

There have been a lot of questions recently about the political and economic position of the United States.

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We want to examine God's position  
on these matters -- and as always,  
we will compare it to the ways of  
men.

There has been a lot of comment about capitalism lately as Pope Francis commented on it while in Mexico on his recent trip.

The Pope is clearly opposed to capitalism but chooses his words carefully depending on his audience.

When the Pope came to Washington DC last September, he had written, “politics ‘cannot be a slave to the economy and finance’” for his speech but he softened it to “business ... is a noble vocation ... especially if it sees the creation of jobs as an essential part of its service to the common good.”

The Pope recently visited Mexico and condemned capitalism. In Bolivia, he has called for the poor to have the “‘sacred rights’ of labor, lodging and land.”

## Concerning property rights:

Act 4:36 Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, (37) sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Act 5:3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? (4) While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."

So we find in this covenant that owning property is a God given right, which can be transferred to others.

It is ours to do with as we wish, but the child of God will remember to help the less fortunate.  
Act 20:35 ... 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'“

Jas 1:27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, ...

## Concerning labor:

Act 20:34 You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. (35) 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.'



## Concerning labor:

2Th 3:10 For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. (11) For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. (12) Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.

The country in which we live is unique in that labor is prized, whether being a shopkeeper, a mechanic, a carpenter or a University professor. We spend more time at our jobs than any other “first world” country.

Jesus says the church will be like a man who went on a long journey.

Mat 25:15-17 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. (16) He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. (17) So also he who had the two talents made two talents more.

Each person in the church is expected to use his/her abilities to gain more souls for Christ.

But it should be obvious that Jesus approved of what the Master (person in control) and each of the servants did.

Mat 25:25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'

(26) But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed?

(27) Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. (28) So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. (29) For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

The US employment rate has fallen in the last 6 years to from 72% to 68%, with the Scandinavian countries, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, the UK, Japan and even Russia, having a higher employment rate.

Who owns the big corporations in the US? – not some rich person but the Employees.

Nearly half of all Americans own stock but only 14% of households own stocks directly.

70% of all stocks in the United States - held by domestic agents such as mutual funds, pension funds, and insurance companies - are now kept in tax-deferred plans as a result of high income tax rates (a change based on tax deferred pension/savings plans introduced in 1982).

When you hear people in the US complaining about their employers, half of them are owners of the businesses through their pension and stock plans. 30% of Americans are employed by small businesses. This is unlike Europe where stockholding are small (Germany 6%, France 15%, UK 10%) or South American countries (where the government owns the companies)



Looking at the success rate of the countries in which capitalism is not practiced in providing jobs for the people, the answer appears not to be more public giving but more private jobs.

Eph 6:5 Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, (6) not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, (7) rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, (8) knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.

So the Pope misses both the Scriptures and the practical application as capitalism provides far more jobs when done in the background of “Evangelical Protestantism” but in the background of the socialism the Pope espouses, the number of persons employed is about 1/10 of that where capitalism and the rule of law is implemented.

1Ti 5:18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages."

**What kind of wages should we expect?**

Rom 12:3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment,

## Concerning taxes:

Mat 22:16 And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. (17) Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

Mat 22:21 They said, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

Rom 13:4 for it [government] is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. 5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. (6) For because of this you also pay taxes, for *rulers* are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. (7) Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. (8) Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* law.

You can discuss among yourselves whether our government is doing well in its job as a “servant of God” with the taxes it takes in providing an atmosphere for employment, security, and such.

But we have to recognize that we must not cheat on our taxes as we “render to Caesar.”

When you think about what God has done for all of us, I trust that you will  
“count your blessings.”

Perhaps you will even show your gratitude to God by thanking Him in prayer.

One of the interesting things the Pope said is that if you couldn't pray for him, perhaps you could send your "best wishes."

The Catholic church teaches that anyone who is not a Catholic in good standing may not pray to God, the Saints or for others.

The Bible doesn't agree with that as Cornelius, the Roman Centurion was neither a believer nor in fellowship with God. But God answered his prayer by sending him a preacher.



Act 10:2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, and gave many alms to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually.

Act 11:14 and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.'

As I pointed out in our lesson on prayer last Sunday, if God is your Father, you can go to Him for forgiveness of sins and comfort in time of trial.

Gal 3:26-27 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. (27) For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

You become a child of God when you believe that Jesus is the Son of God who died for your sins and you obey Him in baptism.

If you have not done that, you are not yet a child of God and may not address Him as your Father.

Why not obey Him now?