

Title: Taxes and Debts

Romans 13:6-14

We are in Romans chapter 13. And I want to continue where we left off last Sunday. We are talking about our responsibility to Governing authority. And today we shall move into areas where even angels fear to tread. Our topic TAXES AND DEBTS. Romans chapter 13 beginning with Vs 6.

(Read 13:6-14)

(Prayer)

(4C) Chapter 13 is dealing with the Christians's responsibility to governing authority. Last Sunday, we looked at our (1D) subjection to authority. God tells us to submit ourselves to those in authority. This is a basic responsibility that all believeers have under God.

(2D) Now, beginning with Vs 6 we come to the second major area in this chapter on authority. And that is, the support of government. Vs 6 says, "For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing."

I have noticed with some amusement how true that last little phrase of Vs 6 is. Have you noticed that? I mean government rulers really do devote themselves to taxing us, don't they? ~~I mean~~ They really like to pass those tax bills. Now, the Federal government wants to stimulate the economy by giving us a tax break. While the state and counties wants to pay their bills by higher taxes. It is kind-off funny...stealing from Peter to pay Paul. But, anyway, taxes are a way of life. And do you know what is so exciting? It is all part of God's plan. THAT IS RIGHT. And I want you to see this. Paul gives us two reasons why God wants us to support government. Two reasons. (1E) Number one, because of their position. Vs 6 says. "rulers are servants of God." Now, dear friends, I did not say that. The Bible says that. We are to support government with taxes because rulers are servants of God.

WOW! Do you mean that ^{President Bush}~~Governor Bill Clinton~~ is a servant of God?

That is what the Bible says. And we are to support government because rulers are servants of God.

You know, something happens to us that is kind of interesting in this whole matter of money. And I know that money is one of those things you are not to talk about from the pulpit. But, dear friends, when you are preaching through a book of the Bible, and that book talks about it, you have no choice but to teach the truth of the passage.

Listen, money is the whole issue in terms of subjection in this chapter. And it comes in a funny way: PAY TAXES TO WHOM IT IS DUE. It is never right for any Christian to try and cheat on his or her tax form. It is never right to withhold from anyone what is due them. We are to owe no man anything.

By the way, in regards to the first phrase in Vs 8 where it says, "Owe nothing to anyone," many ask the question, "WELL, WHAT ABOUT TIME PAYMENTS?"

Well, I like to be practical, so let's talk about that. WHAT ABOUT TIME PAYMENTS? You borrow some money from the bank or from the credit union to buy a new car. Is that violating Vs 8 which says "Owe nothing to anyone"?

Well, dear friends, I hope you find an answer to that question....(ha)

NO! NO! I will not cop-out. To put it simply...If one didn't pay his payment, he is violating Romans chapter 13 verse 8. You see, once you make your monthly payment you owe nothing for the rest of that month.

Did you know that when you have a pattern of not paying your payments, have you noticed that it does effect that little word "CREDIT"? Have you noticed that? Did you know that it, also, effects your credit with God? Did you know that God with hold, the testimony of your life, the effectiveness of your witness when you refused to pay taxes or payments? That is right. God is with holding the effectiveness of your life and mine. You see, dear friends, money is where it is at. There are many things in the Bible that God talks about regarding money.

I don't know what happens to us. But when we get into the area of money all of a sudden we become the great master of it. You know, we are now in control. When will we learn. All that we have, all belongs to God. And ~~He~~ gives to us. And we are his stewards.

People often talk about their rights. My right to buy things that will bring me happiness. As if things could bring us happiness. And we get all caught up in this. So, we extend ourselves beyond our means. All in the effort to get things which we believe will bring happiness. And we fail to see our total commitment to God. Subjection to God means that I give up my right to control even my money. This principle, by the way, is the whole principle behind tithing and giving unto the Lord's work.

But, anyway, we are required to pay taxes because rulers are servants of God.

(2E) And that brings us to the second reason why we are to support government. Vs 7 says "render to all what is due them." We support government because of God's command. He commands us to do this.

Rulers are God's servants. And we are to give back to them. You say, "WHAT DID THEY EVER DO FOR ME?" Oh, listen, all the money, all the rulers, are all part of God's great program and economy. If God has allowed you a little bit of quote "HIS MONEY", He is asking you to give it back in return for the governments responsibilities toward you.

And all of our money is really God's. Not ours. We are to support the government. The Bible teaches that principle.

(3D) Now, in verses 8-10 there is a third major area I want you to notice: And this the matter of THE SATISFACTION OF THE LAW. Doing all that the law requires. Satisfying the Law. Please notice three things....

(1E) Number one, OUR DEBTS. To what and to whom are we indebted? Vs 8..... "owe nothing to anyone except to love one another, for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law." Of course this is the love that gives without thought of anything in return. It is the love that is always interested in the benefit of the other person, regardless of how it will effect me. That kind of love fulfills the law.

Now, isn't this an interesting change of pace? The first 7 verses ^{Tolded} ~~told~~ about authority. Now, we move to love. ^{So, is Paul changing direction? No} ~~However, Paul is not really~~ ^{I do not think so} ~~changing the topic at all.~~ It is all related. You see, we fail to be subject. And Paul is saying, "Listen, when love controlls our life, we will completely fulfill all that the law requires . This means being in subjection to government, to our families, to our employers. We will be submissive when love is in control.

(2E) Now, the second thing that Paul brings before us is that the deeds of our life are programed in the opposite direction. I hope you realize that. Vs 9 says.."For this, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and if there is any other ^{Concerning the Satisfaction of the Law} ~~command~~ commandment, it is summed up in this saying: YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

Do you understand? The old sin nature is programed to take advantage of people. That is what Vs 9 is all about. But, the love that fulfills the law is the love that gives and willingly submits itself. And when we don't have that love operating in our lives, we have a sin nature that takes advantage of others, that violates other peoples rights. Whether it is physical like: stealing from them, or committing adultery, or lieing, or bearing false witness, or killing...It is all a part of our old sin nature...

When "SELF" is ruling, when "SELF" is not submissive to authority, this is the kind of life we can expect. ^{vs 9} The opposite of loving your neighbor. The word "neighbor" means "friend." You shall love your neighbor or friend as yourself. It is not talking about someone who lives next door to you. Love your friend.

(3E) Now, Vs 10 explains this principle of loving your neighbor as Paul talks about motivation. Vs 10 says that "love does no wrong to a friend, its neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law."

You see, love never takes advantage. Love never desires to hurt. But love always seeks to build up and to encourage and to help others.

O.K. how is this related to subjection to government? Paul has been moving down from subjection to government to the root problem in a person's life, which is an uncontrolled sin nature that refuses to be broken and submissive to God. Let me show you what I mean as we come to the final section of this chapter.

(4D) Verses 11-14 deal with the sufficiency of christ in controlling our sin nature. This old sin nature that does not want to submit to authority. This old sin nature that feels that it can run itself. This old sin nature that feels that it doesn't need God. Paul is going to deal with that. And he does so in a very interesting way. There are three principles, here, that I want you to see.

Vs 11 says, "And this do, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed."

a return of Christ

The first things he brings before us is the nearness of our salvation.

It is so near. It is much nearer today than it was yesterday. With every passing moment it is getting ^{nearer} ~~nearer~~. And he says that this is no time for apathy. Here is a warning against apathy and compliancet. Don't get compliancet. Don't get apathetic. It is time to wake from sleep. Jesus is coming. Christ will be here soon. Therefore, Christian awake to the real need. And that is being submissive. To submit yourself to God. A broken heart is what God will use. A complete surrender of all of our rights to Him. And God says, Awake from sleep. It is time now to get your life stright. Submist yourself completely to God...

Dear Friends, you cannot leave this service and try to control your ~~old~~ old sin nature. You cannot. We don't have the ability to check our old sin nature. Only God the Holy Sprit can do that. And that comes throuagh a submissive heart.

(2E) The second thing he brings before us is the nature of our walk.

Do you know what our walk, or our behaviour pattern is like? Vs 12...

"The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of ~~the~~ light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lust."

In discribing our walk, he says that everyone of us wants to go our own way. That is why we are having the problem of submitting to authority. That is our problem. You can get all excited in the christian realm. Wanting to do something for God. But that ald sin nature is still there. And we try to do it in the ~~the~~ power of the flesh. And we fail and we get discouraged.

You know, David was a great servant of the Lord. And he sinned greatly. He committed audlery with Bathsa~~pe~~. He laid out the plans for the murder of her husband. But God ^{loved} ~~put~~ to that man.

For awhile David carried on in the power of the flesh. He thought all would be O.K. He reasoned that he could still perform as he had always performed. He tried to be a good godly king. But you see, he still had an unsubmitive heart. He had never been broken... *There was pride*

And God brought along a man named Nathan, the prophet, who gave David a little parable. Nathan told David about a man who had violated the rights of someone else. And David with great self centeredness in total command of the situation said: "the man should be punished for taking advantage of another person." And Nathan looked at him and said, "You are the man! David you have violated the rights of a lady and her husband. You have sinned against the Lord."

And in Psalms 51, David who learned what subjection was all about, a broken man now, cried out, "the sacrifice ^{That} of God ^{Wants is} a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." *Lord, be merciful to be, a*
Friends, God wants broken hearts. We read in 2 Chronicles 7:14 "if my people, who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray, and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

You see, there is a very important principle here that Paul is dealing with, all in the content of subjection to the government. The real issue as to why I cannot subject is not because the president isn't the one I voted for...or, isn't the party that I want, or, isn't performing the way he should. All of those ^{things} according to God's word are excuses, for a rebellious sin nature.

Now, there is going to be issues, friends, in which the government says one thing and we are going to have to follow God. The Bible is clear about that. Acts 5:29 says we ought to obey God rather than men. And the issue there is that the government said "don't preach or teach Christ anymore." If government tells us that we must ^{NOT} do ~~what~~ what God wants us to do. Even if it involves imprisonment, like the Apostles. There is that issue.

But taxes, the way the government is being run, our respect and honor for those in authority,...Listen, the Bible says, honor the King. And the king in that day was Ceasar. God says to the believers "honor him." We ought not to speak evil of anyone in authority...

omit Oh, if you knew my boys, or my old man, listen, stop that talk. It is hurting your life. It will destroy you as an individual.

(3E) The third thing that Paul mentions is the great need to control the Flesh. And ~~the~~ the flesh is controlled through the life of Jesus in us.

There is no other way to check the old sin nature. Maybe many of you have made the same mistake that I have made, ~~and~~ ^{and} continue to make. ~~You say:~~ ^{you say:} ~~I'm thinking~~ ~~with all of the old sin nature that is so evident to me,~~ ~~but thinking~~ ^{I believe} that some how I can control ~~it.~~ ^{my old sin nature} I am sincere, I am honest before God, I want victory. But my mistake is in thinking that I can control my old sin nature. And so the heart is not really broken, yet. It is not really submissive.

The submissive life, the life that is in subjection is a life that says, "I can't control this. I can't live the way God wants me to live." It is a life that realize that it is Christ in you that is the hope of glory.

Or, as Paul says in Vs 14 "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." It is his life in you that will control the old sin nature. You cannot control it.

And it is great the way Paul expresses this in Vs 14. He says "make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts."

Now, we all have the problem of lust and desires. The Bible says so. The issue is whether or not you are going to fulfill them. Whether you are going to bring them to completion.

And Paul says "make no provision" to do that. The word "provision" means "to think before hand" or "forethought". HOW TRUE THAT IS. AND YOU AND I KNOW THAT. We ~~think~~ think ahead of time. Sin crosses our minds. And we want to accomplish it. We lay out plans to accomplish it. And it is all of this ~~forethought~~ ^{planning} that will eventually ~~bring~~ ^{bring} out the act.

Paul says, "Listen, don't make any ~~forethought~~ ^{provision}, don't keep thinking about that sin. But instead think on Christ Jesus. Put on the Lord Jesus. Bring every thought into captivity to the Lord Jesus" says 2 Corinthians 10.

Colossians 3 says "set your minds on things above where Christ is seating on the throne at the right hand of the Father."

It is Christ in you that will control that old sin nature. The whole issue of subjection. People, we all have this ~~problem.~~ ^{problem.} Undisciplined lives, produce no responsibility....no responsibility produces no leaders..... no leaders in God's work at that point deminishes and fades...

God is looking for people with character. People who are willing to stand up and be counted and to be used by God.

But the whole effectiveness of our life is back here with our problem. *God wants a broken and contrite heart.*
ARE WE BROKEN AND SUBMISSIVE BEFORE GOD?

It may be that in this moment you recognize that that is the problem. *are you going?*
WHAT ~~TO~~ DO ABOUT IT. HOW TO HANDLE IT.

I do not suggest that you leave this service and lay out 10 steps to a more effective life. Don't do that. I suggest that in this one moment you recognize and admit before God that you are incapable of running your own life,
U God, I am unable to run my own life. I have no ability to control that old sin *nature*. That is the first step.

The second step is like unto it. And this demands faith. That Jesus is capable. Jesus is capable of controlling my life. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT?

Do you believe that ~~he~~ ^{God} can run your life? *The issue is faith*

Then, third, deals with your responding to that ~~fact~~ ^{issue of faith}. Are you willing in this one moment to acknowledge that you are incapable, to acknowledge that Jesus is capable, and then to say, "Lord, Jesus, I am here, use me.

It is availability...not ability....but availability....It is useableness. Jesus wants to use us.

It is like saying, "Lord, teach me." When the real issue is teachableness.. Will you be broken? Will you face the issue of your submission to Jesus.

You see, this involves every area of life. Money...job...family...*church* everything..... *everything*
Submit To The Lord.

Let's close in prayer