

Nathan Rambeck

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Preacher: Nathan Rambeck

[0 : 00] Well, Pastor Marv asked me to share this morning, and in thinking about what to share, you know, one of the things Pastor Marv was talking about this morning is that our nation is in a lot of upheaval right now, and, you know, it's not like our nation has never been in upheaval, but right now it seems especially concentrated, and there's a lot going on. So I thought, hey, let's talk about some of these issues that are at the forefront of what's going on in our nation, and so this morning I'd like to talk about an issue that, you know, many people is, in a lot of ways, is political, but something that the Bible speaks about, and that's this whole concept of socialism. Socialism, it's becoming more popular kind of idea today, especially among younger people coming out of universities. It's an idea that has been tried in many places across the world throughout the last few hundred years at least, and has been experimented with to do a great deal here in America.

And, you know, some people say, well, should you really talk about political issues at church? And there's a saying, right, you should never talk about two things in polite company, never talk about religion or politics. And we just blow both of those away here at church, right? This really isn't polite company, right? But when the Bible speaks about something, we shouldn't ignore it, right? We should be able to see what the Bible says, see what God has to say about any issue facing us individually or our nation or whatever it might be, our family.

And the Bible is a sufficient guide to our lives. The Word of God is sufficient for everything that we might face in life. And some things the Bible addresses very explicitly, directly, and other things it just provides wisdom for us to use to address anything, to think through anything going on in our lives. The Bible talks a lot about family and relationships, about economics and finances.

But it even speaks about things about states and power and human rights and criminal justice as well. And we should be able to look to the Bible and find answers for any issues that we might face. And there's some people that specifically would, let's say, bully churches, right, into avoiding certain issues because they don't really like what the Bible has to say about those issues. And so it's easy to try to bully churches and say, well, you know, you shouldn't talk about those things because of, um, uh, for whatever reason. Uh, but we don't, we don't like people to bully us, do we? Um, and I think that understanding socialism and, um, the ideas, the fundamental ideas behind it and how we ought to think about issues of, quote, economic justice or however you might label it, uh, is not just important for how we vote, even though that might be one way that we use that knowledge and how we think about it, but also just our everyday lives. And I hope to get a little bit into that and try to broaden the topic a little bit beyond just, you know, voting for our leaders and things like that.

[3 : 34] Uh, so first is, you know, this, just this idea of socialism. What is it? And, you know, sometimes I don't know that people know. I, I've over the years talked to co-workers and friends about it and a lot of times there's just not really agreement, but, uh, the idea is, is that, um, there is a benefit if the, uh, if the community as a whole owns things and decides what to do with all of our stuff, whether it be your land, your house, your money, um, and that if we allow too much freedom for people to do whatever they want with their stuff, then we can have all kinds of problems. And so advocates of socialism say, hey, the, um, the best way to, uh, resolve this, uh, because can, because can, is it possible for people to do bad things with money? Is it possible for people to make bad decisions or even use wealth money to, uh, to do things that are criminal or harmful to others? It certainly is, right? And so, uh, to those who promote this idea of socialism, the idea is, well, if we, if we can get the community as a whole to be the owner or at least the regulator of things, um, then we can solve these problems. Um, one of the, uh, kind of categories, um, is this idea of really that socialism is justice, that, um, it's a matter of justice, uh, because if you allow certain people, individuals to hoard too much wealth, then, uh, that's a, an issue of justice because in some people's minds anyway, if my neighbor has a lot of stuff, then that means there's less for me, right?

Uh, that's kind of a common mindset, uh, that people have, um, if, uh, there's a, uh, for people who think about this, economists, um, people who try to educate people against the ideas of communism, this is an idea called a fixed pie fallacy. Anybody ever heard of that? It's the idea that, uh, wealth and money is just this fixed pie. There's this pool of money and resources in the world. And the more you have, that means there's less for me. And so obviously if you have a lot of it, then that means there's less for me and all my other neighbors. And so for some people, this really is an idea of, of justice. We need to kind of, um, be the arbiters of justice, which really is the government's job, right? The state's job is to uphold justice. And so for some in their mind, this is an idea of justice.

Um, the other is, uh, through the means of socialism, we can be a helping hand to those in need, right? And who can possibly be against that, right? You have people who are needy, they have needs, that they have trouble meeting. And, um, is it really a bad thing to help provide for the needs of others? And so these are the kinds of ideas that kind of come into play when we're talking about, uh, this idea of socialism. Uh, even, um, Proverbs, right? You read in the Bible, you open up the Bible, and what does it say in Proverbs 21? It says, whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be heard. The Bible is a huge advocate, right, of helping to meet the needs of the, those who are needy, those who are weak. Uh, and we certainly should. Uh, there's an idea that, uh, and the term capitalism is thrown around a lot and kind of thrown around with derision. And, um, capitalism is, it's a fun word to kind of, uh, uh, attack, I guess. But again, a lot of people don't know what it means. Um, I remember I worked for a newspaper years ago. And, uh, we know that newspapers, you know, have a lot of, uh, they really promote free market principles and that kind of thing in general, right? Okay, I got to chuckle. Um, but, uh, you know, working, uh, uh, with, uh, the tech, I helped, uh, build newspaper websites, uh, years ago. And, um, was talking to a friend, and he despised capitalism. And I said, well, you know, what, what is capitalism in your mind? And he went on and on and all kinds of things. It's rich people kind of oppressing the poor. And I said, well, I'm certainly against that. But, um, but really talked about, well, capitalism is the right to own your own property. I said, are you against that? He said, well, I'm not against that. So there's a lot of confusion around what that is. And really what, when I talk to people about this issue, I like to try to avoid that term. Does anybody know who coined the term capitalism? Anybody? There's a guy named Karl Marx. He wrote a book called Das Kapital. And, uh, he coined the term capitalism. So that was his kind of invention. Um, and if you know anything about Karl Marx, he was one of the main propagators of the ideas of communism and socialism and those ideas. And, um, so I try to avoid that term. It's, there's a lot of ambiguity to what it means.

Not that it's wrong or anything to use that word, but word, but I prefer the term freedom, prefer freedom and a free market, um, rather than capitalism. So does the Bible have anything to say about this? Uh, I think it does. And I think it's pretty clear and sometimes maybe more clear than we think. Um, I think one of the questions that we have to answer when it comes to this topic is, do individuals like you and I have a right to own our own property that belongs to us, that doesn't belong to a community? Is, do we have that right?

[10:06] Uh, does the Bible speak anywhere about property rights? And, uh, you know, there, when you look through the Bible, the Bible typically doesn't speak in terms of rights necessarily. That's kind of a more, kind of a modern approach to looking at things. But that idea is there. And the idea isn't there in some obscure passage in the 93rd chapter of Hezekiah. Um, the fundamental idea of our human right to own property is found in a common passage that most people, even non-Christians, know and understand. How many people in the world have heard of the Ten Commandments?

Lots, right? You don't have to be a Christian to have heard the Ten Commandments. And there's four, there's one of the shortest commandments in the Bible, or one of the shortest in the Ten Commandments, um, says this, four simple words, you shall not steal.

So simple. So simple. You don't have to have a degree in Hebrew to understand what that means, right? You don't have to look into, uh, your, uh, commentaries and try to figure out what that means. Uh, it's a simple idea. It's not even a controversial idea on the face of it, right? How many of our, um, you know, neighbors who, who aren't Bible believers would disagree that, you know, well, that's, that's something bad that's in the Bible, the idea that you should not steal. Almost no one, right? So it's a, it's an accepted idea, um, but it provides this, a concept that people have a right to

own property. And so there's, uh, the Bible typically, like I said, does not speak in terms of human rights, but it does speak to those ideas typically in the concepts of laws. And when you have laws, those laws defend what? They usually defend a human right. So the law you shall not steal is a defense of the right that each of us has to own property. Uh, the, and that doesn't apply to just, uh, stealing and, uh, and property rights. Um, you shall not steal is a right to property.

Also in the Ten Commandments, you shall not murder. And that speaks to a right as well, doesn't it? We call that the right to life. We have a right to life because the Bible says you shall not murder. [12:59] And it's not just individuals that have rights or at least not, um, also parents have rights, don't they? Well, I know that that's kind of up for, uh, up for debate these days that parents have rights.

But there's another, another commandment that speaks to parental rights, doesn't it? And what is that commandment? You shall honor your mother and your father. And so that speaks to the rights that parents have to have authority over their children.

Um, there's a lot going, you know, a lot of things going on, not just in the U.S., but also in the world. There's the U.N. has their, I forget the name, but some kind of convention on the rights of the child. And really, it's just a covert way to remove parental authority, to take away parents' authority over the lives of their children.

And we can debate about why they would do that, but, um, parents have a right to have authority over their children, to discipline, to inculcate, um, their values and, uh, their ideas into their children. And a lot of people don't like that. Um, but the Bible speaks to this directly.

[14:21] We have the right, as parents, to have authority over our children. Also in the Ten Commandments, you shall have no other god before me.

That's a law that speaks also to another right. Now, this isn't a human right, but it's a, you might call it a divine right.

It's a right that God has. God has the right to be the sole object of our worship. That's His right. He's our creator.

And so we have this law that we should worship the Lord and Him only. And it's because He has a right to our worship, to our affection. There's a lot of people that don't like that as well, right?

In fact, in a lot of times, there is a, uh, an opposition between, uh, religion, specifically Christianity, but religion in general, and states, right?

[15:23] Because religion typically points to God as the object of our affection. And a lot of times, states and governments, they would prefer that for themselves. Back to, um, that job that I had.

I worked for the Augusta Chronicle. And we moved the family down to Georgia for, for, uh, six months. And, uh, oh boy, was that, uh, there were, there were, uh, lots of interesting ideas that, that, uh, came across there, uh, working for that newspaper.

It was actually many newspapers, but uh, I overheard a conversation one day. And it was two guys talking, and they were, they were talking about this concept of being able to own your own land.

And, uh, what a horrible idea it was. The community should own the land, not individuals. And it's a horrible idea to allow individuals to own land.

And as I was listening, one of the guys said, um, you know, really, this whole idea that individuals should own land has only been around for a couple hundred years.

[16:32] And I don't know if you know this, but America is fairly unique in this idea of individuals owning land. In many countries across the world, uh, that doesn't exist. Private ownership of land does not exist.

Um, and even here in America, you know, we kind of pay rent to, for the land that we, we quote, own. But that's another, uh, uh, that's another bunny trail.

And so I, I couldn't help myself. I had to interject. And so I said, hey guys, I heard you talking about, you know, this idea that individuals have the right to own land.

And it's, you know, fairly new. I said, have you guys ever heard of the Bible? And, uh, you know, they looked at me kind of funny. I said, there was this guy named Moses. And he wrote this law 4,000 years ago, long time ago.

And he said, and, uh, that it was against the law for you to move your neighbor's property marker.

[17:36] And they were shocked. They had never heard of such a thing. Um, but that was, that's one of the things, right, in the scriptures that God gave to the Israelites. Um, and let's see, I think I've, I thought I had it written down.

Yeah, Deuteronomy 19, 14. And then even in Proverbs, it says, do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set.

And, you know, I, I don't know, maybe this is less common today. But when you own land, you, you, you want to have some kind of way to figure out the difference between, or the boundary line between your land and your neighbors.

Because you don't want to necessarily farm your neighbor's land for him, right? Uh, and vice versa. So, you know, back in the day, you'd find some big boulder.

And really, even today, right? Uh, have, does anybody here have, like, some big boulder on their land that marks, you know, one corner or whatever? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Even today, we have these markers that, that set what the boundaries of our property is.

[18 : 49] And you can imagine that, uh, somebody who is sneaky and, uh, corrupt might get up in the middle of the night.

Especially if, you know, it's just grass and fields. You don't have a lot of other boundary markers. You just have a stone. They might get up in the middle of the night. You know, get a bunch of men together.

You know, go there, pick up a stone. You know, and, and move it 200 yards, uh, you know, maybe towards their neighbor's property. And in doing so, what are they doing?

They're increasing their land plot. And what? They're stealing from their neighbor. And, um, that was something that was forbidden.

And we know from that, because of that law, that your neighbor, he has a right to his own property. Property is not community-owned.

[19 : 43] Property is owned by individuals. And God created us specifically to own things privately. We know, and we'll talk about this in a second, things break, the world breaks, when we try to have this community ownership of things.

So most people are pretty clear on the idea and agree with the idea as far as individuals not stealing.

Because, you know, when somebody comes into your house, you know, they take your television or your computer or something valuable, everybody has a gut reaction to that.

Hey, that's mine, right? But there's this idea that as long as we can get together as a community together, and if we all agree as a community to take our neighbor's things, then that's okay.

But is that true? Or does you shall not steal apply regardless of how many people decide that we're going to steal from our neighbor? And then, of course, sometimes it's difficult to understand stealing.

[21 : 04] Sometimes, it's really easy when, and the Bible talks sometimes about donkeys and cattle and flocks and vineyards. And so when it's physical things that are easy to see, it's a lot easier to understand that you're taking my things from me and you're taking them for yourself.

But as economies become more complex, it's harder to see when somebody's stealing things from their neighbor. And so it's easy to kind of get muddled in what that means.

So we talked about what the Bible says about this human right that we have as individuals to own property. But another issue, and so that addresses the issue of justice.

It's actually an injustice, right, to take property from our neighbor and use it for some other means. But let's talk about what the Bible has to say about charity.

Because we all agree that charity is good. We should give to our neighbor. We should help people in need. In Acts 20, verse 35, the Bible even teaches, I have shown you in every way by laboring like this, Paul's talking, that you must support the weak.

[22 : 34] So we ought to support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus that he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Those who advocate socialism do so a lot of times with a good heart.

We want to help people. But one of the things we actually do when we're using the force of the state or the community, as some people like to call it, we actually remove and take away people's ability to give, don't we?

Because if you force someone to give, are they giving? No. Force and voluntary giving, those are two very separate things.

So when we force someone to give, we're actually removing from them, taking away their ability to be charitable, to be giving.

And the Bible, we'll read this in 2 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 9, verse 7. Paul's talking about giving. He's just talking about giving as a church to those who are in need.

[23 : 58] And he says this, each one must give as he has decided in his heart. So giving is something that you decide from your own heart, not something that somebody decides for you.

Not reluctantly, so you should be willing, nor with compulsion. You can't really force someone to have a charitable heart, can you?

Through compulsion. For God loves a cheerful giver. And so when you give, you actually have, it's a benefit to you, right? Jesus said it's better to give than to receive.

It's better for you. It actually is a spiritual or a moral benefit to us when we give to others. And so when we're forced to give, we don't receive that benefit.

And we kind of know this in general because, you know, you see a lot of times large government bureaucracies that have billions of dollars sometimes to help people who are in need.

[25 : 04] But many times you'll see a small organization of volunteers who form in a community who have a small budget of maybe \$100,000 that they have to spend to help people in need.

And how many times do we see that that little tiny organization, because they have a heart of charity and service towards others, can be more impactful than the other organization that, you know, for a lot of people it's just a job.

But with a lot more means to help people. And then, of course, when we give individually, we have opportunities that when you have kind of the state or the community giving, it's impersonalized, isn't it?

And God really loves it when there are relationships involved in giving and serving one another. When you remove the relationships through government bureaucracy or whatever it might be, you remove the relational part of it.

And in a couple of ways, one, we get to pour our lives into other people when we give kind of one-to-one or family-to-family or whatever that might be. But also, there's more opportunity to use wisdom.

[26 : 24] Because don't we know that sometimes helping someone can hurt them, right? There's actually a great book out there called *When Helping Hurts*, and it provides a great kind of schematic or blueprint for how to help people in a way that is positive and not hurtful.

And so for a lot of people, the best way to help them is to provide them the means they have for themselves to help themselves, to help somebody find a job.

If you're an employer, provide somebody with a job. I have a good friend of mine. He owns a business. And kind of a demographic that he employs a lot of in his business are people who are recovering from alcoholism and drug addiction.

And that's something that he's had in his past. And he's had so many testimonies in his business of people whose lives he's been able to turn around. And it's not 100% success rate, right?

But it's enough, right, to see the joy of somebody's life turning around by helping them to provide for themselves, to provide for their own family. Also, the Bible teaches that justice is something that must be blind.

[27 : 42] That's an idea that we have in this country. We have the picture, I guess, or statue of, I don't know what's it called, Lady Justice, right?

And she's got the blindfold on and the balances, right? Justice is blind. What does that mean? But there is this idea that's kind of integrated in the whole socialist concept ideology that we actually need to provide more justice maybe to the needy or some oppressed group than to others and less justice to everyone else.

But does the Bible have anything to say about that? In Proverbs chapter 6, it says this, people do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving.

Right? You have somebody who's starving. They're really deeply struggling. And they run into the market. They grab some food and they run out.

And you kind of think, well, they're in dire straits. You kind of understand why they would do that. But the second part of the verse there in Proverbs said, yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold.

[29 : 05] He may have to give up all the substance of his house. So even though we understand why people might do those things, yet we need to uphold justice and find other means other than violating someone's property rights to meet the needs that we have or that our neighbor has.

Justice must be blind. We can't give more justice to those in need and less justice to those who have more means. Also in Leviticus chapter 19, this is specifically in the law of Moses, you shall do no injustice in judgment.

You shall not be partial to the poor. Nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. And we can imagine, right, situations where someone might give preference to somebody who has a lot of wealth, money, power, prestige, right?

That is wrong. We should never do anything like that. That's injustice when we do that. But today we kind of have this idea that we should actually, that it's actually something we should do.

We should be partial to those who have less means. But the Bible says otherwise. So after talking about those things, and I'll try to wrap this up kind of quickly so I can take time for questions or comments.

[30 : 43] But in thinking about this, it's easy to just focus on how our rights are being denied us and how we are being oppressed.

And that's true. When people's property rights are taken away, that is a system of oppression. And we should be concerned about that. But I think there are other things for us to consider, especially as Christians, on how these ideas affect everybody on any side of this issue.

So, one, we have the economic harm that is done. I used to live in a communist country. I lived in Vietnam as a missionary for a year. And it's interesting, communist countries are not as committed to the principles of Karl Marx and some of these other guys as they used to be.

And I remember being in Vietnam, and when the communists took over in Vietnam, they actually tried to put into place the ideals of Karl Marx and communism.

And it went south really fast from the 70s through the 80s. And I heard stories directly from people's mouths who experienced it, how bad it got in that country.

[31 : 59] Just filthy poverty. Our neighbor, who was a tailor, I asked him, I said, I was interested in his business. He also had like a haircutting shop.

You know, this is a big city in the front of his home. And I asked him, well, how did you become a tailor? And he said, well, when the communists took over, they gave everybody a test to kind of evaluate their skills and their, you know, mental acuity or whatever.

And he said, and they told me, you're going to become a tailor. And then they provided him a free education to become a tailor. And so that was the system that was employed early on in that nation, and it got really bad really fast.

And they finally let go of a lot of their restrictions and allowed people to pursue their own interests and their own education and their own means of making a living.

And to a certain degree, right, not completely taking the chains off, but loosening them to a certain degree. And that really helped to provide stability in their economy. And we see Venezuela, and there's all kinds of other things throughout history that we see.

[33 : 11] So that's just one thing, the economic harm that is systemic in a nation that adopts these kinds of things. The other thing I think we need to think about, though, is the corruption of character that these ideas can bring, can inculcate in people.

There's another commandment that we need to talk about, and that's the last one. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods. And it's a commandment, it's pretty clear, it really speaks to envy, this idea of envy.

And wanting something that others have that we don't. And in trying to promote socialism, this actually, seducing people to covet their neighbor's goods is the number one way that I see that people try to promote socialism.

And this doesn't just destroy people's wealth or their goods, it actually corrupts their character. And we need, as Christians, need to be concerned not just about the wealth destruction, but also about the destruction of people's character.

Exodus 20, 17, you shall not covet your neighbor's house, his wife, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that's your neighbor's. Today, it's your neighbor's medical care, or his insurance, or his education.

[34 : 33] These are all things, right, that you can covet that your neighbor has. And we think, well, we can just take from our neighbors and we can provide those things for everybody, for ourselves. And justifying, when we justify sin, like covetousness, what happens?

We become corrupt. Our hearts become corrupt. And the things that worry me most about the things going on in our nation are not necessarily my kids being driven into poverty or the persecution that they might face.

But the things that concern me most are the attempts to corrupt my children's hearts. Because, you know what, it's not wrong to live in poverty, is it?

It's not wrong to be persecuted. I mean, it's wrong to do the persecution. But I would much rather my kids face those things in life, and that's much preferable, right?

And to a certain degree, we expect that, biblically. But we don't want our hearts, our kids' hearts, our neighbors' hearts to become corrupted by these things.

[35 : 38] Proverbs 14 says this, A sound heart is life to the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones. Envy will eat you up inside.

It'll corrupt your insides. And we should have concern for our neighbor. We don't want his insides or her insides to become corrupt, to become rotten like that. Number three, also kind of toward the corruption of character, is this idea of dependency, right?

The government trough, you know, people talk about that whole idea. And we all, because of the circumstances that we live in, we all receive some kind of benefit from the state, don't we?

That comes from our neighbor. And a lot of times we think, well, it comes from ourselves, right? It does. It comes from the whole community. And, you know, some people ask the question, you know, is it wrong to take benefits from the state?

You know, should we do it? Because, you know, we disagree that that happened. And I think it's really hard not to, right? Because otherwise it would be really hard to get by in the world.

[36 : 49] The government pulls out 15% for Social Security. And at the end you say, well, I'm not going to take any of that. So, but we do have to be careful.

Because the more of the things that we take that don't really belong to us, the more we become dependent. And, you know, just a few examples.

You know, look at marriage. Men are really hard to live with. Men are really difficult, right?

Men, they're noisy. You know, they make funny noises sometimes. They smell. They're kind of gruff. They get grumpy, right? And so it's really hard to live with a man.

And so we have, through socialism and taking from your neighbor and giving it to people in need, we have this seduction. You know, you can either have this husband, who's pretty hard to live with, or you can take a government check.

[38 : 00] And to some people, that's kind of a tough decision, right? Take this husband, or do I take the government check? And so many people make the wrong decision.

Instead of putting up with the grumpy husband, who watches too much football and, you know, doesn't pay enough attention to the kids and all that kind of stuff.

They take the government check, and their lives are destroyed. Their lives are turned upside down. Just for the sake of time, we'll move on to the last one.

Or, so, charity. So, because I think there's a risk, because of the social safety net, there's charity all around us, right? A lot of it is provided by the state.

And so we can find people who are in need and decide, well, you know what?

[39 : 01] There's already a program for that. You're struggling to make your rent payment. You're struggling with a medical need. Hey, you just walk into the ER. Somebody will pay for it.

The state will pay for it. And we lose opportunities to reach people, to help people, to be a helping hand, to be a personal touch in helping others.

And so I think as Christians, we need to be careful not to always have that mindset, well, the government took all my money, and they can help them, right? We should find ways to help people, even if it hurts.

There's a, actually, I don't know if it's still around, maybe it is, but there's a free clinic in Xenia that offers people medical services, pretty light medical services that they have needs for.

But you might ask, well, why would they do that? You know, the state will give out Medicaid to anybody who needs it and provide medical services. And there's a group of churches that provide that service with Christian doctors.

[40 : 04] But, man, would we really want that to go away? Absolutely not. Then finally, just to wrap up, I think there are evangelistic opportunities in talking about issues.

You know, when you're at work, when you're talking to people, friends, whether they're people who are on both sides of this issue, I think we can use opportunities to try to reach people for the gospel. Because really, that's the most important thing. And whenever there's any challenge in life, it always provides an opportunity. It's all the challenges that we're facing today.

It provides opportunities to reach people. And we can use current events, especially, you know, lots of these are the things that people are talking about. So people, if they're opposed to socialism, right?

We have some people who are friends. They're not Christians, but they're opposed to all this stuff going on. They're taking my money, all this kind of thing. And we can share with them, say, hey, I agree with you. And here's why I agree with you.

[41 : 00] Here's what the Bible says. The Bible actually shows us that our being created in God's image provides a foundation for us to have human rights and the rights to property and the right to our lives and the right to liberty.

It's because we're created in the image of God. We can point them to the Lord through the scriptures. And the same things who might not agree with us, who might be proponents of these, we can kindly, you know, in a respectful manner, as we're discussing these things, share with them what the Bible has to say.

You know, what is your foundation? What's the foundation for your worldview? And a lot of times you come up with blank stares. It's just emotion or, you know, something like that.

It makes me feel good. You can provide a solid foundation where people's lives, so many people's lives, their lives are built on sand. And we can point them to the Bible on an issue like this, as simple as this.

Say, here's solid ground. So, anyway, some things to think about. You know, we talked about what the Bible says about the fundamental idea, but then also, you know, how we can apply that as far as, you know, reaching people, loving our neighbor, not just thinking about, you know, the way that this impacts us, but how it impacts others in all the different ways that it does.

[42 : 19] So, I guess I'm over my time. I pulled a Pastor Marv and went past time without taking questions. But, I don't know, should we do five minutes?

All right. I got at least a few nods, so we'll take five minutes. And you're getting in trouble, Joe.

Jesus himself said there will always be poor among us.

That's true, yeah. And then one other comment Marv is always bringing up, and as you brought up, choices, decisions we make in our life. We'll all remember in our high school days the goof-offs, the ones that didn't study, the ones that didn't work.

Well, you can assume, you know, that they probably went on in life pretty much the same. They didn't perform in their work and their jobs. They drank too much. They got drunk.

[43 : 20] And so, you know, they brought on the poorness of themselves. This human, sinful nature of ours does this. And so, to have all this disparity, you know, in economics that goes on, I mean, it's us.

You know, it's part of life. It's the cursed world, you know. And socialism is not going to, we know that it doesn't work. It's not going to change that. You know, it's part of life.

But thank you very much. You did an excellent job. Thank you very much. Thanks. Any other comments or questions? We got. I think it's interesting.

One of the first, maybe the first real estate transactions in Scripture is when Abraham buys the cave. Yeah. To bury Sarah. And the Hittites wanted to give it to him. And he said he insisted on paying for it and getting the deed.

Yeah. And, of course, if you travel, Paul and I have had the privilege to travel to Israel a few times. They talk about that. That was a real estate transaction. This is our property. So I think it's, you know, clear back in Genesis.

[44 : 28] You started with property rights. I think it's interesting how early property rights comes up in Scripture. Yeah, that's very true. I understand the theft of property and belongings.

What about theft of an election? There are lots of things that can be stolen. Yeah, things are, it can be, and maybe that's less confusing, but I remember years ago, this is maybe 10, 15 years ago, you had, music was going digital, right?

It was becoming files on your computer rather than a cassette tape or a CD. And there was this huge problem of downloading music. And the music studios were going crazy because people were

just sharing all their music.

And for a lot of people, they didn't equate it with stealing because it wasn't something physical. And so they thought, oh, it's no problem. And, you know, we have, we know about intellectual property and all that kind of stuff.

And people, the music studios have tried to educate people on that. But anyway, yeah, sometimes it's not just, you know, physical goods that can be stolen.

[45 : 44] So, okay, John. Come on, run up there. Okay. You know, you talked about the scripture that said we should treat the poor alike with the wealthy.

That, you know, you shouldn't treat them different. I've always had a problem with wholesale versus retail. Okay. Okay. Because if I, as a single person, go to a business and want to buy something, I have to pay more than the wholesale person does.

What do you think about that? You know, I realize it's a business practice. Right. And everything. But it just does not seem correct to me.

Sure. Yeah, I get that. It seems unfair. You have insurance, right? You buy it as an individual. You don't get nearly as great of a deal as if you do group, you know, policy or whatever. I still think that's within the realm of freedom, though.

You know, it's definitely to the benefit of a company to sell 1,000 widgets to one person than it is to sell, you know, one widget to 1,000 people, right? There's lots of cost savings involved.

[47 : 00] And so they're able to reduce their costs and pass that along to their customers. So I think that's within the realm of freedom and liberty to do those kinds of things.

It's my thought anyway. You know, a quote, and see if I can get this right. You know, Joe, what you're talking about is, you know, the guy you went to high school with, it was a goof off.

And we hope, right, we hope and pray that they figured out how to do life correctly. But not a lot of people do. But it's so much harder when you have someone who's willing to take away the consequences.

Because there's this great thing called like a hungry stomach that is a force towards helping people to go in the right direction. The Bible says, Paul said, if a man doesn't work, he doesn't eat.

And that's a great incentive, right, to working hard, to providing for your family. But it was Ronald Reagan, what did he say, the nine most terrifying words that you can hear?

[48 : 05] Yeah, I'm from the government and I'm here to help. So it can be destructive. Anything else? I guess maybe one more, Joe, and then we'll wrap up.

So, Marv mentioned this morning, you know, like what could heal the land, right? What can heal our situation? It just jumped out to me and it's kind of stuck with me even while you were talking.

And that is that the truth seems to be what would heal our situation and our nation, right? The truth is under attack. And, you know, this thing with like socialism, you know, it's an attack on the truth about life and about how God made it.

And it's just, I just wanted to share that. I feel like I really believe that in the midst of all the confusion, I think that what we're watching is just an attack on the truth, what God determines as truth in every arena that we're looking at.

So I just wanted to share that. Amen. Yeah. And we have it, it provides an opportunity. Like I said, every challenge provides an opportunity. We have an opportunity to point people towards the truth that provides a solid ground.

[49 : 21] So many people, their lives are just a mess. It's on shaky ground and we can show them where they can find a solid rock. Amen. Let's pray. And we'll be sent to this. Father, thank you for your word that you gave us such a comprehensive, such comprehensive wisdom in the scriptures so that we could understand the world around us, how we ought to live our lives.

And we ask that you would continue to work in us, to open up the scriptures to us so that we can understand and be a light, a shining light to the world. For those who are in need, that we might be a light to show them the path of solid ground through you, through knowing you, and putting their trust and faith in you.

I ask that you work in each of us in that way. Amen.