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(Matthew 10:2-4), and He welcomed among His disciples “*Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector*” (Luke 19:2). Jesus also commended the “*great faith*” of the centurion of Capernaum (Matthew 8:5-13), without expecting him to repent of his role as commander of a hundred Roman soldiers.

Philip the evangelist converted “*a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury*” (Acts 8:26-40). Peter the apostle converted “*Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment*” (Acts 10:1-48). Paul and Silas converted the jailer of Philippi (Acts 16:25-40). Paul the apostle was “*friends*” with “*some of the officials of Asia*” (Acts 19:31). There is zero indication that any of these souls were taught to end their careers in government so as to be pleasing to the Lord.

Paul relayed greetings to the church in Philippi from “*all the saints... but especially those who are of Caesar’s household*” (Philippians 4:22), who would most likely have been employed in the palace, rather than having been family of the emperor. He also extended salutations to the brethren in Rome from “*Erastus, the treasurer of the city*” (Romans 16:23), which city was probably Corinth (Romans 15:23-26).

With the exception of the Ethiopian treasurer, all the foregoing examples are people who served Rome, an empire that promoted immorality. While there are plenty of occupations which a Christian might need to resign from in order to fulfill repentance unto salvation, and that might include certain civil service positions, the fact is that government employment, in and of itself, is not sinful. There are simply too many approved examples of Christians working these jobs to leap straight to that conclusion in every case.

What those in authority need is to be prayed for, as Paul wrote, “*I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence*” (1st Timothy 2:1-2). Christians need “*to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey*” (Titus 3:1), unless, and only unless, doing so would cause one to disobey God (Acts 4:4:19-20; 5:29); that includes government workers.

THREE DOLLARS’ WORTH OF GOSPEL

D.A. Carson

I would like to buy about three dollars’ worth of gospel, please. Not too much—just enough to make me happy, but not so much that I get addicted. I don’t want so much gospel that I learn to really hate covetousness and lust. I certainly don’t want so much that I start to love my enemies, cherish self-denial, and contemplate service in some alien culture. I want ecstasy, not repentance; I want transcendence, not transformation. I would like to be cherished by some nice, forgiving, broad-minded people, but I myself don’t want to love those from different races—especially if they smell. I would like enough gospel to make my family secure and my children well behaved, but not so much that I find my ambitions redirected or my giving too greatly enlarged. I would like about three dollars’ worth of gospel, please.

PROTESTING THE CULTURE

Carl Trueman

The church protests the wider culture by offering a true vision of what it means to be a human being made in the image of God. This approach is certainly hinted at in second-century Christian literature. The so-called Greek Apologists, such as Justin Martyr, addressed the Roman Empire from a Christian perspective. What is so interesting when compared to some of the ways many Christians, right and left, do so today is how respectful these ancient apologists were. They did not spend their time denouncing the evils of the emperor and his court. Rather, they argued positively that Christians made the best citizens, the best parents, the best servants, the best employees, and that they should thus be left alone and allowed to carry on with their day-to-day lives without being harassed by the authorities.

DARK MATTER

Author Unknown

Astro-physicists calculate that, in order for galaxies to not fall apart, 96% of the universe must be dark energy/matter – “dark” meaning they cannot be detected in any way by mankind. If only 4% of the universe is observable, how can we say we’re sure there’s no god or heaven?

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"Anyone who imagines that bliss is normal is going to waste a lot of time running around shouting that he's been robbed. The fact is that most putts don't drop, most beef is tough, most children grow up to just be people, most successful marriages require a high degree of mutual toleration, most jobs are more often dull than otherwise. Life is like an old-time rail journey – delays, sidetracks, smoke, dust, cinders, and jolts, interspersed only occasionally by beautiful vistas and thrilling bursts of speed. The trick is to thank the Lord for letting you have the ride."

– Gordon B. Hinckley

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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WORKING FOR THE MAN

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Observing the moral decay of a society and its government's active role in that decline, Christians may well wonder if they can serve the Lord faithfully and simultaneously remain employed in a public sector occupation. This is a thoughtful concern and it deserves a serious answer.

Solomon declared, *"That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun"* (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Accordingly, it is no surprise this concern was raised long ago. Before Jesus even began His ministry, John dealt with this question. *"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.' Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, 'And what shall we do?' So he said to them, 'Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages'"* (Luke 3:12-14). Repentance was, absolutely, the theme of John's preaching (Mark 1:4). When those tasked with gathering revenue for the government and enforcing its laws approached John, they needed to know what repentance would amount to in their respective positions. All he told them was to carry out their duties with honesty and integrity; he did not order them to quit their jobs.

Among Christ's twelve apostles was *"Matthew the tax collector"*
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