

Brother Steward

Lay Reader Message

Giving to God and Country

The Pharisees, who were trying to discredit and intimidate Jesus, asked him a loaded question about whether or not it was proper to pay taxes to Caesar. Responding to the Pharisees, Jesus said,

“You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax.”

After receiving the coin he said,

“Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription? Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” (Matthew 22:18-21).

In his response, Jesus conveys to us our dual responsibilities to our country and to our God. We are to give to our country what belongs to our nation and give to God what belongs to him.

What belongs to our country? What are our responsibilities to our country? Certainly, we are to support our nation with our words and deeds. If need be, we are to serve in the military. We are to pay our fair share of the cost to run our country through our taxes. We need to be obedient to its laws.

What belongs to God? As Christians, we know that it all belongs to him. Everyone and everything is his. Our first responsibility to God is to love him above everything else. We are to serve and obey him. We are to obey his commands, and we are to return a portion of our money to him.

Unfortunately, it seems that our nation gets a better shake than our God does. Our nation threatens, and we obey. God commands our obedience, but we often ignore his commands. Our country forces us to pay our taxes, and so, by April 15 of each year, we submit our 1040 tax returns. God wants us to give generously to him; however, we often neglect to give our offerings to our church. Because our offerings are voluntary, they can be seen to be less important than our taxes.

As Christians, our commitment to our Lord must be even stronger than to our country. God has a claim on our lives, and we need to respond to that claim by giving to and serving him with our time, our abilities, and our money.

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Save a Seat for Jesus!

Road trip! It's vacation time.

Now, God doesn't take a formal vacation but, God does go along with you for the ride! So, as a good steward spend some time with your spiritual passenger in prayer:

- *At the airport when your flight is delayed or your luggage is lost, or*
- *On the road when the next gas station is 50 miles way and you're running on empty, or*
- *When your kids keep asking, "Are we there yet?"*



Ask for help if your child gets sick in a foreign place. Ask God for patience, protection, and guidance. And thank him when your journey is completed without incident; but filled with joyful memories.

Remember, he is with you always. God Bless.



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Sun-Days Appeal Starts!

Yes, it's going to be a long hot summer. Already, as some folks head for vacation, our offertory collections head south. So, in order to keep our AC running, our electric bills paid, our hurricane protection completed, we're asking for a little help. An extra \$5.00 per week would get us through the summer. That's the price of a latte, or the savings on a two-for-one sale. Or, if you can make it more: a few dollars from your tax refund or savings from a Memorial Day Bargain. And because hardship never goes on vacation, the good stewards of our community keep our ministries going.



If everybody does a little it will add up to a lot. So, for this Sun-Day and every Sun-Day during the summer, giving is a cool thing to do.

God Bless.

