



## WHAT DO VARIOUS TRADITIONS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT TAXES?

### **Presbyterian**

"There is a growing consensus within our community that tax revenues are collected in a manner that harms those who have the least. Current tax policies put higher proportional burdens on middle class and poor Americans... The amount realized is insufficient to meet this country's pressing social needs."

"By the degree to which corporations, individuals and families of great wealth exercise inordinate political influence to lower their tax burdens, democratic values are jeopardized. (We should) work to limit and eliminate corporate tax expenditures that do not broadly serve a business or societal purpose."

***Tax Justice: A Christian Response to a New Gilded Age***

[http://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/acswp\\_tax\\_justice\\_42.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/acswp_tax_justice_42.pdf)

### **Roman Catholic**

"The tax system should be continually evaluated in terms of its impact on the poor. This evaluation should be guided by three principles. First, the tax system should raise adequate revenues to pay for the public needs of society, especially to meet the basic needs of the poor.

Secondly, the tax system should be structured according to the principle of progressivity, so that those with relatively greater financial resources pay a higher rate of taxation.

Thirdly, families below the official poverty line should not be required to pay income taxes. Such families are, by definition, without sufficient resources to purchase the basic necessities of life."

**US Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All* (1986).**

[http://www.usccb.org/upload/economic\\_justice\\_for\\_all.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/upload/economic_justice_for_all.pdf)

"The goal to be sought in public financing that is itself capable of becoming an instrument of development and solidarity ... designed above all to protect the weakest members of society."

***Compendium of the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church,***

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=7209>

### **United Methodism**

"We claim all economic systems to be under the judgment of God no less than other facets of the created order. Therefore, we recognize the responsibility of governments to develop and implement sound fiscal and monetary policies that provide for the economic life of individuals and corporate entities.

We support measures that would reduce the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. We further support efforts to revise tax structures and to eliminate governmental support programs that now benefit the wealthy at the expense of other persons."

***Social Principles of the United Methodist Church, Paragraph 163.***

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/economic-community>

## **Judaism**

“We support tax policy, both now and in the future, that reflects our deep Jewish commitment to the achievement of a just society in which all people can live with dignity and respect.

THEREFORE, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations resolves:

- To oppose any tax policies, including rate cuts, that unfairly and inequitably bestow their benefits on the wealthy in our society.”

***Union for Reform Judaism, “What We Believe: General Principles of Responsible US Tax Policy”***

[www.urj.org/what-we-believe/resolutions/general-principles-responsible-united-states-tax-policy](http://www.urj.org/what-we-believe/resolutions/general-principles-responsible-united-states-tax-policy)

## **Unitarian Universalism**

“The Second Principle of Unitarian Universalism is ‘Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.’ The increasingly regressive tax system created in the state of Louisiana over the last eight years has placed the greatest burden upon those least able to bear it, and is neither just, equitable, nor compassionate.”

At the UU General Assembly of 2014, the Assembly ratified as one of its Study Action Issues for 2014-2018 the issue of "Escalating Inequality."

***Unitarian Congregational Study/Action Issues, “Escalating Inequality”***

<http://www.uua.org/economic/escalatinginequality/csai>

## **Episcopal Church**

“We believe that God has created a world of sufficiency for all, providing us daily and abundantly with all the necessities of life. All people deserve the opportunity to live lives of dignity and abundance. However, today there are pressing economic challenges facing many throughout this nation, especially those living in poverty, that require our collective attention, effort, and imagination. We raise our voices with and on behalf of those in need to advocate for an economy that serves everyone.

An equitable, moral tax code should reward the efforts of low-income people to work and save at every level.”

***Episcopal Church, “Faith Reflection on Anti-Poverty Tax Policy”:***

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/article/faith-reflection-anti-poverty-tax-policy>

## **Adam Smith (“Father of Capitalism”)**

“The subjects of every state ought to contribute towards the support of the government, as nearly as possible, in proportion to their respective abilities; that is, in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the state.”

***Adam Smith, “An Inquiry into the Wealth of Nations”, Chapter 2, Part II, 1.***

[http://www.online-literature.com/adam\\_smith/wealth\\_nations/34/](http://www.online-literature.com/adam_smith/wealth_nations/34/)

## **Luke 21:1-4**

And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, “Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had.”