

Socialism/Communism

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1John 1:9). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

Most of this doctrine was originally presented in Luke 3; however some introductory material has been added to this study.

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Preface: The two great enemies of Christianity today are Islam and socialism. There is simply because these two movements (which could coalesce at some time in the future) have the greatest number of adherents. It is important for the modern-day believer to understand socialism and just how antithetical it is to the thinking of the mature believer.

This is somewhat of an introduction to socialism:

How Socialism Takes Over a Nation

1) In order for socialism to take over a nation, a number of things have to take place:

How Socialism Takes Over a Nation

- 2) Socialism must be aligned with an established political party in a two-party system, or be able to sell itself as an independent political movement.
- 3) The people must be fed false information (propaganda) about socialism from a very early age.
 - (1) This propaganda must find its way into the education system, public and private.
 - (2) This propaganda must find its way into media outlets.
 - (3) This propaganda must find its way into popular culture.
- 4) Socialism must be able to intimidate its opponents.
- 5) A nation must be weak spiritually.
 - (1) Socialism, in today's world, is a natural enemy of Christianity. This does not mean that it will present itself as the enemy of Christianity.
 - (2) The fewer Christians, the better chance socialism can succeed.
 - (3) The fewer Christians with Bible doctrine in their souls, the better chance that socialism can succeed.
- 6)
- 7)

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For Socialism to Succeed, Christianity Must Fail

1. In today's world, Christianity has two natural enemies: (1) Islam and (2) socialism. There are many enemies of Christianity, but these two movements have the most adherents at this time in human history.
2. There are 3 ways for Christianity to be weak within a nation: (1) numerically; the percentage of believers in a nation is continually decreasing. (2) Believers spend less and less time in fellowship. They may understand that they need to name their sins to God and they may not. (3) Their understanding of Bible doctrine and the laws of divine establishment is weak.
3. There is another consideration when it comes to Christians in a client nation: a client nation often provides the greatest amount of freedom; but Christians must operate in this realm of freedom with great circumspection.
4. The number of Christians in a nation:
 - 1) Ideally speaking, the number of Christians in a nation should be growing. This involves evangelism. When I was growing up, evangelism took place on a massive scale. Billy Graham held crusades all over the United States and the world, and large numbers of people came to hear him and were converted.
 - 2) Evangelism must take place within the local church. This does not mean that the pastor-teacher proclaims the gospel every time that he stands before his congregation, and prepared sermons that focus on evangelism. However, the pastor-teacher must make the gospel of Jesus Christ clear: **believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.**
 - 3) Individual evangelism. You, as a believer, should know the gospel backwards and forwards, as well as have answers for the most commonly asked questions. However, the key in personal evangelism is, focus upon Jesus Christ and His dying for our sins. Everything else is a side-issue (including socialism).

For Socialism to Succeed, Christianity Must Fail

- 4) Evangelism of children. A parent must evangelize their own children. This is why people must be careful about who they marry. Both partners should understand that their first responsibility to their child is to give them the gospel of Jesus Christ.
5. Fellowship for the believer is simple. When you sin, you are out of fellowship; when you name your sins to God, you are back in fellowship. R. B. Thieme, Jr. taught this as the *rebound technique*, which is based upon 1John 1:9: **If we name our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** No other Christian or member of the clergy is necessary for you to name your sins.
6. The believer must grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 1) This is fundamental to the Christian life. Even Jesus in His humanity was required to grow spiritually (Luke 2:40, 52).
 - 2) The believer need to take in spiritual nourishment (*teaching* from the Word of God) daily. Now, if your church is not meeting daily, then your spiritual growth must be supplemented in some way. Now, many doctrinal churches provide teaching online, so that you may avail yourself of what the pastor has already taught.
 - 3) You can also re-listen to teaching which you received in the past. Personally, I have listened to many series from R. B. Thieme, Jr. which I have heard before, and have been amazed as to the amount of information that I did not completely recall.
 - 4) Good Bible teaching can be up-to-date no matter when it was taught. I went back and re-listened to Bob's teaching of David, and was amazed as to how pertinent it was, listening to it 30+ years later.
 - 5) So that there is no confusion, despite the fact that I spend hours each day writing commentary, I still attend my church and I still am edified by the teaching which takes place there.
7. There is also the concept of the believer's individual responsibility within a nation (generally speaking, this is within a client nation):
 - 1) The greater the impact of Christianity on a nation, the greater the freedom. The United States is a prime example of this.
 - 2) There is a careful balance which must take place in the believer's life and soul. This is a balance between your Christian life and the rest of your life.
 - 3) What is first and foremost in your life is spiritual growth. That takes precedence in the believer's life.
 - 4) You, as a believer patriot, also have a responsibility to your nation. In a democracy, this means that you need to be informed and vote. However, what you need to be informed about *first* is Bible doctrine. You need to understand the Christian life and the laws of divine establishment. If you do not understand the laws of divine establishment, then you should not vote.
 - 5) There is the right balance to strike between your Christian life and the rest of your life. Obviously, you must work to support yourself. If you are in a marriage, then there are considerations concerning your spouse. If you have children, there are considerations concerning your children. None of this should take precedence over Bible doctrine, even though everything in your life will vie for your attention.
 - 6) There is a balance which must be struck between your political life and your Christian life. Your spiritual growth always takes precedence. However, this does not mean that you should not vote, not support a particular candidate (or candidates). It is reasonable that you understand the issues.
 - 7) Whatever level of participation in politics that you choose, always bear in mind that

For Socialism to Succeed, Christianity Must Fail

ultimately, every solution to life is a spiritual solution. You may have candidates who are right and yet they lose; you may have issues which you support, and yet they are defeated. It is not our job as believers to whitewash the devil's world; at the same time, it is legitimate for us to modify our surroundings in which we live.

8. If every believer was growing and understood the laws of divine establishment, and that believer voted, these views would be perpetuated throughout the United States.

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What follows was taken from Lessons 90–93 in the weekly study of Luke:

[Luke Lessons #1–100 \(html\)](#)

[Luke Lessons #1–100 \(pdf\)](#)

[Luke Lessons #1–100 \(wpd\)](#)

The passage that we are studying is:

Luke 3:10 *And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?"*

Luke 3:11 *And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."*

It would be easy to read this and think that the spiritual life in that era would consist of wandering about looking for people without shirts or food to eat and then supply them. John, whether he fully appreciates it or not, is speaking of a time in the near future where every Jew in Jerusalem is going to be facing great persecution. When this happens, they will need to look to one another for help. There is not going to be a super-wealthy Jew who helps everyone out; but there will be a man with two tunics who shares with a man who only has one. Food and clothing are two of the most basic items; but whatever is necessary to live, those in Jerusalem must be willing to supply it to fellow Jews or fellow believers. Also, even before that, those who follow the Messiah—those who are dubbed Christians—would be at the receiving end of great persecution, both by Rome and by the Jewish religious hierarchy.

Application: During a period of judgment, individual believers need to act to alleviate the suffering of others. Some people are naturally givers; and many are not. This is a part of your service to God; particularly if you find yourself in the midst of a great judgment.

In the book of Acts, the church at Jerusalem will share all things in common. Again, this is not a call to socialism, as what was done was completely voluntary among a very specific and limited group of people. This was required due to the great persecution which they faced (many Christians in Jerusalem and throughout the Roman empire would face persecution).

It is possible to voluntarily subject a country to socialism through voting (we appear to be doing that very thing right now in the United States). However, socialism is handing over complete and total control of a nation to a small group of men (those at the top of the socialist party); and over all of them will be a single person. His power will be dictatorial. How is this any different from an all-powerful king? It really isn't, except communists have figured out a way to sell their political system as brand new.

Because people are being led astray when it comes to socialism and because socialists will quote Bible verses in order to support their views, it is necessary for us to understand what this movement is all about.

One problem with discussing socialism and communism is, most people do not really know what these terms actually mean. Some may think that communism is socialism on steroids; or that communism results by a violent overthrow of the government, while socialism is a peaceful overthrow, etc. These words actually have very specified meanings, and what they mean is key to selling this governmental dictatorship to ignorant and unsuspecting populations.

Distinguishing between Socialism and Communism

1. Most people have no idea as to the actual difference between socialism and communism, and they often believe that it is a matter of degree.
2. There is some degree of socialism in nearly every industrial country (and non-industrial ones).
3. There is no such thing as a true communist government, even if the government is so described as a communist state. Even if Freedonia was called the Communist Paradise of Freedonia, it would not be a true communist state. It would be socialist. Bear in mind, I am making this statement regardless of the actual government which exists in Freedonia.
4. Before I begin to distinguish these concepts, let me start out by stating, there is no such thing as theoretical socialism or theoretical communism. How Karl Marx described these systems does not exist today and has never existed.
5. Karl Marx describes socialism and communism:
 - 1) Socialism is when the means of production belong to the people. So, let's say that there is a factory and it sits on land and there are machines in this factory which are used to produce whatever it produces. If these all belong to the people, then this would be theoretical socialism.
 - 2) What truly takes place under socialism is, the people at the factory do not own this factory, but it belongs to the state. Anytime when socialism says, *such and such belongs to the people*, this means, in reality, that *such and such belongs to the state*. Either the state owns that business and oversees its operation; or some private or governmental group (or individual) owns the factory and/or the land; but the government still controls and administers the function of the factory.
 - 3) The idea that the people own the factory and the means of production sounds great and fair and equal, but that is not what happens in practice. For instance, if you worked at a factory *owned by the workers*, could you build a lean-to next to the factory? Could you erect a house on the land of the factory (which you *own*)? Of course not! That is because you really do not own that land. The workers never own the land where the factory is, and they never own the factory or the means of production; the state does (when a nation is full-on socialist).
 - 4) The way that Karl Marx sells communism goes like this: for a relatively short period of time, there is the state which oversees all of these things; but, at some point in time, the state will disappear—apparently because it is no longer necessary—and you will just have workers working in factories that they themselves own. Once all of the state authorities disappear, then the country is a full-on, theoretical communist state. Under his theory, when the authorities disappear, then each factory, owned by people working in that factory, then the state has become a full-blown example of communism.
 - 5) This final phase of going to true theoretical communism *never* happens; and that for a very simple reason. When a person has power, most of the time, they desire *more* power, not

Distinguishing between Socialism and Communism

less. Furthermore, they want more perks for being the person in power. No matter how Castro or Stalin dressed in public (they dressed as common people, often in a military uniform), they had great privileges and wealth compared to the people. Millions of people in Russia and Cuba starved; communist leaders in both countries were never in danger of starving.

- 6) Another reason why communism never happens is, people do not work unsupervised. Now, if they truly own something (like a landlord owns a house, like a farmer owns his land), then they will work unsupervised because it is theirs—and, in most cases, they will work hard. But, no factory worker really believes that the factory belongs to him, so he has little motivation to work hard.
- 7) Now, there are small collectivist communal businesses and farms; and those working in those places more or less owns a piece of it. But this is an agreement which can legally take place in a free enterprise system (such a private agreement *cannot* happen under socialism without the state's permission).
6. I do not know my history of Karl Marx well enough to know if he really believed all of the crap that he wrote or not, but his writings have been embraced by many modern dictators in order to make their dictatorship seem palatable. No man can propose to a people, "I will rule over you with an iron fist and I will kill anyone who opposes me." Such a man would never have any support. But if that same man says, "You will all be equals and participate in a society which looks out for itself. You will all be guaranteed a job, medical care, education, etc. You, the workers of this socialist paradise, will truly own and personally benefit by the factory where you work." Well, that sounds like pretty good stuff. But the defacto form of government being proposed is a dictatorship.
7. There are some collectives and cooperatives throughout the United States and elsewhere, and these are entered into by voluntary contract. However, in most cases, there are actual owners of the property and the means of production; and there are actual supervisors. The end result is exactly the same—the leader essentially has dictatorial powers. This does not mean that the owner ignores the suggestions and opinions of its workers—every business needs to have an ear to the ground, just in case there are good ideas coming from the workers (in many cases, some workers can provide excellent suggestions).
8. Students are dishonestly exposed to communism and socialism in the classroom, and they are given this continuum with communism on one side and fascism on the opposite side. That is completely ridiculous, as Hitler ruled over a socialist state (NAZI stands for the *National Socialist German Workers' Party*). A true continuum has anarchy on one side and complete government control on the opposite side (whether a fascist or socialist government). The word *communism* should not appear on the continuum, as that is a theoretical system which will never exist. There is a continuum which is valid has free markets at one end, government control of the market on the other.

What I have done here is presented the actual theoretical difference between socialism and communism. How many people are aware of this distinction made by Karl Marx? I would guess, not even 1 out of a 100. Yet people of all political persuasions toss those terms *socialism* and *communism* out as if they know that there is a difference and what that difference is.

When it comes to the actual use of these terms, most people, if pushed, would agree that communism is socialism on steroids; or communism = super socialism. That is pretty much a defacto definition.

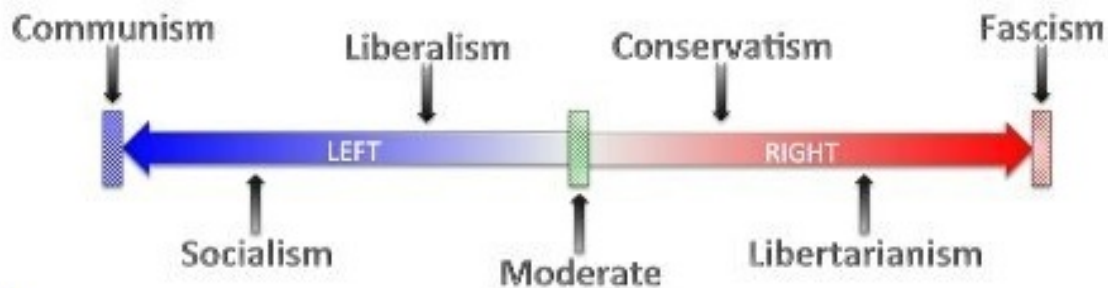
I did not take any sort of a survey of opinions, but I would not be surprised if some thought that communism was the result of a violent overthrow of government; and that socialism was the result of a vote.

Again, neither approach is accurate, historically speaking; but the term *communism* is used constantly, so we need to recognize what the speaker/write means by their use of that word. Most of the time, they mean one or the other of the definitions above.

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Traditional Political Spectrum (a graphic); from [OER2Go](#); accessed May 16, 2020



This is how I was *taught* the political spectrum in school, not realizing that it is pure-dee propaganda. In this false model, conservatives are more closely associated with fascism; and libertarians even more so. The idea that we progress from conservatism to libertarianism and then to fascism is completely illogical. Fascism is logically at the opposite end of the spectrum from libertarianism; these two philosophies could not be further apart. Libertarians (and I am not a libertarian) want as little government control as possible, leaving as many decisions as possible in the hands of the general public. In fascism, the government reigns supreme; and they make most of the decisions for their people and their economy.

The whole purpose of presenting such a false view of politics is to try to *sell* socialism to people who cannot think (also know as the *useful idiots*).

The True Political Spectrum (a graphic); from [Meme](#); accessed May 16, 2020.



his is a far more accurate view of the world. Total government control on one end; no government control on the other.

It should be clear to any person who pays attention that no government is strictly one thing or another; but there are elements of most everything you see above, depending upon where you happen to be.

One of the absurdities of today's world is, many of those in the American anarchy movement today also favor socialism. They claim to represent anarchy—which is no government—but what they truly support is a socialist state in charge of everything. Those groups who often confront the police, destroy property, steal and hurt people that they do not like—they are oblivious to their own absurd approach to politics.

When it comes to political power, it is not unusual for a person or movement to promise "X", even though they know that they cannot provide that. They make such promises because that will gain them more support, which leads to them having power. Many politicians will promise "X" even though they have no intention of delivering on that promise; or they know that they have no ability to deliver on that promise.

The laws of divine establishment favor things which can be found under every form of government (although a tyrannical leader can change that overnight). Even though the exercise of freedom is a wonderful thing, that is quite rare in world history. The freedom which we enjoy in the United States is an amazing blessing; a blessing which puts us far ahead of most people who have lived on this planet.

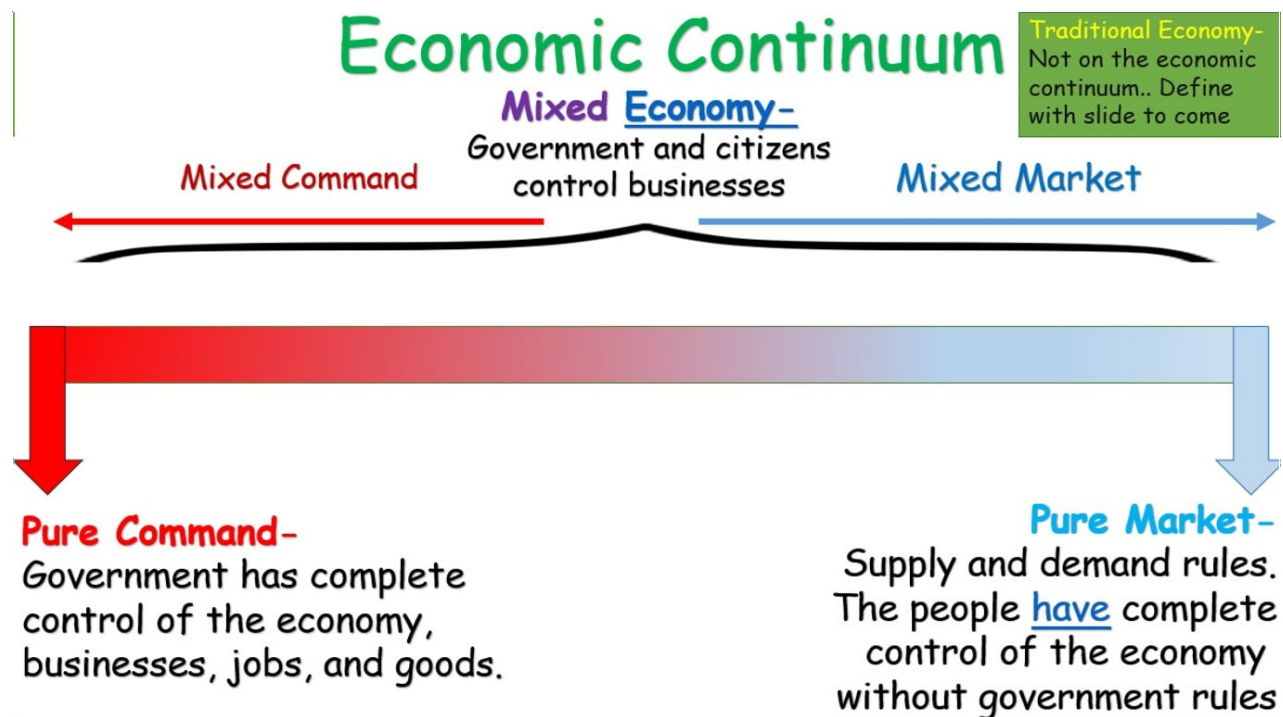
We have to be careful, as Christians, not to get so caught up in this or that movement. It is fine to enthusiastically belong to a political party and to enthusiastically support a candidate; but, like everything

else, it should never take the place of Bible doctrine. Furthermore, it is not our job to whitewash the devil's world. Political devotion is not necessarily going to accomplish a single important thing in this life. You may think that you got your candidate elected—and he might even be a great candidate—but God is still in charge.

Even more important, a missionary should avoid politics as much as possible. Political points of view should never be an issue to people who come to Jesus Christ. The missionary in the worst, most oppressive government ever needs to concentrate on bringing people to Jesus Christ; not to changing the government. Those who come to the Lord under the ministry of a missionary should not have the slightest idea as to his politics.

One last graphic:

Economic Continuum (a graphic); from Naylork.Weebly.com; accessed May 16, 2020.



There were quite a number of different continuums out there; and this particular model stood out as important enough to throw into the mix. A socialist government wants as much control over the economy as possible.

The passage that we are studying is:

Luke 3:10 And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?"

Luke 3:11 And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."

This passage and others have been used by socialist propagandists to claim that the Bible teaches socialism. This is patently untrue.

I will use the term *socialism* below, rather than *socialism and communism* because there is no such thing as true communism and there never will be.

Socialism as a political system is sold in such a way as to make total government control over life seem palatable.

The ESV; capitalized is used below:

(Alleged) Socialism in the Bible

1. Jesus is not a sandal-wearing, long-haired hippy, spreading free love, free government healthcare and socialism. The only thing true about this statement is, Jesus wore sandals, which were the common footwear of that era.

So Jesus was a Socialist (a meme); from **Cheezeburger**; accessed July 16, 2020. There are a myriad of memes about Jesus and socialism; many of which allege that He was a socialist.



2. Socialism is sold as a cure-all, no matter what the disease. When a country is impoverished, socialism is sold as helping the poor (which is why socialists who know the Bible will be quick to point out passages where the word *poor* is found). When a country is rich, where poverty, for the most part, is relative; then socialism is sold as a cure for wealth-inequality (which is a term recently brought into American society to sell socialism to those are relatively poor—there was a recent presidential candidate who continually spoke disparagingly about *millionaires and billionaires who were not paying their fair share of taxes*).
3. Because of this propaganda presentation of socialism, every time the word *poor* is found in the Bible, socialists take this as a proof positive of the socialist leanings of the Bible. However, God's concern for the poor is one of a benevolent God, not a socialist God. God is not trying to get every government to be all-powerful and benevolent.
4. One of the greatest enemies of socialism is religion, because to socialists, the state is the reigning entity over all else. The government wants to determine what is good and bad, or right and wrong. They cannot have people who believe in a power higher than the state. That is where limitations on the power of government come from.
 - 1) This is why suit was filed against the Little Sisters of the Poor, when they refused to supply their staff with free birth control. The Supreme Court **ruled 7-2 in their favor**. The government had determined that any and all forms of birth control should be provided by all employers, and the Little Sisters of the Poor, which I believe is a Catholic-based organization, balked at such a requirement.
 - 2) The idea is, if the state decides to require something, then no exceptions should be allowed, even in the case of religious objection.
 - 3) People who favor socialism believe that the government can overrule any religious teaching.
 - 4) In other words, you can do or believe whatever you want and do whatever your religion

(Alleged) Socialism in the Bible

prescribes, unless the state says otherwise.

5. Socialist proponents have found out that direct opposition to Christianity can often doom their movement, so they often take a different approach to Christianity. Initially now, socialists propose that socialism is a basic tenet of Christianity (even though, privately, they find Christian doctrine to be distasteful; and they will work to remove it after socialism has been established).
6. Although Christianity is more compatible with a free society, this does not mean that the believer should be working incessantly to establish a constitutional republic wherever he lives. We are not here to whitewash the devil's world. In the United States, we are given the freedom to vote, and it is reasonable for the believer to consider the issues and the candidates in light of the laws of divine establishment and then to cast his vote with those things in mind.
7. Furthermore, it is not wrong for a Christian to lobby for a candidate or for a bill (or proposition); and it is not wrong even to be a politician or to be part of the campaign of a politician. However, if it is ever a choice between Bible doctrine and politics, the growing believer must choose Bible doctrine. We need to grow spiritually, rather than to think that our chosen political movement is the end-all, be-all solution to the world's ills. God did not give Christians life after salvation in order to cure the world's ills.
8. When politics in any form interferes with taking in Bible doctrine, you set the politics aside. If it interferes with evangelization, then you set the politics aside.
9. The attempted association between Christianity and socialism is a relatively recent thing (just as socialism is a recent thing). This happened because direct opposition to Christianity did not work.
10. If you understand socialism for what it is—propaganda designed to make a free people choose to live under a dictatorship—then the incorporation of Christianity into socialism as a propaganda tool makes a great deal of sense. It is the smart thing for the socialist to do, albeit dishonest.
11. The believer must realize that socialists attempt to use the Bible and the words of Jesus in order to sell socialism to people who believe, at least in part, in both. It is a propaganda tactic, nothing more. No socialist paradise can allow for free thought, life after death, or a power higher than the state. As the state has more and more power, they will regulate and control the local church more and more. In many cases, they will outlaw Christianity (for instance, they may allow churches to stand, but they will not allow evangelization to take place).
12. Socialism and the false dichotomy between wealth and socialism:
 - 1) Socialism often sets up a false dichotomy. You are either in favor of a few men having great wealth; or you favor socialism. By the meme below, Jesus made some harsh statements about some rich men; therefore, according to the meme, He must be a socialist.
 - 2) All men have a sin nature. Some wealthy men have enough wealth and power to take advantage of others, and they do. Jesus spoke against such men. It was not their wealth that was the problem; it was their behavior (they use their wealth unjustly). This is not true of all wealthy men. We have seen men of great wealth, particularly near the end of their lives, scramble to figure out what to do about their wealth—since they come to the realization that they cannot take it with them.
 - 3) Jesus' public ministry took place over a very short period of time. Those who wanted to take part in it—like the 12 disciples—needed to commit to Him and His ministry above all else. One man spoke to Jesus, and it was clear to Jesus that his commitment was not complete—in fact, he was not even a believer. Jesus proved this by telling the man to sell all that he had, give to the poor, and to follow Him. The man was certainly not going to do that.

(Alleged) Socialism in the Bible

13. Jesus had some association with wealth or with that which approximates wealth. Jesus showed no animosity towards those who were wealthy nor did He explicitly disapprove of extravagant acts.
 - 1) Mary took a pound of very expensive perfume/ointment and oiled the feet of Jesus. Judas was concerned about such a great waste of expensive ointment, but Jesus disagreed with him. John 12:1–8
 - 2) Both Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea saw to the burial and anointing of the lifeless body of the Lord. Both men would have had wealth and influence in order to do this; and some of their wealth was used to place the Lord in a tomb. This was the right thing to do and could not have been accomplished apart from their wealth and influence.
 - 3) If you happen to have some wealth, then there are times when you must make a choice between Jesus and your wealth (most often, this is making a choice between attending Bible class or not).
 - 4) In Luke 19:1–10, Jesus accepts a meal at the home of Zacchaeus, a wealthy man; and Jesus does not berate Zacchaeus for his wealth. Jesus does not tell him to give his money away to the poor.
 - 5) In fact, in a parable, apparently spoke in his home, Jesus praises that man who receives some money and by shrew investment, parlays that money into much greater wealth. Even though the point of the story was not about money, the person who did the best in that parable was the person who made the most money. That is certainly not the view of a socialism. Luke 19:11–27

(Alleged) Socialism in the Bible

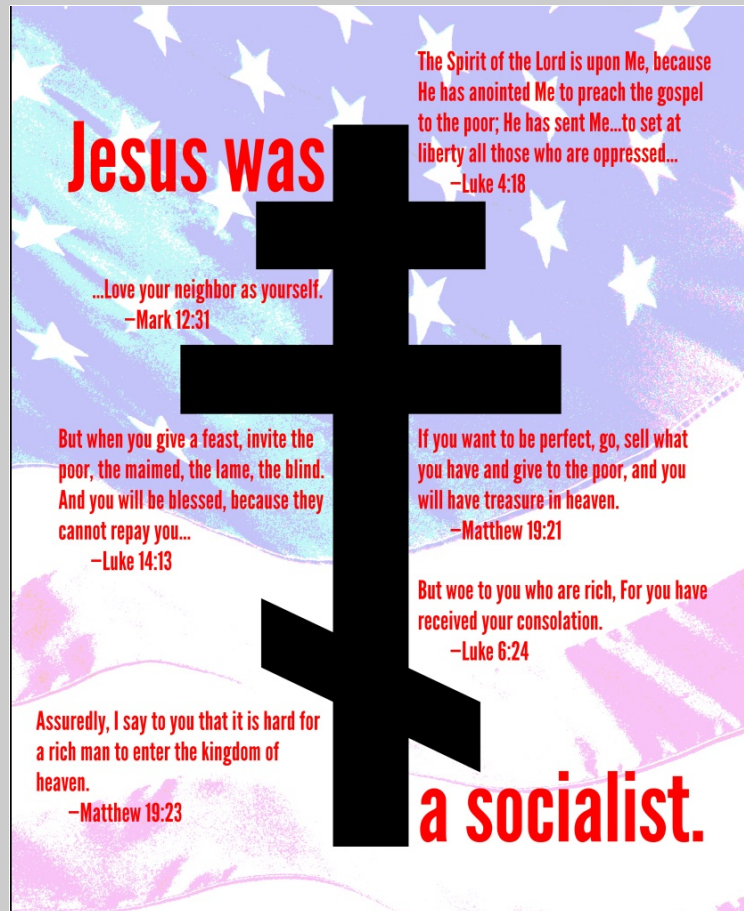
Jesus was a socialist (a meme); from **Pinterest**; accessed May 16, 2020.

14. We will look at each and every passage quoted in this meme. These particular quotations are supposed to *prove* that, *Jesus was a socialist*.

1) Mark 12:31b [Jesus is speaking] "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." This is the correct attitude for all believers to have. This maxim has nothing to do with socialism or with emotionalism. We are to have a relaxed mental attitude towards those around us. We do not think evil thoughts about them and we do not say bad things about them. No government is able to remove a person's mental attitude sins from their day-to-day existence.

2) Luke 4:18–19 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Jesus is speaking and He is quoting Isa. 61:1–2.

- (1) First of all, every time socialists come across a verse which mentions the poor, they tout this as some sort of affirmation of socialism. That is ridiculous!
- (2) Here, Jesus is quoting an Old Testament passage, and there is a great deal of complexity here which I will not delve into until we get to Luke 4. Jesus is presenting this passage as if it is all about Him (which He later says, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." —Luke 4:21b) So the emphasis is far more upon Jesus here, rather than upon *the poor*.
- (3) The good news that Jesus is proclaiming to the poor (and to everyone else) is called the gospel, which is the news that, if you want a relationship with God, you may have it. All you need to do is believe in Jesus Christ.
- (4) The liberty which Jesus proclaiming is from enslavement to the sin nature. Jesus is not calling for some new governmental system here. Jesus never touted any particular political system; He never urged his disciples to *march for change*; Jesus never touted revolution as the answer to Roman oppression. Most importantly, Jesus never taught socialist tenets.
- (5) Although Jesus gave physical sight to blind people, this is analogous to giving sight to those who were blinded by religion. One might also apply this to people who have been blinded by socialist propaganda.



(Alleged) Socialism in the Bible

- (6) Those who are oppressed are oppressed by the cosmic system; and Jesus gives them liberty from the cosmic system. This is not some sort of socialist solution.
 - (7) The year of the Lord's grace is the period of time during which Jesus is speaking, because He is there before the people, speaking directly to them, as God in the flesh.
 - (8) The things which are said here are in direct contrast to socialism and communism. Socialism is not good news for the poor; socialism does not lift up millions of people from poverty. Look at even China today where people are eating rats and bats; look at Venezuela today, where this once very rich nation is in an economic free fall. Cuba has never regained its position as a small but reasonably wealthy nation. Almost all Cubans today live in poverty.
 - (9) It is people under communism and socialism who are captive to that system and who are oppressed. When you are controlled by the government economically, then you have lost your free will.
 - (10) Medical innovation in communism is almost nonexistent. During the current pandemic, China is doing everything possible to hack into American computer servers of various medical groups to find information and cures which they can use there for COVID19. They know that free scientists in the United States are better equipped to find and develop a cure.
 - (11) Socialism and communism actively harass Christianity and people who believe in Jesus. That is the exact opposite of what Jesus is speaking about here. All socialist governments disparage Christians and the Bible. The very Bible which they claim supports socialism in their propaganda is often banned or restricted in socialist countries.
- 3) Luke 14:12–14 **He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."**
- (1) The Bible does make many references to the poor. This does not mean that the Bible is anti-wealth or pro-socialism. It means that God is concerned for the welfare of the least among us. A person who is unimportant because of their financial status is of great importance to God. Throughout the Old Testament, God provides for those in Israel who *cannot* provide for themselves. This involved the largess of landowners as well as a special tax for the poor which was collected (which amounted to 3.3% per year). Contrast this to the federal budget of the United States where about half of it is some kind of payment to various people, including much for the poor. The United States has gone overboard in an experiment to end poverty (which no government can do, as poverty is a relative status).
 - (2) The believer is to give of himself to those less fortunate than him. This is clearly taught in the Bible. This is private and personal giving, unrelated to government.
 - (3) Dinners and banquets are often reciprocal social pleasures. They were offered often to retain one's status on the dinner and banquet circuit. The bigger picture is, much of what is done in life is done with the idea that, there would be some reciprocity in social functions and in economic collaboration. It may *seem* like you are giving, but you are giving to get.
 - (4) Jesus is suggesting that one gives where there is no possibility of return. The banquet for the poor is an illustration, not a mandate.

(Alleged) Socialism in the Bible

- (5) The good that we do in the Spirit is rewardable in heaven. There are times when we are called upon by God to give where we expect no short-term reward. This may occur in a myriad of ways.
- (6) In the Christian life, make certain that you are filled with the Spirit when you give (that is, you have named your most recent sins to God). Then, not only is your largess a blessing to others, but you receive reward in heaven for your generosity.
- 4) Matt. 19:21 **Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."**
 - (1) Again, I hope you can see how socialism takes a passage like this and removes it from all context in order to try to *prove* that the Bible is a treatise on socialism. The immediate context is, *so that you will have treasure in heaven*; is that a socialist tenet? Of course not! They do not believe in heaven and hell.
 - (2) First of all, Jesus did not tell every single potential disciple who came to Him to sell everything that they owned. Jesus interacted with at least two wealthy men, and did not tell them to divest themselves of their wealth or even suggest that was a better way for them to behave.
 - (3) This happened one time with one particular person. This person was trying to become a disciple of Jesus by claiming obedience to the Law (no one is saved by obeying the Mosaic Law). The entire context of this passage makes that clear. Jesus point was to show this man that he was not keeping the Law as well as he thought he was.
 - (4) The idea is, no one is justified by the Law because no one can keep the Mosaic Law perfectly. Rom. 3:20 Gal. 2:16 3:20
 - (5) When Jesus told this man to sell what he has and give to the poor, this was not a general principle that we should all follow (if we did that, all of us would become poor overnight). This stated requirement proved to the man that he did not completely conform to the Law; and, therefore, he could not be saved by the Law.
 - (6) Like the other passages, I will not completely exegete it, because there is a lot to teach from the overall passage. But, suffice it to say that, this rich young ruler came to Jesus from the perspective of legalism. **And behold, a man came up to Him [Jesus], saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"** (Matt. 19:16) Or, rephrasing this, "You seem to be pretty smart about all of this religious stuff, what good thing is there left for me to do in order to be saved?"
 - (7) If this man is going to be legalistic, Jesus approaches him from that particular point of view. "There is just one thing necessary for you to do in order to be perfect," Jesus tells him. "Sell everything, give it to the poor and then follow Me." The man sought to be proclaimed perfect under the Law, and Jesus suggested the one thing that there was one thing that man would not do. This is because we are *not* justified by our deeds.
 - i As an aside, this was not the only shortcoming that this man had regarding the Mosaic Law (that is revealed when this passage is thoroughly exegeted); but it was the most demonstrable shortcoming, which even the rich young ruler had to admit to.
- 5) Luke 6:20–24 **And He lifted up his eyes on His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as**

(Alleged) Socialism in the Bible

evil, on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation."

- (1) Jesus is teaching His disciples here, as well as those who have come to hear Him speak.
 - (2) If you allege that it is good to be poor and bad to be rich, based upon this; then you must also assume that it is good to be hungry and bad to be filled, it is good to be weeping but bad to be happy, it is good when people hate you but bad when they love you. Context is everything.
 - (3) The Lord's disciples—particular from that point forward for the next few decades (many of them, to the end of their lives), they would suffer hardship as followers of Jesus. They would be poor, they would be persecuted, they would weep on occasion and they would be hated. God is watching all of this and taking all of these things into consideration. People who have faced such difficulties as believers—particularly at this point in time—would be greatly rewarded in heaven. Does socialism promise that to poor people that they will be rewarded in eternity? Of course not! There is no eternity for them (in the view of socialism)! So, again, a few words are taken out of context in order to sell the false concept that being poor is good, being rich is bad (therefore, become a socialist).
 - (4) At any given time, there are rich and there are poor. If the rich depend upon their riches; if the rich believe that their riches are the end-all and be-all (or if they believe that this is the result of God blessing them for being so good)—but they do not seek Jesus Christ as their Savior—then the wealth which they have—that is their reward. That is the sum-total of all that they will get. If they have not believed in the Lord, they will spend eternity in hell.
- 6) Matt. 19:23–24 **And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."**
- (1) Again, what does this have to do with socialism? What socialism government is selling, "Do what we tell you so that you might enter into the kingdom of God"? There is no other kingdom for socialism apart from the state, and the state is to be all-powerful. Under most socialist regimes, churches are outlawed or heavily regulated. Often when churches are allowed, the believers are not allowed to proselytize (or they might be imprisoned, disappeared or executed).
 - (2) The concept of this passage, in the time that it was written, is that people who had money in Jewish society believed that this indicated God's blessing and that they were, therefore, acceptable before God already. This approach to life is very much akin to those who believed that they had a relationship with God simply because they were Jewish.
 - (3) We are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ; and not by any other means.
 - (4) Wealth is *not* necessarily an indicator of God's blessing.
15. There are other passages in the Bible which are supposed to be supportive of socialism. As was clearly demonstrated, Jesus was not a socialist; He was not selling socialism; He did not believe in or teach any socialist principles. Furthermore, socialism does not embrace Jesus or Christianity. It tries to use what it can in order to sell their brand of tyranny to the masses. Socialism believes in whatever propaganda helps install a socialist government.
16. Throughout the Old Testament, there are verses which indicate that God is concerned for the

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welfare of the poor and helpless, and that He expects His client nation Israel to provide for them.

- 1) Lev. 19:13 "You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning.
 - (1) The owner of a business or the employer of others must take into consideration the needs of those who work for them.
 - (2) Sending a man home without any pay often was equivalent to sending him home without the means to purchase food.
 - (3) The modern-day employer should take into consideration the needs of his workers. This is not the same as giving into any demand given by a worker.
 - (4) The modern-day employer, boss or manager needs to see his workers as more than cogs in a great machine.
- 2) Lev 19:18 You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.
 - (1) This would be the exact opposite of socialist dictatorships who take control and often kill their enemies; sometimes they kill millions of them (this has been documented in Russia, China, Vietnam, Cambodia and North Korea).
 - (2) When it comes to interaction with your neighbor, consider what their point of view is. So often, it is instructive to mentally change places with your neighbor and think, "What if this situation were reversed? What would be my point of view here?"
- 3) Deut. 10:18–19 He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.
 - (1) This speaks of personal giving; and personal respect for others.
 - (2) This is not something which can be mandated by government. One's mental attitude towards others is a matter of choice; not of government mandate.
 - (3) There is a form of welfare found in the Bible, and this is rarely quoted by socialist propaganda. Socialist governments often collect 50–90% of a person's income (and even higher). The tax for the poor found in the Bible is only 3.3% each year.
- 4) Deut. 24:19–22 "When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over them again. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.
 - (1) There was a land and crop requirement in Scripture of individuals who owned orchards and fields of grain. They were not to harvest the corners, but allow that to remain for the poor to harvest for themselves.
 - (2) The poor had no ownership in these fields, but they were allowed to work the fields for what remains in order to eat.
 - (3) This is analogous to food banks today (except for the fact that food banks rarely require work from those who come to get food there).
 - (4) Let's say that you are a very successful Christian businessman. Does this mean that you open up part of your store, your farm or factory for the poor to come in and take what they want? Of course not! However, someone who is smart enough to have a successful business is smart enough to figure out how to serve the community and to help the poor.

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- 5) Psalm 112:1, 9 **Praise the LORD! Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who greatly delights in his commandments! He has distributed freely; he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever; his horn is exalted in honor.**
 - (1) Distributing freely is the free will gesture of a person with wealth. In fact, it does not necessarily refer to a wealthy person; just a person who has enough to share. This act promises eternal rewards.
 - (2) Under socialism, a person works for the state; accepts from the state whatever the state is willing to give them. There are no eternal rewards.
 - (3) Do you see how this passage has nothing to do with socialism?
 - (4) **Socialism does not mandate that we give to the poor; socialism mandates that we give more to the government.**
- 6) Interestingly enough, socialist propagandists do not quote Psalm 112:3 **Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever.**
 - (1) In the middle of the passage quoted above in point #5, we have this verse. Those selling socialism will quote vv. 1 & 9; but not v. 3.
 - (2) It promises wealth and riches to the house (family) of a mature believer. So here, wealth and riches are not treated as a bad thing or as a thing to be scorned.
 - (3) Furthermore, such a person blessed by God will have righteousness which endures forever (that is, there is eternal blessing for the man of Psalm 112).
- 7) Isaiah 1:15–17 **When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.**
 - (1) A person who is out of fellowship is not going to be heard by God.
 - (2) A person who takes advantage of the poor is not going to be blessed by God.
 - (3) God's concern for the poor, as expressed here, has nothing to do with socialism. In the past few decades, Venezuela, one of the richest countries in the world, become a socialist nation. Now, almost the entire nation is in extreme poverty. Socialism is wrong and it does not work.
17. There are a handful of verses to be found in the New Testament which are quoted by socialist propagandists as well:
 - 1) Acts 2:42–45 **And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.**
 - (1) Twice in the book of Acts, there is mention of newly converted believers selling all of their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to those in need.
 - (2) There are two important considerations in the historical context of these passages: (1) The people believed that Jesus was going to return soon, so that they needed no possessions. (2) The early church was persecuted greatly for many decades, which financially ruined many believers in the church. Fellow Christians would have died from starvation had not other Christians stepped in to help.
 - 2) Acts 4:32–35 **Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to**

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the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

- (1) When the Church Age began, Jesus was expected to return quite soon; therefore, this seemed to be the thing to do.
 - (2) Christians were in a very odd place—they were not Jewish and they were not heathen—but they had placed their faith in Jesus. This was all very new to all of them. Even the Apostles did not have a complete handle on what was taking place (the Age of Israel had given way to the Church Age).
 - (3) Because of the persecution of the early Christian church, this sharing of resources was very helpful to those who were in need in Jerusalem.
 - (4) The church in Jerusalem was always on shaky ground, subject to persecution by both Romans and Jews. At one point in Paul's ministry, he took up a collection for the church in Jerusalem. So they were always in difficult straits. Paul gathering such an offering from the local churches was not done on the basis of legalism or coercion; but people gave based upon their free will.
 - (5) Based upon Acts 5:1–4, it is clear that selling one's land and giving all of the proceeds to the church was not a requirement. Ananas and Sapphira pretended to give all the proceeds from selling their land, but they held back some, and both died the sin unto death as a result. The problem was not that they kept back some of their profit, but that they pretended to give all of the proceeds to the church (Acts 5:3–4).
 - (6) This sort of arrangement was completely voluntary and it is possible that this kept many saints in Jerusalem alive. We are not aware of other churches doing this. However, if a church was heavily persecuted, this would not necessarily be a bad thing to do. It would not be socialist if a wealthy church in the United States sponsored several poor churches in other countries (which has happened in some places).
 - (7) There is nothing parallel in the New Testament epistles. It is in the epistles where we find our guidance for life in the Church Age. There are no commands for us to continue this practice.
 - (8) In the United States and in other free nations, finite collectives can be established, where the workers of a farm both have a say in the direction that the farm goes in and they share in the profits as well. This is perfectly legitimate, and if some like this sort of business model, there are no laws preventing them from developing a business like this (or from becoming a part of an already established collective).
 - i As an aside, when you become a part of a collective, you often do not begin as having an equal say or equal remuneration with others who established the collective in the first place.
 - ii Those who have established a collective or became a part of the collective early on have a real stake in the collective. If you have just shown up with nothing in your hands, then you have far less to lose than those there from the beginning.
 - iii Based upon this, many such collectives bring you in as a provisional worker or as probationary worker. It is possible to join a collective and have no say and no established rights.
- 3) James 5:1–6 **Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have**

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corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days. Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.

- (1) The problem is not the wealth per se, but the mental attitude one has towards his own wealth.
 - (2) If you use your wealth in such a way as to help further the plan of God (giving to your church, to a missionary group, to the poor), then you have the right approach. If God entrusts you with wealth, then use your wealth responsibly.
 - (3) If you would do virtually anything to gain money and use that for self-indulgence, then that approach to wealth is a problem.
 - (4) Furthermore, James here is railing against unfair business practices, such as, not paying your workers. No Christian should ever be guilty of withholding wages from his employees.
18. Encouragement to give money to the poor; and giving money to the poor are activities which are in direct opposition to socialism. Socialism allows for high taxation and the redistribution of this wealth by way of services. This is all accomplished by government force. The taxation is required; the programs and means of redistribution is government determined. When you give money to the poor, it is voluntary and you are making the decisions of who to give to and how much to give totally apart from any government agency.
- 1) Let's say that you really don't know any poor people; you must be within driving distance to poor neighborhoods.
 - 2) Whereas, socialism is not Christian; driving to a poor neighborhood and handing out a few hundred dollar bills is (provided that you are filled with the Spirit when you do this).
19. Again, all propaganda aside, socialism is all about high taxation which goes to the government; it is not about giving to the poor.

This is information which is very important for believers to know and understand, so that they do not find themselves getting caught up in various forms of social action and thinking that they are doing *the Christian thing*.

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Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

The best cure to counteract socialist propaganda is the accurate teaching of Scripture. Many of the passages briefly discussed above will be more fully examined as we continue our study in the book of Luke.

As an aside, R. B. Thieme, III has recently been teaching a lot about socialism (June–August 2020). This particular study does not represent a rehashing of his teaching, nor am I following his lead in this subject area. I made a decision to make a study of socialism when we came to this part of Luke well over a year ago, and much of this material was written months ago.

The passage that we have been studying is:

Luke 3:10 **And the crowds asked him** [John the herald], **"What then shall we do?"**

Luke 3:11 And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."

Passages like this have been taken by propagandists for socialism to make the argument that, "The Bible teaches the virtues of socialism."

Socialist propagandists figured out that opposing Christianity head on is a tactical mistake. So, when it comes to interacting with Christian doctrine, they quote a few passages from the Bible, out of context, and present them as if the Bible teaches socialism as a basic tenet.

Throughout, I use the terms *socialism* and *communism* interchangeably. The difference between them was explained previously.

Final Points on Socialism and the Bible

1. It is very hard to sell the population of a country on the idea that all the people of that country should submit themselves to a tyrannical government run by a few people.
2. It is even harder to sell that form of government, if it is known, in advance, that this new government will persecute, incarcerate and eliminate those who disagree with or act contrary to their policies.
3. The Marxian theory of socialism and communism have given dictators a relatively new way to sell their product—a totalitarian government—to a large population who believe that they will taken care of by a benevolent government.
4. The end result, in a violent overthrow is, a particular military leader will also, in the end, run a very autocratic government.
5. When dealing with an autocratic system which is already in place, socialism sells itself as providing guaranteed rights. Unlike the current autocratic system, they would promise to do specific things for the people (such as, free education, free healthcare, guaranteed employment).
6. We had a president of the United States who spoke of the *negative rights* found in the Constitution and he proposed it would be better for us to promise what the government would do for the people (positive rights).
 - 1) This revealed a complete lack of understanding of the founding of our country.
 - 2) These so-called *negative rights* are limitations placed upon the government. The Bill of Rights tells us what the government *cannot* do. This historical background for this is, England took advantage of individual citizens of the United States in a variety of ways; and our Bill of Rights was designed to see that our new government did not do that. Our founding fathers did not want to exchange one form of tyranny for another.
 - 3) Our founders actually endured some of the worst aspects of a controlling government, and hoped to design a government which was constrained, to keep it from acting directly against the will of the people.
 - 4) Filling up the Constitution with promises from the government (*positive rights*) sounds great; but it simply grants more and more power to the very few who are in charge of the government.
 - 5) Many presidents have made many promises in the past to do things for their people—promises that many of them have tried to keep—but what has happened has removed freedom and given greater power to government. Education, social security, medicare are all examples of such things. I am not proposing a debate on these topics, nor am I saying they are of the devil; I am saying that, the result of these *benevolent* programs

Final Points on Socialism and the Bible

- is more government power and, therefore, less freedom (there is always this dynamic between the people being ruled and the people who rule).
- 6) In a capitalistic economy, money is representative of freedom; the more money a person has, the more freedom they have. If the government makes a promise to give a free program, that free program costs a huge amount of money, and the money will be taken away from people who have it. Therefore, their freedom is reduced, as their money is being used to provide some politician's program. Now, even though many politicians make a big show about taking money only from millionaires and billionaires, they could take *all* of the money of the top 1% and it would not even pay for the government deficit for a year or two. That means, there is not enough money right now to pay for the wonderful programs already in place.
 7. When dealing with a very poor country, socialism tries to sell itself as the government providing all of the necessities to the population. Essentially, such a government is promising to be the peoples' god. Because socialism tries to sell itself to people who are religious, they will not call government *god*, but that is, to some extent, their intent (their primary goal is *power*).
 8. When dealing with a very prosperous country, often the concept of wealth inequality is used. The relatively small amount of money which the majority of people have is compared in a variety of ways to a few people who have an incredible amount of money. Great effort is given over to influencing the large majority of people who are middle class or below, and turn them against people who have an incredible amount of money. This approach, if done right, always has the majority siding with the socialists. This is because, in any society, those who are rich are going to be in the minority (even in socialist societies).
 - 1) As an aside, the more free a nation is, the more likely there will be a great variety of economic situations. This is because freedom is all about choosing one's own vocation, one's place in that vocation, and the amount of effort one might devote to his vocation.
 - 2) The same is true of every other aspect of a person's life.
 - 3) That same person will also decide which material items are important to have, which can have a great effect upon a person's economic condition.
 - 4) Person A may decide that driving an incredible automobile is his top priority; person B may want a large house in an expensive neighborhood; person C may want the best healthcare insurance; person D may want a lot of disposable income; etc. A superficial glance at such people is going to look like they are unequal because of their choices and values. However, their lives may look very different simply because they make different choices of what to accumulate and what to put off to another day.
 - 5) The less disposable income a person has, the less freedom they have. In most nations, people fight just to have basic food, shelter and clothing necessities.
 9. People are led to believe that somehow, if the wealthy are sufficiently plundered, then things will be better for everyone, economically speaking. This is *never* true. If memory serves, we could take all of the money away from the richest top 1% of Americans and it would not even pay for the government's yearly deficit.
 10. When dealing with a democracy, then these ways to sell socialism to the masses make up the fundamental propaganda points. Recently, in 2016 and 2020, Bernie Sanders, an unabashed socialist, became a serious contender to run for president of the United States. This was the first time that this has occurred in American history. In the past, there were other socialist candidates, but they generally expected to get about 1% of the vote. The fact that Sanders was a serious candidate for president marks a great turning point in the thinking of the people of the United States.

Final Points on Socialism and the Bible

11. One thing which has kept socialism at bay in the United States is Christianity. There is no call for socialism in the Bible. Furthermore, socialism is a godless economic system. I remember working in some Hispanic neighborhoods in the 1970's where there were signs in the resident's windows, Christ, yes; Communism, no (except that this was in Spanish: *Cristo sí, comunismo no*). The socialist/communist movement figured out, after many years, that if they villainized Christianity, then communism would lose. So, instead, they tried to show that Christianity was an early form of communism. Many Christians who lack doctrine will actually fall for this.
12. Let us consider the Christians in Acts who held all things in common:
 - 1) This took place in Jerusalem, where the church was persecuted both by Jews and by the Romans.
 - 2) This was completely voluntary; not all Christians were required to do this.
 - 3) The church was not a government agency; nor were the believers encouraged to develop a nation-wide (or empire wide) system of *sharing all things*.
 - 4) This seems to have been an organic movement from people who were grateful and who expected to see the return of Jesus soon.
 - 5) This approach is far more similar to joining a farming collective than it was to government-imposed, top-down socialism.
 - 6) In the United States, any church (or non-church entity or group) can choose to do something like this; any farm can choose to operate as a collective. This is freedom of choice; it is not socialism.
 - 7) Such agreements can be entered into between free people; and these same people may void their agreement and exit the communal agreement when it suits them. That is not possible under socialism.
13. There is certainly the truism that, a nation might vote socialism in as their form of government; however, to return to free markets and freedom of choice, that usually requires a blood-letting revolution. This is one of those things which a society can be convinced to do; but the end results will end up being far different than what is originally promised.

Communism is, strictly speaking, a theoretical concept of a socialist society without a government. Therefore, there will never actually be a true communist government.

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For the final doctrine in this realm:

Some of the Chief Problems of Socialism

1. Socialism, in theory, is a very materialistic view of society, where the highest authority for man is the state. This places the government in natural opposition to the Christian faith, where God is the highest authority. The purging of religion from socialist states is very common. Sometimes it proves to be impossible, so the state does everything possible to regulate what a church does and the government tries to then restrict what a church can do. In most socialist governments, members of a church are not allowed to evangelize.
2. A previous president spoke of the United States as offering up *negative rights*; and that he believed we needed to have more of what the government would do for the people in the Constitution.
 - 1) That particular president seemed to have little understanding or appreciation for the United

Some of the Chief Problems of Socialism

States Constitution.

- 2) When a government provides a service of some sort—say, free education or free medical services—then that government taxes in order to pay for these *free* things, thus reducing the options of the workers (who may want similar services, but not in the way that the government provides them).
- 3) Let's say the government provides 10 free things specifically. What they offer often uses up the entire government budget, which is based upon heavy taxation.
- 4) There are two problems with this approach. The first is, the government can never provide what it claims that it will provide. Therefore, no matter what is promised to the people, the actual result is going to be far less.
- 5) The second problem is the heavy taxation. The less money that you have, the less freedom that you have. In a free society, people have much more to choose from. One young person may choose to go to college, another may choose to start a business, another may choose to start work for a business. A very important consideration to a young person is, *Can I afford to move out of my parents' home now?* With some modicum of income, such choices can be made. Remove much of this income, these things are no longer options open to a young person.
- 6) Free college education sounds wonderful; but it is not free. It is paid for by taxes taken from others, from those who attend, attended or have never attended college.
- 7) For every free thing which is offered, there are fewer and fewer choices which can be made by individuals in their lives.
- 8) I have watched many television series from other countries, and I have noticed that, the more a country offers by way of free services to its people, the less freedom the population has regarding what they will do with their lives. For instance, in the United States, for decades, it was a natural thing for a young man or woman (at age 16–21) to buy their first car—in many cases, with their own money. Do you know that is almost unheard of in most countries? Do you realize that sometimes families will go in together and buy a vehicle which may be used by 2 or 3 or 4 different people—often people from different families?
- 9) Here is why. Let's say that a government offers a free college education and free medical care. What is being offered is determined entirely by the government and everyone partakes of just the options offered by the government. I may, as a young person, want to have a high deductible medical insurance policy and use the money I save to put elsewhere. I may, as a young person, want to attend a less expensive college (or not attend college at all), so that I can put my funds towards something else. When something is provided by government, those options no longer exist. We simply take what the government offers, whether it is good, bad or mediocre (and, when government is in charge of something, odds are that the product offered is mediocre—how many cars are built in Russia and China?). How many cars are built in Great Britain—which has moved very far left—for that matter? And, yes, I am aware that there are car companies in Great Britain and I am aware also of their lack of quality. But since Great Britain is less socialistic than Russia and China, it provides a better product.
3. Socialism never does what it proposes to do. It does not eliminate poverty, as socialist states are well-known for mass starvation.
4. Freedom of thought is discouraged, and often illegal, because that could lead to a critical view of the government, and socialism cannot stand up to scrutiny. We see this playing out in Hong Kong, where China has control, and they do not appreciate the freedoms enjoyed by the citizens of Hong Kong (I write this in 2019–2020). Over the very short period of time that I have been

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working on these lessons, Hong Kong has gone from having a great many freedoms to the point where, they can no longer criticize the Chinese government (without suffering dire consequences).

5. One simple problem with socialism is its fundamental dishonesty. Many things are done in order to sell the concept of socialism; but what is promised and what is delivered are two very different things (remember Obamacare and all of the promises versus the reality?). If you think that is too political, consider social security and medicare. These two programs threaten to destroy the United States because of their costs. And how many people treat social security as their full retirement (when SS was never designed to be one's entire retirement)? The whole idea of social security (in theory) was to make sure that older people had money guaranteed to supplement their income. However, in reality, a huge percentage of Americans enter into retirement with little more than their social security payments. This means that they face the end of their lives without enough money to cover their basic needs—exactly the thing that SS was supposed to cure.
6. In the same way, Socialism must be dishonest in order to sell a dictatorship to an unsuspecting public.
7. A socialistic government is sold as a cure all for so many problems; but it is not. Further, there is no workers' paradise; there is no utopia that results from government trying to do too much.
8. During one of the Obama campaigns, there was an interactive piece of propaganda called *the Life of Julia* (I do not believe that the original version is available anymore). This follows the life of a woman who, at many points in her life, must look to the government to provide this or that. The chief problem is, our government is unable to provide all of these things for 300 million people. There is not enough money in the world for every person to live the life of Julia.
9. The greatest nation in human history is the United States. It is based upon a foundation of freedom as being God-granted. Freedom—the basic function of the human soul—is the most fundamental of the divine institutions. Any nation which encourages the divine institutions is a nation which will prosper and be prospered. If you could choose between the life of Solomon or the life of a lower middle class worker in the United States, the choice is easy—be a lower middle class worker in the United States. Right there, you have far more conveniences and far more options than Solomon had; and with about a hundredth of the responsibility of a king.
10. If you have some understanding of the Angelic Conflict, you would understand why Satan would like to end the United States with all of its freedoms. He much prefers a socialist dictatorship (where religion can be outlawed); or an unstable government in the middle east (where Christians can be killed); or even a socialist-leaning government in Europe (where the church appears to be dying). Moving away from freedom to socialism often goes hand-in-hand with moving away from Bible doctrine.
11. Whereas, the United States is a wonderful example of freedom and Christianity, there is no socialist government that comes close; or a welfare state that comes close to what we have here, in terms of freedom and economic prosperity. If there were—despite all of the internet articles to the contrary—people would be moving in droves to a different *paradise*. However, if given the choice to move to a different country, a majority of people in the world would choose the United States. It is in this country where freedom and opportunity are greater than anywhere else in the world.

So there is no misunderstanding, if you are a missionary in a socialist nation or a nation moving in that direction, it is not your job to try to stop such a progression. The missionary is to provide the gospel and then, some basic doctrine to get new Christians started. It is the missionary's job to establish a local church and to guide them to the point where one of their own will be able to pastor that church.

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