

## FREE TAX ADVICE

Dan Williams

This is the time of year when Americans are struggling with that mind numbing, patience destroying, Byzantine labyrinth otherwise known as the U.S. Tax Code. In the interest of being helpful, I thought I'd pass along a free tax tip my wife spotted while doing some recreational reading in that thrilling bestseller, Publication 525 – "Taxable and Non-Taxable Income" (yes, she is a C.P.A.). Gina shared with me the following item from page 34:

**Stolen property.** If you steal property, you must report its fair market value in your income in the year you steal it unless, in the same year, you return it to its rightful owner.

I realize that in the world of tax accountants this ruling may seem perfectly logical. To my financially untrained mind, however, it raises all sorts of awkward questions that may not have occurred to the IRS bureaucrats, such as:

How does a thief determine the "fair market value" of a motorcycle he hotwired? It somehow doesn't seem appropriate to call up the owner and ask, "Could you do me a favor? Do you remember how much you paid for the Kawasaki Ninja 650R that used to be in your garage?"

If the robber *does* return the stolen property to its rightful owners, it is proper etiquette to ask them for a receipt for his tax purposes?

And maybe the most puzzling of all: What leads the Internal Revenue Service to think that someone who is dishonest enough to steal from his peers will be conscientious enough to report his ill-gotten gains as income on his 1040?

Thievery has apparently become so commonplace that it merits a provision in the tax code. When Paul described the changes that should take place after conversion, however, he tells new Christians:

*"He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with those who in need"* (Ephesians 4:28).

Stealing is a sin, of course (Exodus 20:15), one that destroys character and breaks relationships. It also breaks the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12) – after all, if I don't want my possessions stolen, then I shouldn't take what belongs to others. But more than that, Paul's admonition reminds us that thievery is the antithesis of Christianity: followers of Jesus are to be givers, not takers; should be productive, not pilfering; and must do an honest day's work, rather than filch from others who do.

So, here's my advice: keep your hands off property that doesn't belong to you. Doing so will preserve your relationship with the Lord, help keep you right with others, and.....it will make your tax returns a lot less complicated!



That meets at 701 South Wilbur, Sayre, PA 18840  
(570) 886-1838

Arthur Barry, Evangelist- (607) 280-1732

March 1, 2020

### WELCOME!

Sunday

Bible Class- 9:30 a.m.

Worship- 10:30 a.m.

Tuesday

Ladies Bible Study- 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study-6:30 p.m.

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**All the churches of Christ greet you.**

Romans 16:16

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**Today's Sermon: The Hamartia Virus:  
Are You Protected?**

Sermons are recorded and are available for listening on the church website.

Bulletins are archived on the website.

[valleycitieschurchofchrist.org](http://valleycitieschurchofchrist.org)

[aicoc.org](http://aicoc.org) (Antioch Initiative)

Find us on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/valleycitiescoc](https://www.facebook.com/valleycitiescoc)

**Scripture: Numbers 14:1-12**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS...

- **Wednesday Evening Bible Class:** March 4<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm. Paul will continue with our study of Colossians, chapter 3.
- **Next Potluck:** March 15<sup>th</sup>. Something **green**?
- **Horseheads Ladies' Day:** Saturday March 21<sup>st</sup>. Prayer is the theme. See the poster in the foyer.
- **Next Regional Singing: March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, @ Horseheads 4:30pm**
- **Sojourners-** July 27<sup>th</sup>- August 6<sup>th</sup>
- **VBS-** August 8<sup>th</sup>



NEWS **HAPPY MARCH!**

- **Ted's** Eustachian tube surgery, which was to take place on Tuesday, has suddenly been postponed until April.
- **Bible reading schedules for March** are ready for pickup, for those who are reading from books instead of online. You will find them on the railing at the front of the auditorium.
- **Jerry** will be traveling to Las Vegas, NV next week to stay with his son for an undetermined period of time. We will all miss Jerry!

**He who buries his talent  
is making a grave mistake.**



## PRAYERS

- **Please pray for Arthur and Paul**, as they are deciding how to divide up the ministry work and secure support income for Paul.
- **Dawn's grandson Nazir**, age 11, had a seizure last Sunday and was treated at the ER. Thankfully, he seems to be fine now. Please pray for his continued good health.
- Pray for **Ted** as he will have surgery on his Eustachian tubes to restore his hearing in the beginning of April.
- Pray for **Chris Henson and Devon Wolcott** and their little son, **Jace**, who has brain trauma after suffering a seizure.
- Pray for **Andrea Lentz**, friend of Darlene's, who has lung cancer.
- Please pray for **Mark Elsbree**, who needs a kidney donor. Pray for his daughter, Emily, who is a match for him and is making plans for her surgery.
- **Pray for Lori Kashorek**, who has lung cancer.
- Pray for **Chris Beiber and sons, Nick and Nate**, as they adjust to life without Erin. Pray that we can encourage them to draw close to Jesus
- Prayers for the group effort **Bible reading** program! Help us all feel connected knowing we are all reading or listening to the same chapters in the Bible each day.
- Pray for **Jerry** as he's traveling and while he's staying with his son in Las Vegas.

If you have any **PRAYERS** or **NEWS** that you would like included in the bulletin, please contact Sandy at [barncat7237@gmail.com](mailto:barncat7237@gmail.com) or text or call (607) 261-0911.