

Some Socialists Claim Jesus, But What Does the Bible Say?

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SUMMARY

The discussion argues that Jesus was not a socialist, emphasizing that socialism involves state control and coercion, which contradicts Jesus' teachings on personal responsibility and charity. The speakers assert that Jesus advocated for individual initiative and voluntary charity rather than government redistribution of wealth.

- *Jesus never suggested using government force to address societal issues, contrasting with socialist principles.*
- *The concept of socialism is often misunderstood, with many associating it with compassion rather than its actual implications of state power.*
- *Jesus emphasized personal responsibility in helping the poor, rather than delegating that responsibility to the government.*
- *Key parables, such as the Good Samaritan and the Parable of the Talents, illustrate the importance of individual initiative and the ethical use of resources.*
- *The parable of the workers in the vineyard highlights the value of private property and voluntary contracts, opposing socialist redistribution.*
- *Many young people today have a favorable view of socialism, often due to misconceptions about its intentions versus its outcomes.*
- *The speakers argue that capitalism, through freedom and free markets, has historically done more to help the poor than socialist systems.*

was Jesus a socialist well the answer is absolutely no and of course much depends upon uh how you define socialism some people have a mistaken view that it's just uh an innocent uh but strongly held compassion for poor people lots of people have that of all kinds of political and economic views socialism is the concentration of power in the hands of the state for the purpose of achieving objectives like the central planning of an economy or government

ownership of the means of production or redistribution of wealth all of that rests upon the use of force there is not a single passage anywhere in the words of Jesus that suggests he would call in the government uh and its political power its use of force to solve any problem he never uh once suggested that the way to fix a problem is to rob Peter to pay Paul or trust yeah exactly yeah the he knew them both

or to trust politicians to plan an economy I mean that's so alien to his entire message at the same time I wouldn't say he was a capitalist either he to limit him to those words that didn't even come into existence for another 18800 years after the crucifixion is to limit Jesus to but a fraction of who he was um but was he friendly to the ethics and the economics of freedom and free markets yeah I think

totally U and very um opposed to the ethics and the economics of what we call socialism today you've given the conclusion and now we are going to we are going to walk through it okay and and the reason I think that's important is multifold so one is if you look at polls today and I'm I know you look at these things a substantial amount of young people believe that they have a positive view of not just the word

socialism but even communism which used to be a word that was very much out of favor after the fall of the Soviet Union and all of the other sort of murderous communist societies that we as a species experimented with in the 20th century ma China you know Cambodia we still have North Korea kicking around starving its people every year but I think it it's over 25% of gen Z when asked in these

polls if they favor if they think communism is a good idea or if they a positive or negative view they say positive yeah and I wonder how much of that is about a belief in what those words mean when it comes to am I being a good person am I caring yeah do I care about others and I think that so that's one group of people that I think deserves to hear what you've got in your

book and what you've spent your life working on the other group I think are people a lot of whom I think you know are Watchers of this show yeah who who are deeply devout Christians mhm and who see business and capitalism they view it with a certain amount of skepticism and uh Say Hey I want to be a good person I follow my Christian faith and I'm I'm being told including by this Pope Pope Francis that business is greedy and

markets are bad and sort of immorally corrosive and so I'm for the values of sort of Christianity but when you talk start talking about business and marketing I'm like ah no I don't know about that yeah I'm deeply skeptical especially big business but maybe a business more broadly so let's start to break this down for me like what you know didn't Jesus like flip the tables over and you know hate on the money changers you know

I I brought you in as a Protestant because as a Catholic I need you to explain the Bible passages because we don't read it that's for another day but yeah uh Jesus certainly over turned the the tables of the money changers but he did it at the temple and that's the house of God he never uh drove away the money changers from a bank or from a Marketplace uh this was not the place to be doing the things that they were doing

and presumably they may even have been disrupting services or at least entry to the to to God's house but when when looking at socialism I think there's a lot of sympathy for it because people are judging it by its stated intentions not by its actual results they're night and day uh because in terms of intentions you know socialists often speak of helping the poor being compassionate doing good for others thinking of others instead of yourself you know those things sound appealing to

a lot of people but it all comes down to how are you going to accomplish that and the fact is that under what we would call capitalism freedom and free markets uh far more gets done for the poor uh and those who need special attention for various reasons handicaps or whatever far more gets done for them under capitalism than is ever being done under socialism uh and Jesus did tell us that we should uh consider the poor and to do

what we can to help them but if he came back today and asked an audience okay what did you do for the poor I told you to pay attention to them what what did you do he would not be impressed if you raised your hand and said well I just voted for the politicians who said they take care of that he wanted to know what are you going to do if you stood up in that audience and said uh to Jesus that

well I built a company and I hired lots of people who didn't have such opportunities before or if you stood up and said I invented things that that uh saved lives lengthened lives I think he would be immensely proud of you but he wouldn't be proud if you said I just foed the responsibility of the poor onto somebody else you defined socialism as you know essentially State ownership of the means of production more or less concentration of power and that's one of

the objectives of course yes the Socialist the self-described Socialist would would take exception with to that description at least when it comes to power and they would say no I am for power being centered with working people yeah and that it's democracy that gives the power to the people and that what we need to have is economic democra that that's what we want we want the people to be able to decide through their vote

which they all have equally because you know one man one vote one person one vote but I think that is like the yeah ethos yeah and prob and the argument no I'm not for I don't think Bernie Sanders would say that he was for a centralized power no but what Bernie Sanders does not understand is that if you in the name of democratic socialism go down that path you'll soon find yourself uh uh at least you'll find the social

socialist objectives that you have at war with the Democratic objectives because the more you trust the government to run the economy to own the means of production uh to uh all the things that socialists want the government to do uh the more that tends to uh not only concentrate power but it leads to uh corruption I can think of no more toxic motivator than the desire for power to push other people around take their stuff redistribute it and then

remind people at election time that it was you that gave them something that's inherently corrupt and we've had many such experiments in so-called Democratic socialism and they all end up the same I mean Britain went down that path after World War II I mean it retained its Democratic political institutions but followed a socialist economic path and barely 30 years later you had Margaret Thatcher coming to power saying we are the sick man of Europe we've got to undo

some of this that is a pattern that's been repeated over and over and over again you have to get rid of the uh the high sounding intentions and look at actually what a proposed system will do what does it do what's its track record and socialism is a pretty sorry record I want to dig into the specifics of why and how that is even a lot in this conversation but before we do I actually want to come back to the words of Christ

help me understand how we could have a culture and have like a meme yeah that Jesus was a socialist yeah that to be Christian is to believe in um social justice and equity and all of these things that they all sound nice they're all beautifully branded yeah what are the things that people derive from Christ that they misunderstand to be

socialistic you know so often John I find uh in talking to people who think that Jesus was

sympathetic to socialism I find they really haven't read much of the Bible I mean if they did they would find for instance in the Book of Luke uh Luke 12:1-15 a man approaches Jesus with a request to redistribute wealth he said which is a socialist objective he says Master speak to my brother that he divideth The Inheritance with me and Jesus does not respond by saying Oh you mean you didn't get as much oh we don't

have equality here let me do something about that no he looks at the man and he says man who made me a judge or divider over you H now I mean that's power ful that's he's basically saying what you want me to take from some and give to others or take from some guy your brother and give to you I mean who made me a judge or devoter and he's the son of God uh I think too they not looking

at some of the Parables that Jesus uh told he told almost 40 Parables three are very strongly economic in content and they make no case for a socialist arrangement of the economy you have the the parable of the Good Samaritan yeah when a man is walking along a road he comes across another who's been beaten and robbed and clearly needs help and what does the man do he helps him and we call him the Good Samaritan not because

he said to the man there must be a government program for you or I'll put a word in for you with the emperor but instead he pitches in with his own resources and of his own free will he helps the man he doesn't do anything that's remotely socialistic he does it himself through his own initiative that's why he's called the Good Samaritan he would be known as the good for nothing Samaritan If he if he said

you know there's got to be a government program for you and again I think you could maybe say well it's an ethos of Charity right but it was never charity at gunpoint Jesus never advocated charity by gunpoint it should come from the heart he was interested in what's in your heart not what you are willing to foist on to somebody else as a responsibility um he told the parable of the talents which I think is even more

powerfully antisocial and in this Parable he has an estate owner who's about to leave for a period of time he gathers three of his employees together gives them each a different quantity of his wealth and he says when I come back we'll see what you've done with it and Jesus has the estate owner come back and gather the same three guys and he says the first guy what you do with what I trusted you with and he says oh you'll be happy with

me I'm paraphrasing I have just what you gave me I didn't lose anything and uh the estate owner criticizes him he says what you didn't do anything with it you didn't magnify it in any way ah then he goes to the second guy says what you do and the guy says I magnified it by making the right Investments and now I have four or five times what you trusted me with he's praised in the parable the third guy has

like 10 times as much he's was even a wiser investor and and Jesus has the estate owner issuing the greatest praise to him and then going one step further saying let's take the money from this first guy this freeloader who

didn't do anything with it and give it to the third guy because he knows how to magnify wealth you'd never have a socialist uh say anything like that this just reminds me of this this concept right that you know uh from each

according to his ability to each according to his need so that's Parable what you're laying out there in the Bible that says no if you have ability you should have you should actually be given more resources and responsibility it's the exact opposite yeah how does that square with the concept of Charity or selflessness that that I think is again I'm Catholic so I can't yeah quote the I can't quote the Bible like that like you can but I mean at least now you can read

it I can read it I can read it but I went to 12 years of Catholic school and the couple things that came out of that were well God is love uhhuh pretty awesome pretty simple and you know love your neighbor as yourself among other things and I know there is something that that Christ does say right which is how you treat the least of us is how is it is you treating me I when you help

another person you are helping me that is me that that you're helping and so that is an ethos of Charity and of giving yeah not of maximizing return on investment um right well you know quite often in a free economy or capitalist economy the way to maximize your return is to serve customers to to have an ever increasing number of people who say thanks for what you did you made my life better uh I'll buy from you another time

uh so there's nothing inherently incompatible with the creation and enjoyment of wealth and helping those in need Jesus did Advocate it for the charitable impulse but he never said the way to accomplish it is to employ the politicians to do it instead of you uh to do it at gunpoint uh it was always a gesture that one he encourage one and everyone to engage in it but from the heart and with their own resources he

never said anything like vote for the politicians who will do it and relieve you of that responsibility you said there was three Parables that are especially powerful in this regard what's the third uh the third is the parable of the workers in the vineyard and this involves a man who owns apparently a large estate of of grapes it's harvest time and uh he gathers a group of workers together early in a day and he says if you each go out and work

the fields I'll give you a Denarius uh which was a Roman coin uh at the end of the day and so they go off to work and around noon time the owner realizes he's got to get more people out in the field so he brings another group together and he says if you'll work the remainder of the day I'll give you a daus and then finally with maybe an hour to go before dark he hires his last

group of workers and offers them the same for effectively an hour of work and then in this Parable Jesus uh has the estate owner Gathering all the workers uh to be paid and as you might imagine the first group is grumbling they're saying what we worked all day and we got the same as the guys who showed up for an hour and um here's an opportunity for Jesus to make a socialist point but he doesn't what he does is he has the

estate owner say to the workers it's my money it's my money and then he goes on to say didn't I give you what I promised didn't uh I meet the terms of our contract of course I did and get out of here scram yeah so I think that is a a defense by way of a parable of things like private property uh because the owner said this is my money and we agreed to it you it's a defense of the

rights to untary contract and I think probably a defense of supply and demand because presumably at the end of the day to get some people who may have already put in somewhere else for they yeah to get them to come out he had to pay them more so there's nothing socialistic about that whatever it's speaks to free enterprise if you like this clip we've got so much more where that came from so be sure to hit that like button

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