songs: *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, *The Lord Is My Light*, and *God and God Alone* by Steve Green

PP#11: Ian Hunter Bautch

Baptized: May 25, 2003 at First Lutheran Church, Hibbing

Confirmation Mentor: Chuck Yetter

Favorite Bible Passage: Psalm 23

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. ..."

Favorite Christian Song: *The Lion and the Lamb*

PP#12: James Allen Richter

Baptized: Oct. 13, 2002 at First UMC, Lindstrom

Confirmation Mentor: Ray Rought

Favorite Bible Verse: 2 Timothy 3:16

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.”

Favorite Christian Song: *The Old Rugged Cross*

PP#13: Conner Philip Keintz

Baptized: August 24, 2003 at FHUMC

Confirmation Mentor: Randy Coley

Favorite Bible Verse: Romans 12:2 “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is - His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Favorite Christian Song: *God’s Not Dead* by the Newsboys

VOWS OF PROFESSION OF FAITH:

“The Apostle’s Creed”

May 7: as understood by Nathan Werner

May 14: as understood by Erik Kargel

The Apostle’s Creed, as understood by Nathan Werner**PP#14-15: The Apostle’s Creed, as understood by Nathan Werner**

I believe that there is a God almighty, who made absolutely everything in the universe, besides what people made and dark powers.

I also believe that God’s one and only Son, Jesus, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity (which is God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit), and was born to Mary, His mother, who was a virgin. He suffered under the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate; then was crucified, then He died, and then buried, and He then descended down to hell. On the third day of being “dead” He was raised from the “dead,” and then He ascended into heaven. Now He sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there He will come down during the rapture and will judge between those who will live forever those who won’t.

I also believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, that people who have died being a Christian are still alive, that Jesus forgives our sins (us doing wrong against God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit), that if we are Christians our souls continue to live and our bodies will be resurrected after we die, and that in heaven we will not die.

Amen.

CONFIRMATION OF FAITH**PP#16: *Images of baptism and prayer***

Pastor: Confirmation is a completion of infant baptism.

Baptism is a declaration to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior

Initiation into Christ’s Church

Incorporation into Jesus’ act of salvation, and
in the New Birth given through the Holy Spirit

Begun in infant baptism, with the vows by God and parents, awaiting the

vows by the individual
 Or is declared at baptism by a person of age
 Through Confirmation and the reaffirmation of our faith, we renew the covenant
 declared at our baptism, acknowledge what God is doing for us, and affirm
 our commitment to Jesus.

Those being confirmed take their place, surrounded by their families.

PRESENTATION OF PRAYER SHAWLS - Mentors

Explanation of the meaning of the colors and pattern.

CONFIRMATION BLESSING FOR EACH CONFIRMAND

*Pastor goes to each confirmand, one at a time
 Family and friends of that confirmand stand in the pews
 Pastor places confirmation cross around confirmand's neck
 Parents and mentor lay hands on the confirmand
 Church family extend their hands toward the confirmand
 Pastor lays hands on the confirmand and proclaims the blessing:
 Name, We pray for the Holy Spirit to work within you,
 That having been born through water and the Spirit,
 you may live as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.
 Everyone affirms, **Amen.***

Pastor moves to the next confirmand.

PP#17: Picture of Conner

Pastor: Conner Philip Keintz, we pray ...
 a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.
All: Amen!

PP#18: Picture of Ian

Pastor: Ian Hunter Bautch, we pray ...
 a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.
All: Amen!

PP#19: Picture of James

Pastor: James Allen Richter, we pray ...
 a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.
All: Amen!

PP#20: Picture of Max

Pastor: Maxibillion Craig Thompson, we pray ...
 a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.
All: Amen!

PRESENTATION OF THE CONFIRMATION BIBLES: UMW

PP#21: Presentation of the Confirmation Bibles
 by the United Methodist Women

CONFIRMATION VERSE: Ephesians 4:23-24

PP#22: Confirmation Verse: Ephesians 4:23-24

“Let the Spirit renew your mind and make you into a new person, for you were created in God’s image in true righteousness and holiness.”

BAPTISM BLESSING SONG: Andrew

May You Run and Not Grow Weary

PP#23: *Song of Blessing*

“May you run and not grow weary....”

Parents and Mentors return to their seats.

Confirmands sit in the front pew (if joining) or with their parents.

JOINING FOREST HILLS UMC

Those wanting to take the vows of professing membership are invited to the front.

Names, you have professed your faith in Jesus and are a part of Christ’s universal church on earth. Do you also vow to be loyal to Christ through the United Methodist Church, and do all in your power to strengthen its ministries? As members of Forest Hills United Methodist Church, will you faithfully participate in this congregation by prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service and your witness? If so, say “I will.”

Response: I will.

Welcome and Blessing

Congregation extends hands to the new members and prays the blessing on the screen.

PP#24: *Blessing of new member*

HOLY COMMUNION

PP#25: *Andrew has these slides.*

Communion Song:

Trust and Obey

Prayers, Lord’s Prayer, Offering

Confirmation students help serve, wearing shawls

CLOSING SONG: Sanctify

You are Good

BENEDICTION

Invitation to the reception

RECEPTION (Lobby)