



"The Truth About Socialism"

TEACHERS - You are encouraged to listen to the "Extra Point" podcast before teaching this lesson. It can be found at www.mobberly.org/lessons

START

HOOK - ICEBREAKER

With the November 2020 presidential election rapidly approaching, there is a great deal of discussion by the candidates about the pros and cons of socialism.

A Heartland Institute and Rasmussen Reports national telephone and online survey of 1,000 people conducted in mid-November, 2019 found that 69% of all "likely U.S. voters" rated a free-market economic system as better than socialism.¹

Just 12% thought socialism was a better economic system, but 18% were undecided. Among all voters, 26% would vote for a self-identified socialist presidential candidate; 50% would not, while 24% were undecided.¹

Younger voters were found to be more than twice as likely as those 40 and over to think socialism is better than a free-market economic system. 42% of those ages 18 to 39 say they would vote for a socialist presidential candidate, compared to 18% of middle-aged voters and 15% of senior citizens.¹

Another survey of 2,100 people conducted by YouGov in October, 2019 similarly found that 50% of all voters were not at all likely to vote for a socialism candidates. By generations, this broke down to 67% of the Silent Generation (age 74+), 64% of Boomers (age 55-73), 56% of Gen X (age 39-54), 30% of Millennials (age 23-28), and 36% of Gen Z (age 16-22).²

"[Socialism] is not just an alternative form of government. It is a different way of life, one that is entirely incompatible with what Americans take for granted, the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and property, which have set the backdrop for the amazing economic development and progress" –

Daniel J. McLaughlin

ASK

Why do you think Americans are in general unsupportive of socialism?

¹ "Democrats, Young Voters Attracted By Socialism", November 25, 2019. Rasmussen Reports. https://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/politics/partner_surveys/democrats_young_voters_attracted_by_socialism

² "Fourth Annual Report On US Attitudes Toward Socialism", October, 2019. Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation. <https://www.victims of communism.org/2019-annual-poll>

What do you think are some reasons for the large differences in likelihood of voting for a socialist candidate between generations?

REVIEW

Teacher Preparation

In addition to studying the passages contained in the Connect Group lesson, study these Scriptures from Pastor Glynn's message:

"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" – Psalm 11:3 (KJV)

"For freedom, Christ set us free. Stand firm then and don't submit again to a yoke of slavery." – Galatians 5:1 (CSB)

"The fool says in his heart there is no God." – Psalm 14:1 (CSB)

"So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female." – Genesis 1:27 (CSB)

"Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth . . ." – Genesis 1:28 (CSB)

"The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it." – Genesis 2:15 (CSB)

INSIGHTS ON SOCIALISM

GotQuestions Web Page³

Question: "How should a Christian view socialism?"

Answer: Socialism is a societal system in which property, natural resources and the means of production are owned and controlled by the state rather than by individuals or private companies. A basic belief of socialism is that society as a whole should share in all goods produced, as everyone lives in cooperation with one another. Various theories of socialism have been put forward from ancient times, including a form of Christian socialism.

The most prominent philosopher to argue in favor of socialism was Karl Marx, who taught that the driving factor behind all of human history is economics. Marx was born to German Jewish parents in 1818 and received his doctorate at age 23. He then embarked on a mission to prove that human identity is bound up in a person's work and that economic systems totally control a person. Arguing that mankind survives by labor, Marx believed that human communities are created by the division of labor.

Marx saw the Industrial Revolution as changing the basic lifestyle of humanity, because, in Marx's

³ "How Should a Christian View Socialism?" GotQuestions.org. <https://www.gotquestions.org/socialism-Christian.html>

mind, those who had freely worked for themselves were now forced by economics to work in factories instead. This, Marx felt, stripped away their dignity and identity, and now they were reduced to mere slaves controlled by a powerful taskmaster. This perspective made the economics of capitalism the natural enemy of Marx's brand of socialism.

Socialism seeks to do away with private property. Karl Marx surmised that capitalism emphasizes private property and, therefore, reduced ownership to the privileged few. Two separate "communities" emerged in Marx's mind: the business owners, or the bourgeoisie; and the working class, or the proletariat. According to Marx, the bourgeoisie use and exploit the proletariat with the result that one person's gain is another person's loss. Moreover, Marx believed that the business owners influence lawmakers to ensure their interests are defended over the workers' loss of dignity and rights. Last, Marx felt that religion is the "opiate of the masses," which the rich use to manipulate the working class; the proletariat is promised rewards in heaven one day if they keep working diligently where God has placed them (subservient to the bourgeoisie).

In the socialism Marx envisioned, the people own everything collectively, and all work for the common good of mankind. Marx's goal was to end the ownership of private property through the state's ownership of all means of economic production. Once private property was abolished, Marx felt that a person's identity would be elevated and the wall that capitalism supposedly constructed between the owners and working class would be shattered. Everyone would value one another and work together for a shared purpose. Government would no longer be necessary, as people would become less selfish.

There are at least four errors in Marx's thinking, revealing some flaws in socialism. First, his assertion that another person's gain must come at another person's expense is a myth; the structure of capitalism leaves plenty of room for all to raise their standard of living through innovation and competition. It is perfectly feasible for multiple parties to compete and do well in a market of consumers who want their goods and services.

Second, Marx was wrong in his socialist belief that the value of a product is based on the amount of labor that is put into it. The quality of a good or service simply cannot be determined by the amount of effort a laborer expends. For example, a master carpenter can more quickly and beautifully make a piece of furniture than an unskilled craftsman can, and therefore his work will be valued far more (and correctly so) in an economic system such as capitalism.

Third, Marx's theory of socialism necessitates a government that is free from corruption and negates the possibility of elitism within its ranks. If history has shown anything, it is that power corrupts fallen mankind, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. People do not naturally become less selfish. A nation or government may kill the idea of God, but someone will take God's place in that government. That someone is most often an individual or group who begins to rule over the population and seeks to maintain their privileged position at all costs. This is why socialism has led to dictatorships so often in world history.

Fourth and most importantly, socialism is wrong in teaching that a person's identity is bound up in the work that he does. Although secular society certainly promotes this belief, the Bible says that all have equal worth because all are created in the image of the eternal God. True, intrinsic human value lies in God's creation of us.

Was Marx right in saying that economics is the catalyst that drives human history? No, what directs human history is the Creator of the universe who controls everything, including the rise and fall of every nation. God also controls who is put in charge of each nation: "The Most High is

ruler over the realm of mankind, and bestows it on whom He wishes and sets over it the lowliest of men" ([Daniel 4:17](#)). Further, it is God who gives a person skill at labor and the wealth that comes from it, not the government: "Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun during the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward. Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God" ([Ecclesiastes 5:18–19](#)).

Socialism, for all its popularity in some circles, is not a biblical model for society. In opposition to socialism, the Bible promotes the idea of private property and issues commands to respect it: commands such as "You shall not steal" ([Deuteronomy 5:19](#)) are meaningless without private property. Unlike what we see in failed experiments in socialism, the Bible honors work and teaches that individuals are responsible to support themselves: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat" ([2 Thessalonians 3:10](#)). The redistribution of wealth foundational to socialism destroys accountability and the [biblical work ethic](#). Jesus' parable in [Matthew 25:14–30](#) clearly teaches our responsibility to serve God with our (private) resources.

Recommended Resource: [Politics According to the Bible: A Comprehensive Resource for Understanding Modern Political Issues in Light of Scripture by Wayne Grudem](#)

*The Christian Post Web Page*⁴

Dear Chuck,

In his State of the Union Address, President Trump declared that "America will never be a socialist nation." Some say the Bible supports socialism. Does the Bible support it or any other specific economic system?

Unsocial

Dear Unsocial,

I'm glad you asked, because I fear many people are supporting an economic philosophy they really don't understand. To many, it sounds good on the surface, maybe even compassionate and fair, a way to close the income inequalities that exist. In reality, it is none of those.

Remember, *Robin Hood* is a fairy tale. It should never be attempted as an economic system and it is certainly not supported in Scripture. God's Word prohibits taking from the rich and poor alike.

[Daniel J. McLaughlin, columnist with Townhall Finance](#), recently argued that those who endorse socialism are naïve; they have never studied its history or lived under it:

It is not just an alternative form of government. It is a different way of life, one that is entirely incompatible with what Americans take for granted, the

⁴ Chuck Bentley, "Is Socialism Biblical?" ChristianPost.com. February 22, 2019.
<https://www.christianpost.com/voice/is-socialism-biblical.html>

inalienable rights to life, liberty, and property, which have set the backdrop for the amazing economic development and progress.

Margaret Thatcher warned that the problem with socialism is that “you eventually run out of other people’s money.”

I have heard it said that socialism truly does usher in equality: equal **misery** for all.

Venezuela's Misery and Socialism

Dr. Anne Bradley, with the Institute for Faith, Work & Economics, identified how *Venezuela Took the Fastest Route to Poverty*, in an article released February 1, 2019.

Eliminating prices and making things free or nearly free is the fastest road to poverty and ruin. Making something free doesn't make it less scarce. It just means we have to find another way to finance those free things.

Printing money to finance the “free things” in Venezuela resulted in hyperinflation. Prices are needed, Bradley defends: “They are powerful market signals. Policies aiming to eliminate them are the surest, quickest way to poverty.”

Frank Vernuccio, in an article posted on January 17, 2019 in The Affluent Investor states that “Venezuela adopted socialism – the very same brand being promoted here in America.” He cites an article at the Mises Institute written by two Venezuelans, who explain this reality:

Ultimately, the lesson we learned is that socialism never, ever works...It was very common during the years we suffered under Hugo Chavez to hear these pundits and economists on TV saying that this time, socialism is being done right. This time, the Venezuelans figured it out. They were, and are wrong.

Socialism is Not Biblically Supported

Having traveled the world, I've witnessed the devastation of socialism and communism. People struggle to overcome barriers that their governments impose and suffer as many of their resources are taken from them. They lose the incentive to work which is contrary to God's plan for us. Inevitably, systems that are centrally controlled are corrupted, leading to widespread economic pain.

Issues like debt, lack of margin, and no motivation arise instead of financial freedom, generosity, and biblical ambition.

The Bible teaches that God gives resources to people, to individuals with private ownership and personal responsibility, and holds them accountable for stewarding these resources. The ability to work and steward our gain is a tremendous privilege in a free society where one can achieve according to their desire to work.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” - Genesis 2:15 (ESV)

In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty. - Proverbs 14:23 (ESV)

If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. - 2 Thessalonians 3:10

A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man. - Proverbs 24:33-34 (ESV)

In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ - Acts 20:35 (ESV)

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. - Colossians 3:23 (ESV)

Work brings dignity and joy. It benefits the family and society, and provides the means of giving to others who cannot work. Economies where individual work and achievement are not rewarded will eventually collapse; dishonesty, greed, pride, and immorality will take over.

Last Thanksgiving, [Jerry Bowyer shared how the pilgrims discovered abundance](#) after a period of socialism and starvation. Decades later, our founding fathers, aware of the destruction caused by unleashed political power, created a limited government based on a constitution. The separation of powers, complete with checks and balances, were an attempt to protect the citizens of America. Private property rights and the freedom to enjoy personal advancement are supported by the [10 Commandments](#).

Although we hear a lot about socialism today, America does not need it. What we need is a return to the Biblical values that support capitalistic freedom governed by transformed hearts in a people that are willing to generously care for their neighbor.

It is easy to say we want *someone else* to care for our neighbor; it is hard to take that responsibility personally. But God said that along with our freedom to prosper is our responsibility to extend kindness by caring and sharing. Taking from others to achieve equality is not the right way or God's way.

Additional Resources

Art Lindsey, “Does Acts 2-5 Teach Socialism?” September 12, 2012. Institute for Faith, Work, and Economics. <https://tifwe.org/resource/does-acts-2-5-teach-socialism/>

Jay W. Richards, *Money, Greed and God – Why Capitalism Is the Solution and Not the Problem*. New York: HarperOne, 2009.

Julie Roys, "5 Reasons Socialism is Not Christian" ChristianPost.com. July 12, 2016.
<https://www.christianpost.com/news/5-reasons-socialism-is-not-christian-opinion.html>

Lisa Smiley, "Socialism Violates the Ten Commandments – A Millennial Explains Why She Could Never be a Socialist" Stream.org. December 21, 2019. <https://stream.org/socialism-violates-ten-commandments/>

CONTENT

As noted by your response to the survey results, socialism is becoming a significant issue in our country, and it is essential that Christians be equipped with what the Bible has to say about it. Today's lesson will explore this important subject following Pastor Glynn's sermon last week entitled, "The Truth About Socialism".

ASK

What were some statements Pastor Glynn made last week which caught your attention?

Thank you for sharing. We will explore many of these points in today's Bible study.

Main Point: the Bible does not support Socialism

Background

To set the stage for our study of what the Scripture has to say about socialism, it is important to review some background on this movement.

Socialism is a political and economic system in which the government, rather than individuals or private companies, own the means of production. Through taxation and redistribution, socialism makes decisions on property, prices, and production and allocates wealth to the people. The basic belief in socialism is that society shares in all goods produced and lives in cooperation with one another.

The most influential philosopher for this idea was Karl Marx. He was born to German Jewish parents in 1818 and earned a doctorate in philosophy by age 23. An atheist, he sought to prove that human identity is tied to a person's work and that economic forces exercise total control over a person. Marx felt that the Industrial Revolution stripped workers of their identity and made them slaves. He identified the downtrodden working class as the "proletariat" and the wealthy business owners as "the bourgeoisie" (boo-shwah-zee').

"According to Marx, the bourgeoisie use and exploit the proletariat with the result that one person's gain is another person's loss. Moreover, Marx believed that the business owners influence lawmakers to ensure their interests are defended over the workers' loss of dignity and rights. Last, Marx felt that religion is the "opiate of the masses," which the rich use to manipulate

the working class; the proletariat is promised rewards in heaven one day if they keep working diligently where God has placed them (subservient to the bourgeoisie).⁵

Marx envisioned an intermediate system of “socialism” in which all the people own everything collectively and work for the common good of humanity. The ultimate goal was “communism”, which would end the ownership of private property by having the state own all means of economic production. When this occurred, Marx believed a person’s identity would be elevated and everyone would value one another and work together for a shared purpose. He thought at that point of utopia the government would no longer be needed, as people would be less selfish.

“The Bible teaches that God gives resources to people, to individuals with private ownership and personal responsibility, and holds them accountable for stewarding these resources. The ability to work and steward our gain is a tremendous privilege in a free society where one can achieve according to their desire to work.”

– Chuck Bentley

One sage put it well; “Ideas have consequences”.

What are some of the consequences to society of following Karl Marx’s philosophy of socialism and communism?

“We don’t need to demonize the recipients of help or assistance, but you’re never going to multiply wealth by dividing it up. Socialism is a scam because it undermines the values of work and the creativity of God.” – Pastor Glynn

The Bible has much to say about socialism. First, it shows the flawed basis for Marx’s theory.

1. Socialism is Based on a Materialistic Worldview

According to socialists, the greatest problem in the world is the unequal distribution of wealth. Marx invented the idea of “dialectical materialism”, a belief that matter contains a creative power within itself. In so doing, he eliminated the need for a Creator. There is no acknowledgment of the spiritual reality of sin, but rather an assumption that salvation comes when everyone receives an equal amount of wealth and all problems in society will vanish.

This directly contradicts Christianity, which teaches that humanity’s greatest problem is spiritual, not material. The cause of suffering is sin, and salvation is found only in the cross of Christ, not in redistributing inequalities in wealth. The quality of life is not determined by the amount of wealth one has, but by the relationship with Christ he or she has.

“Socialism breaks three of the Ten Commandments, beginning with the first commandment: ‘You shall have no other gods before Me’ (Ex 20:3 NKJV)” (see also # 8 Ex. 20:15 and #10 Ex. 20:17) – Pastor Glynn

⁵ “How Should a Christian View Socialism?” GotQuestions.org <https://www.gotquestions.org/socialism-Christian.html>

Marx was incorrect in his conclusion that economic forces drive human history. The Bible teaches that human history is directed by the Creator who control everything in His universe.

Have a volunteer read Daniel 4:17 aloud:

*"This word is by decree of the watchers,
and the decision is by command from the holy ones.
This is so that the living will know
that the Most High is ruler
over human kingdoms.
He gives them to anyone he wants
and sets the lowliest of people over them." (CSB)*

God is the one who controls everything, not economic forces as Marx held.

Have a volunteer read Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 aloud:

¹⁸ *"Here is what I have seen to be good: It is appropriate to eat, drink, and experience good in all the labor one does under the sun during the few days of his life God has given him, because that is his reward. ¹⁹ Furthermore, everyone to whom God has given riches and wealth, he has also allowed him to enjoy them, take his reward, and rejoice in his labor. This is a gift of God, ²⁰ for he does not often consider the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with the joy of his heart."* (CSB)

Not only is God is fully in charge of history, but He also provides each person skills for labor and the wealth that comes from those skills. It is not the government who provides ability to work and wealth that comes from that labor, but God.

How does knowing God is in charge of all things and provides each of us with skills and ability to work make you feel?

2. Socialism Removes God's Rewards and Consequences

Socialists want to distribute wealth to individuals according to their need, regardless of their effort and diligence. Karl Marx wrote, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

When a government provides aid, it removes God-designed rewards and consequences.

- It can punish those who are industrious by making them pay for those who are not.
- It can reward those who aren't industrious by giving them the fruits of another person's labor.

"The problem with socialism is that you eventually run out of other people's money" – Margaret Thatcher

The Bible teaches that responsibility to work is intimately tied to reward and consequence.

Have a volunteer read Proverbs 10:4 and 14:23 aloud:

⁴ “Idle hands make one poor,
but diligent hands bring riches.” Proverbs 10:4 (CSB)

²³ “There is profit in all hard work,
but endless talk leads only to poverty.” Proverbs 14:23 (CSB)

What do these passage teach about God's rewards and consequences? (diligent work is profitable, idleness leads only to poverty)

We have been given a great responsibility to steward what God has given us. And God promises great rewards when we obey Him.

Teacher: read Colossians 3:22b-24 aloud:

^{22b} “ . . . Don’t work only while being watched, as people-pleasers, but work wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people, ²⁴ knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord. You serve the Lord Christ.” Colossians 3:22-24 CSB

Paul was very clear in speaking with the early followers of Christ about their responsibility before God to work.

Have a volunteer read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13 aloud:

⁶ “Now we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from every brother or sister who is idle and does not live according to the tradition received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you should imitate us: We were not idle among you; ⁸ we did not eat anyone’s food free of charge; instead, we labored and toiled, working night and day, so that we would not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ It is not that we don’t have the right to support, but we did it to make ourselves an example to you so that you would imitate us. ¹⁰ In fact, when we were with you, this is what we commanded you: “If anyone isn’t willing to work, he should not eat.” ¹¹ For we hear that there are some among you who are idle. They are not busy but busybodies. ¹² Now we command and exhort such people by the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and provide for themselves. ¹³ But as for you, brothers and sisters, do not grow weary in doing good.” (CSB)

What does Paul have to say about the responsibility the Thessalonians had to work?

- v-7 They should imitate Paul’s example
- v-8 Paul labored and toiled night and day
- v-10 if someone does not work, he should not eat

- v-12 Paul commanded them to work quietly and provide for themselves

"The church nor the government should subsidize irresponsibility" – Tony Evans

Paul went so far as to say that a Christian who did not do this was a very poor example of the faith.

Have a volunteer read 1 Timothy 5:8 aloud:

⁸ But if anyone does not provide for his own family, especially for his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (CSB)

"Unlike what we see in failed experiments in socialism, the Bible honors work and teaches that individuals are responsible to support themselves."⁶

When the church did dispense assistance to those with needs, it rewarded virtue. Paul said a widow was not to receive aid unless she was "well known for good works" (1 Timothy 5:10, CSB). The bottom line is that virtue was to be rewarded and vice discouraged. This is the complete opposite of socialism.⁷

Not only does socialism not take into account God's rule and remove the rewards and consequences He has built into humanity, the crown of His creation, but thirdly socialism actually promotes stealing.

"Work brings dignity and joy. It benefits the family and society and provides the means of giving to others who cannot work. Economies where individual work and achievement are not rewarded will eventually collapse; dishonesty, greed, pride, and immorality will take over." – Chuck Bentley

3. Socialism Promotes Stealing

⁶ "How Should a Christian View Socialism?" GotQuestions.org <https://www.gotquestions.org/socialism-Christian.html>

⁷ Julie Roys, "5 Reasons Socialism is Not Christian" ChristianPost.com. July 12, 2016. <https://www.christianpost.com/news/5-reasons-socialism-is-not-christian-opinion.html>

Socialism ultimately does not believe in private property. This is contrary to Scripture, which categorically affirms theft of someone's "stuff" is wrong. The eighth commandment plainly states, "Do not steal" (Exodus 20:15; Deuteronomy 5:19 CSB). This commandment presupposes that people can lawfully possess items for their own personal use in response to God's direction in their lives.⁸

"Socialism suppresses the poor, steals from the rich, and legislates theft, and elevates envy" – Jack Graham

A politician once explained socialist policies to a little girl this way, "We've got to make sure that people who have more money help the people who have less money. If you had a whole pizza, and your friend had no pizza, would you give him a slice?"

This does have a ring of compassion to it. How would you respond to the politician?

While this sounds empathetic and Christian, it is actually theft. It is one thing to voluntarily offer someone's possessions to another in need as guided by conscience, but quite another for a government to step in and take part of my pizza from me and offer it to someone else.⁶

In closing, let's examine a passage which is often used to suggest that socialism has Christian roots.

Have a volunteer read Acts 2:41-27 aloud

⁴¹ So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them. ⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. ⁴⁵ They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved." (CSB)

This is a wonderful snapshot of the life of the early church after Peter's first sermon in Jerusalem following which three thousand people received Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Some have used this passage to claim that socialism is distinctly Christian in its roots.

"The Bible does not endorse any one political system. But every Christian generation has a responsibility to stand for truth, live righteously, and protect the pillars of our foundation which our nation's freedoms rest upon."
– Pastor Glynn

What about this passage might suggest socialism was being practiced? (shared everything in common, sold their possession, distributed the proceeds to all as any had need)

⁸ Lisa Smiley, "Socialism Violates the Ten Commandments – A Millennial Explains Why She Could Never be a Socialist" Stream.org. December 21, 2019. <https://stream.org/socialism-violates-ten-commandments/>

Based on our study today, what is different about the early church and socialism? (voluntarily and joyfully gave, led by the Spirit, great joy in serving Christ through offering aid)

The love of these followers of Christ expressed in abundant generosity to voluntarily meet needs was simply amazing. However, what took place at that time was distinct from what socialism holds:

- The early believers did not sell all their possessions
- The sharing was voluntary, not forced
- This was not a permanent practice but a temporary measure to meet needs
- The books of Acts is descriptive, not prescriptive - it describes what the believers were doing, but does not prescribe what we ought to do. We must not conclude the imperative (*all Christians should do this*) from the indicative (*some early Christians did this*)? All narrative passages like this must be interpreted in light of didactic (i.e, teaching) passages (as in the epistles of Paul, Peter, John, James, and Jude).

REFLECT

What new thing has God brought to your attention this morning as you consider the truth about socialism?

“Socialism is the philosophy of failure, the creed of ignorance, and the gospel of envy” – Winston Churchill

RESPOND

Share this challenge with your Connect Group...

As you begin to gain insight through the ***Living With Limits*** sermon series, pray that God will continue to speak wisdom to you through His Word, the messages from Pastor Glynn, and the teaching/discussions.

Stay diligent in reading over the passages throughout the week and spend time reflecting on the words and their meaning.

Pastor Glynn's sermon points on why “The Truth About Socialism”

1. Socialism limits your freedom to worship God.
2. Socialism leads to the destruction of the family
3. Socialism lessens the dignity of mankind
4. Socialism leads to misery, disease, famine, and death