

## **The Bible and Economic Policy: God's Biblical Plan for Government, Economics, and Charity**

Currently, discussion rages in the US about economic policy. Christians point to various verses to support their view on economics and poverty. What if we forgot all about current policies and took a fresh view of what the Bible says about government, economics, justice, and charity. This talk attempts to do just that.

### I. Intro

- A. We have a lot of disagreements now about what as a country and world should be going about government and economics right now.
- B. Christians from both side argue using the bible, but most reference verses they like and ignore others.
- C. Goal is to discover what the Bible says about government, economics, and charity, and incorporate all verses into a coherent idea.
- D. It is not to say exactly what should be done, that is other talk, although I will touch on this
- E. As you evaluate this talk, focus on the stated goal, not whether I said what you want.
- F. Everyone has a bias, including me, but my goal is to set aside my biases and take a fresh look at what the Bible says.
- G. This will be an ambitious talk, and will really serve just as an intro to many other subjects. So I won't deal with your favorite topic as deeply as you want, or be as specific as you want. Feel free to ask questions in the Q&A.

### II. Old Testament vs New Testament

- A. Many laws in the OT were for the Hebrews only.
- B. Gentiles need not follow the Jewish Law, Acts 15
- C. Some seem more universal
- D. Which is which?
- E. Some commands are reiterated in the NT.

### III. Government

- A. In old testament, ideal government is minimal
- B. Judges, Exodus 18:13-27
  - Judge
    - 2 or 3 witnesses required for serious crimes. Deuteronomy 17:6, 19:15
    - Prophet (Moses, Samuel, Gideon)
    - Military leader (Joshua, Gideon, Deborah)
- C. The Mosaic Law
  - The Ten Commandments, Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5
  - Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

Justice, Exodus 21-23  
Religious Observance, Exodus 23-30, Leviticus 1-7,  
Numbers 15, 28  
Unclean Animals, Infectious Disease, Leviticus 11-15  
Holidays, Leviticus 16, 23; Deuteronomy 16  
Boundaries of the Promised Land, Numbers 34, Joshua 12-21  
Forbidden Practices, Leviticus 20, Deuteronomy 14  
Law is enforced by the victims friends and relatives.  
Tithing: Leviticus 27:30-32, Numbers 18:21

D. Samuel's warning about Kings, I Samuel 8:7-8, I Samuel 8:11-18

E. NT: obey the government, but obey God first.

1. Jesus and Taxes, Luke 20:21-26

2. Bear the Sword, Romans 13:1-7

F. The Kingdom of God

A very valuable thing, Matthew 13:44-46

Difficult to obtain, Matthew 19:24, John 3:3

A slow yet exponentially growing thing, Mark 4:30-32, Luke 19:11

The Kingdom of God is here! Mark 1:5, Luke 10:8-10, Luke 17:20-22

Kingdom of God meant to exist in any country, under any government, at any time.

The Book of Daniel, Daniel 3:16-18

G. America is unique, we are the government and we can and should exercise our rights.

#### IV. Justice

We are commanded to be just, Micah 6:8, Hosea 6:6

Many commands in the OT not to cheat others: Leviticus 19:13-14,

Leviticus 19:15-16, Leviticus 19:33-34, Exodus 22:21-24,

Deuteronomy 24:6, Proverbs 17:15, Proverbs 6:16-19

Cities of refuge, Numbers 35, Deuteronomy 19

Relatives enforce the law against murderers.

#### V. Poverty

A. Sabbath year/Jubilee

Leviticus 25, Leviticus 26

In the Jubilee year, all land property is returned to the original family. Lev 25:10

Land sales must be in proportion to the value of the land for the remaining years before Jubilee. Lev 25:14

The land belongs to God, not you. You're just borrowing it. Lev 25:23-24

In the year before a Sabbath or Jubilee year, the land will produce 3x it's normal crop. Lev 25:20-22. Faith is required to keep this law!

If someone is poor and has to sell their land, and a kinsman redeemer wants to buy it back, you must sell it back at the fair market value, prorated for the remaining years until Jubilee. Lev 25:25-28

Jewish slaves are set free every Sabbath year. Exodus 21:2, Lev 25:41-42, Jeremiah 34:14

- B. Gleaning, Deuteronomy 24:19-22
- C. Indentured servitude, Exodus 21:2-6
- D. Generosity is commanded  
Exodus 20:5-6, Leviticus 25:35-36, 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, James 1:27  
Study shows that money does lead to happiness, but it's not the money you keep, it's the money you give away
- E. Don't be wasteful. I Timothy 5:1-16, Poverty, Inc.
- F. Taking care of yourself is commanded, Ephesians 4:28, 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12
- G. Take care of those who can't take care of themselves, Ephesians 4:28
- H. No government involvement in charity or taking care of the poor.

## VI. Slavery

- A. God hates slavery, Genesis 15:13-14, Lev 26:13, 2 Peter 2:19, Exodus 3:7, Deuteronomy 5:15, Deuteronomy 6:21, Deuteronomy 6:21, Deuteronomy 15:15, Deuteronomy 16:12, Deuteronomy 24:22
- B. Slavery is usually indentured servitude, Exodus 21:2-6
- C. Words for "slave" are *ebed* and *amah*.  
Most translations are "servant" (93%). "Slave" is 7%.
- D. Jewish slaves must be released every 7 years. Exodus 21:2, Lev 25:41-42, Jeremiah 34:14
- E. Runaway slaves must not be returned to their owner, Deut 23:15-16.
- F. In the case of serious injury, the slave must be released: Exodus 21:26-27
- G. Foreigners can be kept as slaves permanently and sold as property.
- H. Slaves must not be abused, and do not work on the Sabbath, Exodus 23:1
- I. Slavery in the New Testament, Colossians 3:22-4:1, Philemon 1:15-16
- J. Slave Bible  
80% of OT and 50% of NT removed  
Removed: Galatians 3:28, There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.  
Exodus 21:16, Anyone who kidnaps someone is to be put to death, whether the victim has been sold or is still in the kidnapper's possession.  
Deut 23, 15 If a slave has taken refuge with you, do not hand them over to their master. 16 Let them live among you wherever they like and in whatever town they choose. Do not oppress them.  
Retained, Ephesians 6:5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ,"

K. If God hates, slavery, why did He allow it? Matthew 19:8

VII. General principles

- A. Freedom of religion
- B. Freedom from bondage
- C. Freedom from sin
- D. Be fair
- E. Be generous

VIII. What should we do?

A. Cornelius: How should I live? Not asked to stop being a soldier

B. Be a citizen of the Kingdom of God

Wisdom and courage

Read the entire book of Proverbs!

Daniel 3:16-18

Proverbs 25:26

Like a trampled spring and a polluted well,

So is a righteous person who gives way before the wicked.

C. Stay connected to God

Pray

Read the Bible

Be in Community

Obey Jesus' Commands, John 15

D. Book of Daniel

Support the government

Obey God!

"Live not by Lies"

Rod Dreher

Speak the truth, but only do so with love.

Do not agree with lies.

E. Be generous