

EVERYBODY OWES GOD AND ONE ANOTHER

Mark 12:17

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Every once in a while somebody says "I don't owe anybody anything and I don't intend to owe anybody a single thing..." and there are some people who actually think that they don't owe anybody anything. The Pharisees tried to trick, entrap Jesus by proposing to Him what they thought was a question that no matter how He answered it, He would be taking sides and therefore they "had Him just where they wanted Him.." They asked Him whether they should pay tribute to Caesar or not. Instead of directly answering their question, Jesus asked for a coin and then asked them whose image was on the coin, of course they said "Caesar" so Jesus replied, then give to Caesar that which is his and give to God that which is His.

The answer Jesus gave indicates that we are to regard the things of God and give to God what He requires and then we are to give to others what we owe them, custom, fear, honor, respect, tribute, etc. Therefore no person can say truthfully, "I don't owe anybody anything," for that person is indebted to God and to other people.

I. WHAT DO WE OWE GOD?

1. Our souls and all that they contain and can do.

- Our ability to understand, to reason, to imagine, and to remember.
- We can give our souls to God by using what we are/have in His service, doing what He wants us to do.
- We can discover what His will is for us, remember it, love it, submit to it, then obey it.
- *"...Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength..."*

2. Our bodies belong to God.

- We can feel our bodies and most can their bodies which God has designed.
- We can *"...present our bodies to God as a LIVING sacrifice, holy and acceptable in His sight, which is our reasonable service..."*
- Giving ourselves to God is done when we use ourselves in doing righteous and holy things for Him.

3. We owe God our time.

- We forget about it, but our entire lifetime is a gift from God and as long as we live, every moment should be dedicated to Him.
- Anytime we are not serving God, we are withholding ourselves from Him.

4. We owe God what we know.

- By using what God has given us, our mind, reason, imagination, memory, we accumulate knowledge and so what we know, we owe it to God.
- How we use the knowledge that God has allowed us to have determines how obedient we are to God.

5. We owe our material "property" to God.

- By using our facilities, which are God-given, we accumulate and have material things, therefore we owe God those material things we call "ours."
- In reality we don't really "own" anything, but are "caretakers" for God as all things are "His" to begin with.
- God allows us to have material things to supply our needs, as well as some of our "wants."
- Anytime we misuse material things we have for our "lust" or pride, we are "unjust" stewards.

6. What influence we may have is also owed to God.

- All our faculties, our body, our knowledge, wealth, all that we have which may have influenced others positively points to God, not to our own abilities.
- Our souls, our bodies, our knowledge, our possessions and our influence belong to God and if we dare withhold any of these things from God we are dishonoring Him.

II. WHAT DO WE OWE ONE ANOTHER?

1. We should love everyone as we love ourselves.

- *"...Love thy neighbor as thyself. Whatsoever things ye would that me should do to you, do ye even so to them....Love your enemies, bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you..."*
- Everybody has a right to our love.
 - *"...To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin..."*
- Others have a right to our goodness and a right to expect that we don't talk bad about them.
- Everyone we do business with has a right to be treated in all fairness and honesty.
- Love leads to this, justice demands it, God commands it.

2. We owe obedience, submission and respect to those who are "over" us (superiors).

- As being "under" someone's supervision, we are bound to obey, honor and even pray for those who are "over" us.
- We are to submit to every law, rule and ordinance for the Lord's sake.
- Remember, children are required to honor and obey their parents, servants are required to obey their "masters." Therefore as adults, let us continue to show proper submission to those who are "in charge" of us.
- Not forgetting the elderly, the aged, we are to show respect.

3. To those who are "inferior" we owe kindness, gentleness and understanding.

- We are not to wound or hurt those who are immature, mentally unstable, physically handicapped by careless or deliberate comments or actions.
- Those who have less, know less, are of smaller bodily form have a right to our sympathy and understanding.
- We are to be charitable to the poor, sick and disabled.

4. Christians owe each other the use of their Spirit given gifts and their visible support.

- We are to watch over each other, admonishing when needed, working together to promote peace and unity within God's Church.
- We are to support one another, encouraging, and standing beside each other when needed.

5. As husbands, wives, parents, we owe each other much.

- Spouses owe each other faithfulness and support.
- Parents owe their children education for this world AND for the next, the spiritual world.
 - The family needs are to be provided for and harmony within the family is necessary.

CONCLUSION:

1. In no way have any of us given to God all that we owe Him for every day we withhold something from God which is due Him. What shall we do?
2. Likewise, we have not given to one another that which we owe. How can we correct this?
3. We cannot undo the past failures, but from this moment on, asking God for help, we can try to change.