

Luke 3:12-13

Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you."

So, have you done your taxes yet? Don't worry, this devotional has nothing to do with taxes or even paying taxes. No, this has to do with tax collectors and their response to what John the Baptist was preaching. And what was he preaching?

† **Luke 3:2b-3 & 7-10** *the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." So the people asked him, "What shall we do then?"*

So the people hear John the Baptist preach and they asked "*What shall we do then?*" and you can read the answer in verse 11 for yourself. But then the tax collectors asked the same thing and the answer is in today's devotional verse.

† *And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you."*

But also notice what John didn't say. He didn't say, "Leave your job and stop being a sinful tax collector." Because for one thing, being a tax collector was not a sin. The sin was in the way they were doing their job, collecting more than what people were actually supposed to pay, so they were robbing the people. So if they did their job right "*Collect no more than what is appointed for you.*" then there is no reason for them to quit their jobs.

It's the same for us when we become Christians, we are not called to leave our jobs, even Paul said.

† **1 Corinthians 7:20-21 (NLT)** *Yes, each of you should remain as you were when God called you. Are you a slave? Don't let that worry you—but if you get a chance to be free, take it.*

Think of the word "Slave" simply as someone who works for someone else, or what we call now a days, "an employee" like almost all of us are. We are all called to be a witness for Jesus, and most of us will not travel the world being that witness. But that's okay, because those around you right now need to hear about Jesus.

Now there are those who are called to travel the world preaching the Gospel. One person that comes to mind is Matthew.

† **Matthew 9:9** *As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.*

Yet how many tax collectors were there around at that time? A lot more than one, and I am sure many tax collectors heard Jesus speak and they gave their life to Him. Yet out of all those hundreds of tax collectors, only one, Matthew, was called to leave his job at that time.

So don't get discouraged because you are still at the same old job that you hate, but rather know that God has chosen to leave you there to be a witness for Jesus.

† **Acts 14:3** *Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.*