

Tax Time Again!

The April 15 tax deadline has come. According to the Tax Foundation, the average American in 2008 had to work from January 1 to April 23 just to earn enough money to pay his taxes to the federal, state, and local governments. That's almost four months of working for the government, even before earning anything for himself or his family! Of course, there are many unseen taxes. For example, corporate and other business taxes raise the price of goods we buy, and renters must pay more when property taxes increase. We're paying on average more than 30% of our income to the government.



When the Hebrews demanded to have a king, the Lord told the prophet Samuel what they were in for:

This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. He...will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work. He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants. And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day (1 Sam. 8:11-18).

Samuel and the people were horrified that a king would dare to take as much as 10% of the people's livestock and produce. That's the tithe—the amount belonging to God Himself! Little would they expect that modern nations would be confiscating three times that much! The Hebrews would “cry out in that day,” but the Lord would

not hear them. They had placed their faith in the king instead of in God—now let the king deliver them!

Today the USA, Canada, and much of Europe are turning sharply to the left politically and economically. Give more to the state; expect more from the state; the state will rescue us and care for us. As God becomes small in our thoughts, the state grows ever larger.

The Bible and our Reformed confessions, on the other hand, exalt God and put strict limits on the state. Calvinists have been in the forefront of the capitalist, free-enterprise system. We are told to be good citizens and pay our taxes. But let us also pray and work to keep our liberties under God, and let us labor to “procure and further the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others,” as the Shorter Catechism says (#74). As Christian individuals, created by God in his image and redeemed by his Son Jesus Christ, we glorify God by living as free men. “Live as free men ... live as servants of God” (1 Pet. 2:16).



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May 4-7, 2009

“CAPITALISM: BIBLICAL AND PRACTICAL”

Dr. Burt Folsom of Hillsdale College and Dr. John Battle, President of WRS, will be addressing the following timely topics:

- Mon: Christianity, Capitalism, and the Rise of the United States
- Tue: New Deal or Raw Deal?
- Wed: Will Obama's Big Government Worldview Prevail?
- Thur: Those Enterprising Calvinists—Calvin, Presbyterians, and Capitalism

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