



Christ, the Government and stay at home Moms

The title suggests a huge subject and indeed it is. But I want to tackle just one aspect of this all important issue regarding the Christian's home.

There is every reason to believe that governments which reject Christ, either implicitly or explicitly eventually develop policies which attack God's blueprint for the home. When a government accepts as legitimate the marriage of homosexuals then it is attacking God's clear pattern of marriage: a natural man in covenant relationship with a natural woman (is it not sad that we have to use the adjective 'natural'?). When a government demands that children attend their State sponsored schools then this is an attack upon the autonomy (under God) of the home. And when the government's taxation policies are such that the average citizen is overburdened because of a bloated and irresponsible bureaucracy, this too is an attack on the home.

Proverbs 13:23 states, *"Much food is in the fallow ground of the poor, and for lack of justice there is waste (lit. 'is swept away')."* This proverb highlights the truth that injustice (in various forms) is an attack upon *productivity* and therefore it is an attack on *profitability*.

The picture given to us is that of a poor man who has a field with great potential for fruitfulness. The ground lays 'fallow' ('tillage' in KJV) which means 'newly cultivated.' That is, everything has been done to prepare the ground for planting with a view to harvesting. This 'poor' individual is working hard, he is biblically exerting 'the sweat of the brow' in order to provide for his needs. But some form of injustice lurks nearby in order to rob him of the fruit of his labour; perhaps it was evil neighbours who would burn down his crops or steal the harvest (See Judges 6:1-6). Whatever the precise behaviour, the result of the injustice was a poor man whom remained poor – through no fault of his own. And an excessive tax system has the same evil effect.

Because of irresponsible (read: un-biblical, even anti-biblical) governance, the *State* reaches deep into the profits and thus into the profitability of many South African families. The excessive tax rates take at least 34% of the average worker's salary (including VAT) and for many this figure is as high as 54% (not including other tariffs, rates, etc). Just think of what could be done with the extra income if the average Christian family was not consistently robbed of this share of its salary? Certainly the economy would grow for there would be more money with which to purchase and with which to invest. But also think of how many believing mothers would be able to stay at home to nurture their children rather than being forced into the workplace just to make ends meet.

I am well aware that there are many believing homes in which the wife/mother works simply because of a skewed, because unbiblical, value system. Sadly many believers have been caught up in the anti-godly worldview that a woman must have employment (and/or a career) to be 'fulfilled.' Others have been sucked into the devil's lie that covetousness is not so bad after all and that if we would break free from the command of a stingy God then we would be so much happier. Therefore many couples, having been blessed by God with children, rush off to work – after dropping their precious cargo off at the local surrogate mother – to earn the extra income that they think is so necessary for true abundance of life. This indeed is a serious problem. My concern here is for those who have been forced by an unjust government to work outside of the home and hence their 'fallow ground' remains just that, fruitless.

At present we are required to pay the unjust taxes that eat away at our pay check like a silk worm consumes mulberry leaves. Until the government repents of its waste (e.g. such as the funding of a godless and therefore wasteful criminal justice system, shameful excess of salaries for government

ministers, an excessive bureaucracy, etc) then we will continue to bear the heavy load of excessive taxes.

Some may be uncomfortable with my words for after all we are told in Romans 13:1-7 that we are to submit to those who have the authority over us (Paul is here speaking of civil government) and thus some may argue that is sinful to criticize the government. But to do so is to miss the point that all authority is delegated of 'derivative' in nature. That is, even a civil government is under authority – God's authority. Note that they are *ministers* (vv. 4, 6) appointed by *God*. And as God's *servants* they are responsible to obey God's laws. John Clover Monsma wrote in 1919,

"(The) principle of divine sovereignty, when applied to the Bible, demands an absolute subservience to all of its precepts, not only in the sphere of the church, but in all walks of life. God is the absolute Sovereign of all of life; therefore His Word should be the controlling factor in every sphere of life's activity."

And this applies to a government as well. In other words, a government is accountable to govern in accordance with God's Words. And when she fails here, injustice spreads and society suffers at the hands of a deified State.

What we desperately need is reformation and revival. We need a gospel driven, gospel saturated awakening in our land resulting in God honouring homes, churches and governments who will then take God's Words seriously. *When* this occurs, (see Isaiah 65:17-25) then taxes will be minimal and homes will be more productive along biblical standards.

This leads to the second response that we must embrace: while we *pay* our taxes we must also *pray*. 'Pay and pray' is a good motto as we face this injustice. We must pray for reformation and revival. We must pray for the Holy Spirit to so exalt Christ in the Church and then throughout the land that even Government will fall in line with God's truth.

Further, we must work extra hard at raising a godly seed. For those families whose wives are forced to work outside the home, you must be committed to extra hours, longer days, in order to ensure that your children are being raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Finally, our church must come to the aid of those who are so burdened. We are to 'bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.' This can take on many differing forms but not the least is to forge helpful relationships with such and to be especially sensitive to their challenges. Let us be good role models for the children, let us help financially where we can. The list of ways to help is long but the point is, let us help those whom are more vulnerable in feeling the brunt of the State's injustice than do others.

I often feel as though we believers live on two levels, that is, we claim to believe the Bible and therefore we say that we want to be salt and light and yet all too often we really don't expect the church to make a difference in the world. Therefore we 'Amen' hopeful messages on Sunday but on Monday we go along with the crowd not really expecting Christ to show Himself as Sovereign in our world. The result is that we limply acquiesce to the way that things are. Because we don't see things changing immediately we don't really expect for things to change ultimately. Let me appeal to you in the name of our ruling and reigning Saviour that our generation can make a difference and part of this transformation hinges upon raising the next generation who will be the leaders of our society. We need to realize that things can change. Government policies can change but that the primary means of this is to fill the Government with those who honour Christ. Salt is effective because at times it works as a poison destroying that which corrupts. Let us pray and labour and aim for a generation which, by the grace of God, will honour God's authoritative Word – all of it – in all of life. Tax reform will come about, but only as the church reforms. May God give us the grace and wisdom needed for such a task.

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