

70. (from LSO, Tuesday, September 30, 1997

**Subject:** Is it biblical for Christians to pay income tax?

**Dear Dr. Ryrie:** A man in Florida is soliciting a book about the "donations" U.S. citizens make to the IRS. He maintains that we are not required by the U.S. Constitution to file personal income taxes, that it is strictly voluntary. My dilemma is where does a believer draw the line between citizenship in America (filing federal income tax) and being able to extricate himself from a seemingly corrupt, unfair system which may be strictly voluntary after all? I believe that as a citizen of the U.S., I am obligated to support what God has erected as government in my life. -- Tom I.

**Dear Tom:** People who say we do not have to file income tax will eventually find themselves filing from inside a prison. Put yourself back in the days of Jesus. Under the Roman system of taxation, a tax collector like Zaccheus could buy the right to collect taxes and then levy pretty much what he wanted to. The Caesars in Rome often lived extravagantly and in adultery and even homosexuality. But the Roman citizen could not extricate himself from that corrupt system as far as getting out of paying taxes. On the other hand, Rome did provide its citizens with certain benefits like roads, aqueducts, and a legal system, which were paid for by taxes. Our Lord settled the question you raised when He said to pay Caesar what is due Caesar (Matt. 22:21).

*Roads - interstate*

*Money*

*Count*

*FBI*

*Rom 13:1  
1 Pet 2:13 every*