Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Paying Your Taxes

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Romans 13:6-7 is the setting for our message: "For, for this cause, pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render, therefore, to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor."

It is a basic reality of human behavior that no one likes to pay taxes. Poor people don't like to pay taxes because they start out with so little money. When they have to pay taxes, they end up with even less. Rich people don't like to pay taxes because the more they have, the more tax they have to pay. Most everyone is negative about taxes. The United States was originally founded as a protest against taxation. It was born out of a revolution built on taxation without representation.

We live in a society that doesn't like to pay taxes. It does everything it can to avoid paying them, both legally and illegally. What should the Christian's attitude be toward paying taxes, especially if we disagree with the government's usage of our tax money? What should we do if we disagree with its policies? If I send them my money, I'm allowing the government to use it in ways I might not agree with. We might also think that the present tax structure is unfair. Perhaps you think the escalating tax percentage based on income should be reduced to a common percent for everyone, no matter how much they make. If we believe that the graduated tax program has the ultimate effect of penalizing the poor and stifling incentive in those who are more enterprising, shouldn't we have the right not to pay?

Even with all those criticisms, the Bible is explicit. Without equivocation it tells us to pay our taxes. It doesn't even qualify that statement. It doesn't say to pay them if you agree with what they're used for; it just says to pay your taxes. If we can come up with criticisms of our present tax structure, the people in the time of Paul could as well. Actually, their government was worse than ours in many ways. But that is never the issue. It wasn't the issue in the time of the Lord, and it isn't the issue today. The simple statement of Scripture is to pay your taxes.

We need to take a good look at what the Christian is to be responsible for in the matter of taxation. As we look at Romans 13:6-7, I want you to notice three things: the principle, the purpose, and then the particulars.

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