

Love the IRS... and other Taxing people

The Bible tells us we should love everyone, including some unlikely entities: Like Tax Collectors, here we see an example of “tax collector” being used in the book of Matthew for identification:

[Matthew 10:2-4 ESV]

2 The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;

4 Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

So, by way of identification we have; “call name” Simon who is called Peter as an example, Brother, Son, THE TAX COLLECTOR and identification by deed “who betrayed him”

The Lord Jesus himself even used this vocation as a means of contrast in a parable:

[Luke 18:10 ESV]

10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

From Merriam Webster dictionary: A Pharisee is

a member of a Jewish sect of the intertestamental period noted for strict observance of rites and ceremonies of the written law and for insistence on the validity of their own oral traditions concerning the law

And a Tax Collector is a (from Wikipedia)

Tax collectors, also known as [publicans](#), are mentioned many times in [the Bible](#) (mainly in the [New Testament](#)). They were reviled by the Jews of Jesus' day because of their perceived greed and collaboration with the Roman occupiers. Tax collectors amassed personal wealth by demanding tax payments in excess of what Rome levied and keeping the difference.

So, one keeps the Law the other rips people off.

Of course, that isn't how the parable turns out, but that is for another day.

In speaking to the Chief Priest of the Temple of Jerusalem and the elders of the city Jesus even set the tax collectors above them

[Matthew 21:31-32 ESV]

31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you.

32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

Now the actual tax itself wasn't an issue for JESUS:

[Matthew 17:24-27 ESV]

24 When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax went up to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the tax?"

25 He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?"

26 And when he said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free.

27 However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself."

And (we all know this one)

[Matthew 22:19-21 ESV]

19 Show me the coin for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. 20 And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"

21 They said, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

So, Smile, send off your check to the IRS, don't worry God has your back, but if you are lucky enough to get a refund, let me just say, donations to the church are tax deductible.

Love everyone including the IRS, As the Lord Jesus commands

[Matthew 5:44-46 ESV]

44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?