

**Old Testament****Genesis:29-34**

This Genesis story is about two brothers named Jacob and Esau. They were very different people and had really different interests. For fun you might want to watch a cartoon version of the story click this link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGs1WfRKIoM>

Think of your own family. Think of a sibling or a cousin – how alike or different are you and your interests? How does that impact how you two get along?

Again, thinking of your family is there a thing or a trait or characteristic you have inherited. What is that and would you say you are glad to have it or not.

Esau was willing and happy to give up his inheritance for something to eat when he was very hungry? What would you accept in return for your inherited thing or trait you mentioned in the question before this? Why?

**New Testament****Matthew:15-22**

In this parable the Pharisees come to Jesus and ask the question if it is lawful to pay taxes to the Emperor. Who are the Pharisees anyway?

They were not a formal organization or club, but they were a group of Jewish believers that 1) emphasized the oral tradition of the early scripture. 2) They wanted Jewishness to extend into everyday life. 3) They did believe that there was life after death. They were very religious-minded, but it was in a rule-oriented way. They liked knowing exactly what to do to succeed at being faithful to God.

Let's see how Jesus turns it around from being a question about law into a God sized question. - Whose head is on the coin? It's Caesar's. Okay so far. Then Jesus tells them to give the emperor back what is his – the coins. We are living in occupied land, the Romans run the political show and to survive and prosper we have to obey their laws. Now we get to the interesting part – Jesus says, "Give to God the things that belong to God" What is different about those two things we are told to give?

Thinking about your life now – make a stab at answering these questions. "Why does God want anything from you?" and "What does God want us to give God?" and "What do I not want to give to anyone much less to God?"

*What can I do?*

*Pick individual words from your answers, write them on little slips of paper, and post them on your refrigerator or your bathroom mirror so you see them a bunch of times this week. Notice how your thoughts evolve or change over time. What occurs to you? What is God saying to you?*

*Follow that with a prayer for God to heal you from any fear-based thinking you have right now.*