

DOMINION STRATEGIES

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I am a **deacon** in a local church. **We have** discussed the possibility that one of our members might have an **accident** and lose his **savings**, and then call on the church to help pay for the expenses. What **would** be the church's obligation?

The church's obligation right now is to see to it that every member of the church is covered by life insurance (term insurance only), health insurance, fire insurance (even renters), and liability insurance. This spreads the inescapable risks of life in a scientific, cost-effective, and capitalistic way.

There is a tendency in churches for deacons to drift along and assume that everyone in the church is doing the right thing to protect his family. This assumption is foolish. It denies the doctrine of original sin. Because the church is responsible for providing aid in a crisis, it is also responsible to every tithe-paying member to see to it in advance that no member is subjecting other church members to high risks. After all, one accident could bankrupt a church (try raising the money to pay a \$50,000 hospital bill, plus six months' of income for a recuperating independent contractor).

Any member who will not purchase the required insurance should be told in advance that the church is no longer morally responsible for his errors in judgment. The deacons should sit down with every member and review his insurance situation - no exceptions. Each member should bring in his insurance policies for review. At least one deacon should have expertise in reading these documents, or else deacons should hire (by the hour) an independent insurance agent. Deacons should then warn members not to buy any policy from the agent unless the policy is in turn reviewed by another independent agent.

This review of members' insurance policies must be made mandatory. If some member simply cannot afford a policy, the deacons should consider loaning him the money (interest-free) until he can afford it. Better to pay premiums than after-accident expenses. But the loan would be made only after a thorough review of the family's income and budget. All other family expenses would first be cut to the bone before the loan would be granted.

The church is not responsible for members who refuse to co-operate with this insurance review program. It should announce this in advance. On the other hand, the church which fails to setup such a review plan has opened itself to high risks and God's displeasure if it fails to honor its commitments to its people, should they face a crisis. By turning members over to the civil government's welfare agencies, the church has admitted failure. It is not a good testimony. It makes Mormons look good and the church look impotent.

Is sending your children to a private **Christian** school a **religious** or moral issue?

During childhood (which ends, biblically speaking, when a son can legally enter the military or marry without his parent's consent, and a daughter can legally marry without her parents' consent), the parents are responsible for the moral instruction of the child. This means all instruction, for all instruction is necessarily based on a specific world-and-life view.

Thus, when the parent defers instruction to a tutor or other skilled teacher, he cannot morally transfer his responsibility as a parent. He is still legally responsible before the State and morally responsible before God. The requirement that he pass on God's worldview to his children is still his. The office of parent cannot be abandoned and legal authority still be maintained over the child. He can give his children up for adoption, but he cannot otherwise transfer his parental responsibilities.

This being the case, when a parent transfers the child into the care of a God-hating and covenant-breaking secular humanist faculty in a tax-supported school system, he has created a schizophrenic pattern of obedience for his child. The child is being asked to serve two masters: the God of the Bible, through the parent, and the god of the State, through the teacher. The child is told to obey two radically different law-orders, and to believe in two radically different views of God, man, law, and time.

When a child is sent to college, he is being sent to battle (yes, even if he attends a Christian college, some or most of whose faculty members are baptized Darwinists, Keynesians, and humanist-certified liberals). It is as if he were being sent to war. Yet he is old enough to go to war. Thus, the parents' responsibility is partially transferred in this transition stage, and wholly transferred if they no longer support him financially. Like a young man going off to serve in the army, or off to support a wife, a college student is no longer under the direct discipline of a parent. He is an independent agent who now chooses his masters. Not so with the minor.

Thus, the Christian parent who sends his child to be educated in a school system which by law is religiously neutral, and therefore religiously humanistic, is in the same moral position as a Christian parent who sends his child to be educated by a demon-possessed witch doctor. There is one difference, however: the school of witch doctoring may not be financed by compulsory taxation.

Should I count tuition payments to a **Christian** school as part of my tithe?

The answer is simple: no. The explanation is more involved. The tithe is God's tax. It is collected by God's monop-

olistic agency of tax-collection, the ministry of preaching and sacraments, the church. The State also collects taxes, for it, too, is a God-ordained monopolistic agency, the ministry of justice. The tithe is a tax, and like the civil tax, is paid to a law-enforcing agency.

There has been a great deal of confusion here. One prominent "theonomist" has written that tuition payments to Christian schools can be counted as part of a family's tithe responsibilities. But this same individual has also written that in our day, the Christian school is a more important institution than the church. Thus, he is simply being consistent: his highest-ranking private institution is to be the recipient of the tithe. He also says that the father is to determine where the tithe money goes, and that the church cannot morally require that its members pay the full 10% of their income to the church. This is consistent with his patriarchal view of authority. In short, because he is wrong with respect to primary authority, he is equally wrong with respect to the question of who is responsible before God to collect the tithe.

When you pay tuition for a child, you are building family capital. The child presumably will grow up, and will eventually be required by God to support you if you need care in your old age. The child's tuition payment is no more an aspect of the tithe than your pension program is.

The tithe goes exclusively to God, through his agency of collection, the church. If you are a member of a church which would act irresponsibly if it received every member's tithe, transfer your membership as soon as possible—certainly before the next issue of *Dominion Strategies* is published.

If the government lowers tax rates, should I agree to pay less in taxes next year? The Federal deficit is huge and growing, and if I take the money, aren't I in effect helping to bankrupt the nation and my children's future? Wouldn't I be doing the proper thing to continue to pay taxes at today's higher level, to do my part to tower the deficit?

Biblically speaking, the civil government is a tyranny whenever all branches of civil government combined extract as much as 10% of anyone's income. This was Samuel's warning to Israel (1 Sam. 8). Civil government has not been authorized by God to collect an amount equal to God's tithe.

Thus, whenever the modern, Goddefying State grants tax relief to people, it is moving in the right direction. Even if the deficit continues to grow, it is right for citizens to pull in on the State's tax collection abilities. This will warn buyers of government debt certificates that they had better buy fewer government bonds and invest more money in private business instead. It gives them warning that the State will not be able to continue to make good on lies that it has paraded as promises. No State can defy God's law forever. No God-defying State will be able to continue to fulfill its promises, if these promises have been based on the ability of the State to defy God's law forever.

Thus, by accepting a larger after-tax income when it is offered by law, the citizen is announcing his acceptance of a tax policy which is closer to God's program of limited taxes for limited government. If that threatens the solvency of the State, so much the better. Perhaps the State will make fewer promises, or admit that its previous promises were immoral,

and publicly renege on all of them. It will renege eventually anyway, but probably through the insidious bankruptcy of mass inflation. Better to be open and honest about past lies and present realities.

Should I continue to accept money from the State, or government subsidies of any kind?

Let us start with a simple case. If you are the recipient of tariff benefits, you should lower your selling prices by the equivalent of the "protection money" you receive. That gives your customers the benefits they would have received if there were no tariffs. Besides, this will strengthen your firm's position; if the tariffs are removed later on, you will still be in business; your domestic competitors probably won't be a year or two after. I also suspect that lower prices would also increase sales. Get tough. Now.

On the other hand, it is not your responsibility to send a "tariff rebate" check every month to the Federal government. Your customers deserve the break, not the bureaucrats. They are being asked to pay the tax (higher prices), not the bureaucrats.

What if your business could not exist without the subsidy? Then find a new line of work. The State has in principle made you a slave. If it pulls the plug and abolishes the subsidy— if it does the righteous thing—you will lose everything you have worked to build. Do not allow the State to destroy your calling before God by doing the righteous thing and abolishing your privileged position, your position as a receiver of stolen goods.

I see the same principle working in every form of subsidy. The losers are the citizens who pay the tax. If you can in some way return the confiscated money to them, then it is legitimate for you to accept the subsidy. You are acting as an agent of righteousness. You are returning stolen goods to their rightful owners.

There may be cases when you are just not sure who paid the tax. In that case, you might give the money away. Send it to some charity which aids the public in general. The idea is, you do not become dependent on the stolen money in your life style (or retirement, or whatever), and the public receives restitution from the State—indirectly, through your willingness to return the money. If the subsidy is cut off, you don't suffer a serious setback. You can also campaign to get the subsidy removed. Your competitors will think you are crazy, but it is a good testimony.

What if you are destitute? What if the money from the State is all you have to live on? Then take it, but forever regard yourself as a slave, and as a slave to a humanistic, power-seeking, God-hating master. Pray for deliverance, and if it comes, take that government check and donate it each month to some private charity. But don't send it back to the bureaucrats. They will only spend it to enhance their power and the State's power.

If you can take the subsidy and use it to overturn the modern socialist State, that, too, is a good use for the money. It gets it away from the bureaucrats. It may even help to destroy the future ability of the bureaucrats to extract more money from the public. Jesus walked the roads that the Romans built and kept in repair, preaching a gospel which ultimately destroyed the Roman Empire. Go, thou, and do likewise.