

## Chapter 1 : Money, God and Greed: The Tea Party and Capitalism | HuffPost

*The Bible supports free market capitalism for a variety of reasons. 1) Free market capitalism requires the voluntary exchange of goods and services. Therefore, Freedom is the fuel for the system.*

Posted by chadhovind The Bible supports free market capitalism for a variety of reasons. Therefore, Freedom is the fuel for the system. Someone must freely choose to buy your product forcing you to put their needs ahead of your own by setting a price and quality that THEY will want to buy. The early church reformers and followers of Christ wanted to design a system where everyone provided for his own. This bedrock ideal was part of the framework for the their understanding of the free market system. Here is a clip between Glenn Beck and I about the Biblical foundations for free market capitalism: Socialism, communism, and increasing degrees of government interventionism always lead to poverty and loss of liberty. There were signs in Romania that equated peace with their communist dictator Niklai Ceausescu. His secret police terrorized the country. Everybody was under surveillance. People were starved until they had to steal to survive. They stole corn from large government owned farms. The government sold the corn, probably to Russia, and Ceausescu would pocket the money. They had to steal the corn or else they would starve to death. For example, they might want to know if a person is speaking against Ceausescu, so they would take his neighbor to jail. The stores in Romania were empty. There were lines to buy bread, meat, and gas. Meat was rationed to one chicken per family member per month. The army refused orders to fire on their fellow citizens. On Christmas Day in , Nikolai Ceausescu was shot by a firing squad. The result is a loss of liberty. A loss of prosperity for the masses as the government confiscates property, rights, and incentive. A loss of generosity is the net result of government interventionism. For more information, check out the two DVD series Godonomics at [www.godonomics.com](http://www.godonomics.com).

## Chapter 2 : A Biblical View of Economics

*In Genesis , God says we are to subdue the earth and have dominion over it. One aspect of this is that humans can own property in which they can exercise their dominion. Since we have both volition and private property rights, we can assume that we should have the freedom to exchange these private property rights in a free market where.*

Christian Economics Christian Economics Introduction When it comes to Christian Economics, Christians hold different views about which economic system is most in line with biblical teaching. Some believe the Bible encourages a system of private property and individual responsibilities and initiatives citing Isaiah Others support a socialist economy citing Acts 2: Still others, who are called liberation theologians, believe the Bible teaches a form of Marxism and that some form of socialism will usher in the Kingdom of God. No economic system, however, is capable of saving us or bringing in the Kingdom of God. Nor is any single economic system perfect. Yet one is more compatible with biblical teaching and our imperfect, sinful world.

Christian Economics Socialism or Free Enterprise? The Christian worldview of economics must embrace either socialism centralized control or some form of capitalism free enterprise or open markets. No economic system exists in its pure form in the real world all capitalist systems contain some elements of socialism, and vice versa. Ronald Nash outlines the distinctions between free market capitalism and socialism: Capitalism is more than this, of course, but its concern with free exchange is obvious. Socialism, on the other hand, seeks to replace the freedom of the market with a group of central planners who exercise control over essential market functions. Those who call for a socialist economic system do so on the basis of Acts 2: They fail to consider, however, the implications of Acts 2: The Bible as a whole supports an economic system that respects private property and the work ethic. See especially Proverbs 31, Isaiah He maintains that capitalism began in the early Christian monasteries, long before the Protestant Reformation and Adam Smith. This way of thinking, though, is incompatible with biblical teachings. Our right to own property stems from our duty to work. However, God mercifully allows our hard work to reward us with property. The very existence of private property encourages our diligence and fruitfulness: Every person is accountable to God for the use of whatever he has Genesis 1: When we understand private property in the context of godly stewardship, we are better able to concentrate on our need to work and serve others rather than accumulate more and more for our selfish purposes. In this sense, private property encourages our wise use of scarce resources, whereas publicly owned property provides no such incentive. Christian Economics Economic Competition In reviewing the notion of Christian economics, the Bible teaches that workers deserve their pay, and those that work hard are rewarded, while those who are lazy remain poor Proverbs These teachings imply that competition in the workplace leads to fruitfulness. However, Christians who believe a socialist economic system is more biblical than a capitalist system contend that competition is evil in that it leads to greed and envy, and competition for limited resources is counterproductive. Competition encourages cooperation in a capitalist society when we act in accordance with the principle of comparative advantage. This principle states that individuals in a free market economy can produce valuable goods or services by specializing in an area where there is the least absolute disadvantage. In other words, focusing on producing goods or services through cooperation benefits society as a whole. This in turn creates more goods and services that can benefit the poor. Christian Economics Conclusion In summarizing the concept of Christian economics, competition through comparative advantage also reinforces our worth and dignity in the sense that our work and diligence contribute to the welfare of society as a whole. Comparative advantage allows us the opportunity to become the best producer of a service or product. Thus, competition that leads to cooperation and the recognition of individual worth harmonizes with the Christian worldview, which sees human beings as image-bearers of God. The Christian worldview embraces a form of democratic capitalism that allows for the peaceful and free exchange of goods and services without fraud, theft, or breach of contract as the biblical view. First, the Bible grants us the right to private property and calls us to be good stewards of our resources. Second, a free enterprise system affords the greatest opportunity to steward our resources responsibly by creating wealth and opportunity. Third, the competition in a free market system works according to the principle of comparative

advantage, which affirms our inherent worth as individuals. The biblical view does not cause the rich to get richer and the poor poorer as socialists contend. Rather, the biblical view encourages the rich to create more wealth, thereby aiding all of society. Policies of redistribution of wealth, including welfare systems, only multiply problems for the poor by creating needless bureaucracies and concentrating too much power in the hands of the government. Capitalism, on the other hand, encourages freedom in the political sphere, minimizing the danger of granting sovereignty to the state instead of to God. The biblical Christian worldview supports private property and free enterprise. Christians see work as a virtue, not a vice. The Greeks and Romans, in contrast, grounded their case for slavery in the idea that work is a vice, a view endorsed by both Aristotle and Plato. Rendered with permission from the book, *Understanding the Times: All rights reserved in the original.* Nash, *Poverty and Wealth*: Crossway Books, , Random House, , Better Books, , 4 5 E. Calvin Beisner, *Prosperity and Poverty*: Harper and Row, Liberty Fund Classics, International Publishers, , 3: God , the Father, sent His only Son to satisfy that judgment for those who believe in Him. Jesus , the creator and eternal Son of God, who lived a sinless life, loves us so much that He died for our sins, taking the punishment that we deserve, was buried , and rose from the dead according to the Bible. If you truly believe and trust this in your heart, receiving Jesus alone as your Savior , declaring, " Jesus is Lord ," you will be saved from judgment and spend eternity with God in heaven. What is your response?

Chapter 3 : V&V Q&A: God, Socialism, and the Free Market - The Center for Vision & Values at Grove City

*To label any economic system outside that of the kingdom of God as "biblical" or "God-ordained" seems problematic at best to me. As Wendell Berry has written, "We will not conceive the possibility of a better economy, and therefore will not begin to change, until we quit deifying the present one."*

What does the Bible say about capitalism? For example, whole sections of the book of Proverbs and many of the parables of Jesus deal with economic matters. As such, we learn what our attitude should be toward wealth and how a Christian should handle his finances. The Bible also provides us with a description of our human nature which helps us to evaluate the possible success of and failure of an economic system in society. Because economics is an area where much of our everyday life takes place, we should evaluate it from a biblical perspective. When we use the Bible as our framework, we can begin to construct the model for a government and an economy that liberates human potential and limits human sinfulness. One aspect of this is that humans can own property in which they can exercise their dominion. Since we have both volition and private property rights, we can assume that we should have the freedom to exchange these private property rights in a free market where goods and services can be exchanged. However, due to the ravages of sin, many parts of the world have become places of decay and scarcity. And, though God has given us dominion over His creation, we must be good stewards of the resources at our disposal. Historically, the free enterprise system has provided the greatest amount of freedom and the most effective economic gains of any economic system ever devised. Even so, Christians often wonder if they can support capitalism. In essence, self-interest is rewarded in a free capitalist system. But even the gospel appeals to our self-interest, because it is in our self-interest to accept Jesus Christ as our savior so that our eternal destiny will be assured. We can make choices over property that we can exchange in a market system. But sometimes the desire for private property grows out of our sinfulness. Correspondingly, our sinful nature also produces laziness, neglect, and slothfulness. The fact is that economic justice can best be achieved if each person is accountable for his own productivity. Historically, capitalism has had a number of advantages. It has liberated economic potential. It has also provided the foundation for a great deal of political and economic freedom. When government is not controlling markets, then there is economic freedom to be involved in an array of entrepreneurial activities. Capitalism has also led to a great deal of political freedom, because once we limit the role of government in economics, we limit the scope of government in other areas. It is no accident that most of the countries with the greatest political freedom usually have a great deal of economic freedom. However, Christians cannot and should not endorse every aspect of capitalism. For example, many proponents of capitalism hold a view known as utilitarianism, which is opposed to the notion of biblical absolutes. Certainly, we must reject this philosophy. Also, there are certain economic and moral issues that must be addressed. Though there are some valid economic criticisms of capitalism such as monopolies and the byproduct of pollution, these can be controlled by limited governmental control. And when capitalism is wisely controlled, it generates significant economic prosperity and economic freedom for its people. One of the major moral arguments against capitalism is greed, which is why many Christians feel unsure about the free enterprise system. Critics of capitalism contend that this system makes people greedy. But then we must ask whether capitalism makes people greedy or do we already have greedy people who use the economic freedom of the capitalistic system to achieve their ends? In light of the biblical description of human nature Jeremiah Because people are sinful and selfish, some are going to use the capitalist system to satisfy their greed. But that is not so much a criticism of capitalism as it is a realization of the human condition. The goal of capitalism is not to change bad people but to protect us from them. Capitalism is a system in which bad people can do the least harm and good people have the freedom to do good works. Capitalism works best with moral individuals. But it also functions adequately with selfish and greedy people. All people have self-interests which can operate in ways that are not selfish. For example, it is in our self-interest to get a job and earn an income so that we can support our family. We can do that in ways that are not selfish. By contrast, other economic systems such as socialism ignore the biblical definitions of human nature. As a result, they allow economic power to be centralized and

concentrate power in the hands of a few greedy people. Those who complain of the influence major corporations have on our lives should consider the socialist alternative where a few governmental bureaucrats control every aspect of our lives. The solution lies not in changing the economic system but in changing the heart of man through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Chapter 4 : What Does the Bible Say About Economics?**

*Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy mountain; for the Lord our God is holy! Psalm ESV / 3 helpful votes  
Helpful Not Helpful All the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name.*

Columnist Money, God and Greed: Why Capitalism is the Solution and Not the Problem presents an evangelical defense of capitalism, arguing that the economic system is based on Biblical values rather greed. His book offers, as the tagline on the back cover explains, the "Good News About Capitalism. Money, Greed, and God promises to defend capitalism by dismantling eight of its most persistent myths. That story has had many narrators, but the consistent theme has been this: Consider just one example. While other leaders of the Religious Right endorsed capitalism for containing Biblical principles, Richards argues that Christianity itself created capitalism. In doing so, Richards hopes evangelicals will save capitalism from, predictably, the socialists. But, more importantly and provocatively, Richards argues Christians need to reclaim capitalism from secular capitalists who have themselves perpetrated myths that ultimately undermine the defense of the economic system itself. Following World War II, these Christians, calling themselves neo-evangelicals at the time, argued that true Christianity stood apart from both the Social Gospel message of mainline liberal Protestantism and the angry separatism of Christian fundamentalism. Liberal Protestantism like socialism just got the message of the Gospel wrong, neo-evangelicals argued, while fundamentalism like secular capitalism understood the letter of the law but not the gracious and generous spirit of real Christianity. Richards also wants his readers to resist the polar attitudes he sees operating within evangelical thought about capitalism. The other end, in part repulsed by their prosperity gospel brethren, has hesitated to defend capitalism with much vigor, worried that its values of consumption, greed, and materialism are antithetical to Gospel virtues. But Money, Greed, and God considers itself foremost a work of economic theory, and one bent on exposing the eight myths that persist about capitalism. These include the Nirvana Myth Myth No. Since perfection can never be reached in this world, as Richards points out all true Christians understand, Americans should select the best available option, and unregulated free market capitalism remains the clear choice. To make his argument, Richards contrasts capitalism with communism. Of course, the choice is a false one in a country that, as Richards points out, has never flirted seriously with communism, but the extreme example of communism helps Richards best contrast the comparatively beautiful extreme of a completely unregulated economy. Of course, these economists would likely utilize good data to support their arguments. But Richards is often better at providing extensive evidence that document the evil excesses of communism than he is at backing up some of his most positive assertions about capitalism with hard numbers. Surely this is something that an economist or two has collected extensive research on, but Richards footnotes no sources to validate his claim. Here it may be useful to say a little something more about the author. Jay Richards is not an economist, but rather a trained minister with graduate degrees, including a Ph. While this background might not land Richards a job on Wall Street or in most economics departments -- his author bio, however, indicates that he "has lectured on economic myths to members of the U. None is more compelling, if not also debatable, than Myth No. It is also where Richards parts ways most significantly with secular capitalists. Richards notes our cultural conceptions of capitalism drip with notions of greed-driven capitalists, none more famous than Gordon Gekko, the protagonist of the movie "Wall Street" who famously declared, "Greed is good. But most Christians would be unable to see greed as anything but a vice. And Rand, an avowed and even vicious atheist, understandably discomforts most evangelicals. Richards counters, however, that Rand got it wrong. Self-interest, unlike selfishness, is not concerned only with the self because it is in the interest of the individual to care for his or her family, friends, communities, and causes. The true capitalist wants to get ahead so she can provide for her family, contribute to her chosen charities, and reinvest in her business so that it can grow even more. If capitalism was about merely selfish greed, the system would implode on itself as the wealthy hoarder hid away all his riches or squandered them all on self-serving pursuits. But capitalism succeeds, Richards maintains, because the true capitalist operates from a self-interest that benefits far more

than the individual. Richards worries these valid concerns will lead them to embrace questionable economic practices and policies like tougher regulation, fair trade, and higher taxes that redistribute wealth. What these young evangelicals should do instead is back a free market system that will create more wealth for everyone the less the economy is controlled by government bureaucrats. In fact, "abortion" garners only one mention. Richards tells us abortion rates are always higher in communist countries than in free ones. He, however, provides no sources for the assertion. But this calm and even pastorly tone reveals one way the Religious Right might continue to coexist with the Tea Party movement. Of late, some evangelicals have begun to worry aloud about the overly libertarian leanings of Tea Party leaders. While conservative evangelicals support the economic and political objectives of the Tea Party movement, many have begun to fear that its explicitly libertarian justifications lack the moral basis and theological principles they believe should be at the heart of any politics. Jay Richards delivers that Biblical rationale.

**Chapter 5 : What does the Bible say about capitalism?**

*In essence, an economy of free markets and entrepreneurship follows from the commands given by God, though sin has marred the business practices that we experience today. Free markets only require recognition of property rights and the freedom to trade with other people.*

A Man Of Principle: Essays in Honor of Hans F. Sennholz February 3, by Dr. Patton What do modern day economists do? What procedures and methods do they employ? The standard textbook response is that economists formulate economic principles that are useful in establishing policies designed to solve economic problems. To discover these principles, also known as generalizations, economists engage in positive economics, that is, they hypothesize and theorize about empirical observations, strictly limiting themselves to describing reality, and they avoid issues or questions of what ought to be. The latter is called normative economics. In this positivist approach there is an impassable line of distinction between morality and economic science. Yet, a little reflection, according to Henry Hazlitt, reveals that economics and ethics: Both are concerned with human action, human conduct, human decision, human choice. There is hardly an ethical problem, in fact, without its economic aspect. Our daily ethical decisions are in the main economic decisions, and nearly all our daily economic decisions have, in turn, an ethical aspect. Economic inquiry wants to know the cause and consequences of human actions. Morality purports to show which human actions are right or wrong. Clearly human action is the common denominator, suggesting a possible link between moral principles and economic principles. Thus, could it be possible that a moral principle has its counterpart in the economic realm? Could both moral and economic principles be a part of an inseparable body of thought? Could the economic and moral realms be, in fact, in harmony with one another as opposed to being hermetically sealed, unrelated areas of human knowledge as required by positivism? The positivistic episteme rejects such questions out of hand. Positive economics excludes the possibility of ineluctable economic principles and it excludes ethical or moral principles as relevant knowledge in explaining the consequences of human action in the economic realm. To consider these questions, then, a new episteme is required – one that can investigate a possible link between economic events and moral and immoral human actions. The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate that such an episteme not only exists but reveals a necessary connection between ethical decisions and economic results. Its analysis will address the basic premises of this worldview, its methodology, and some of its magnificent economic and moral laws, and it will demonstrate the interconnection of these two areas of human action by analyzing some important economic issues of our day.

Historical Development The science of economics is generally recognized to have begun with the publication, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, by the Scottish moral philosopher, Adam Smith. Unlike his predecessors in previous centuries, he systematically deduced many cause and effect principles that operate in a market economy. Together, their ideas were a major force in ushering in the age of capitalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For Adam Smith and most of the classical economists, economic science or, in their words, political economy was a branch of moral philosophy built on a moral base. Adam Smith himself believed in the existence of a moral order that he called natural liberty or natural law. Using this framework he logically demonstrated that free markets were not only vastly more productive than any other alternatives, but free markets were also in harmony with the God-ordained order of natural liberty. In the 1830s three economists working independently revolutionized classical economic science by discovering the subjective theory of value as the basis for market prices and phenomena. Carl Menger at the University of Vienna, William Jevons at Cambridge University, and Leon Walras at the University of Lausanne each perceived that it is acting, preferring, and valuing individuals who are the source of market prices, not labor times as most classical economists had assumed. And thus, neo-classical economics was born. Another equally revolutionary idea emerged during the nineteenth century. The idea was that economics should become an exact science, like the natural sciences, by adopting its trial and error approach. The impetus given to this experimental or empirical method was due in large part to the notable successes and progress of Newtonian physics, biology, and astronomy. A corollary to this development was that science



should not have a moral foundation, as did the work of Adam Smith and other classicalists. Science should be value-free. Undoubtedly, no scientist should inject his opinions, prejudices, and judgments into his analysis or work. Scientists by definition are unbiased researchers. Nevertheless, a general understanding exists today that all science is based on a foundation or paradigm that shades thinking and theorizing. This latter position is known as humanism. Humanistic trial and error science has no place for absolute, universal principles. Clearly, they would claim, the testing process in economics is never-ending. Economic theories are not universal but they evolve and change continually. This virtually unheralded revolution changed the scope of economic science from a morally based, deductive science revealing universal principles of human action, to a non-moral, humanistic, experimental science producing principles that are relative to time and place, continually open to refinement or refutation. Founded by Austrian Carl Menger at the University of Vienna, and developed most notably by Ludwig von Mises, this tradition has developed a body of economic principles based on the self-evident axiom that mankind acts purposefully. Unless a logical error is made, Austrian theory is true and correct, providing mankind with essential knowledge of relationships in the economic sphere. Austrian principles reveal the necessary means to the attainment of economic goals. Within this Austrian tradition a group of economists has endeavored to expand the Austrian episteme to include the moral dimension. For the most part, this episteme was developed in a fortnightly journal entitled *Christian Economics* that spanned two decades.

**Two Kinds of Economics** The Bible informs mankind that the fear awe of the Lord is a foundational premise for all knowledge Proverbs 1: Christians take seriously this admonition: In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Indeed, the Apostle Paul warns against the paradigm of humanism “man and his reasoning as the sole source of knowledge” as the basis for any science: Mankind either develops economic knowledge on the foundation God has revealed in His word, or mankind does not. God explained personally to Adam and Eve that they could eat of every tree in the Garden of Eden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was strictly forbidden. If they chose to eat of it, they would surely die Genesis 2: Adam and Eve disbelieved and disobeyed God. They ate fruit from this forbidden tree and took unto themselves, and for all mankind afterward, the discovery of knowledge apart from God Genesis 3: Economically speaking, man has constructed his own economic systems and generated his own diverse and numerous schools of thought that seem right or good to him Proverbs Our point is that the Judeo-Christian tradition must begin its quest for economic knowledge, understanding, and wisdom “as well as for all areas of knowledge” within the revealed episteme of the Bible Matthew 4: According to Gary North, this episteme and the substance of Biblical economics is an almost untouched field for academic work.

**Biblical Economic Paradigm** The Bible addresses a wide range of economic topics. For example, the parables of the pounds Luke They deal with money, interest usury, profit and loss, wages, entrepreneurship, and contractual relations. The Bible does not directly expound principles of economics. It does, however, provide the essential framework for the systematic development of economic science. The Bible identifies four paradigmatic premises for economic science. All other knowledge and wisdom is prophesied to come to naught I Corinthians 1: The second premise central to economic methodology is that man is a purposeful being endowed with a spiritual essence that gives him a mind and free will. Man is not an animal programmed with instinct but is, instead, made in the very likeness and image of God Genesis 1: Man has a spiritual essence that imparts intellect I Corinthians 2: This spirit, working within man, gives him mind power “something not possessed by animals or other living organisms. Man alone possesses an inner self of volition, self-awareness, and the ability to choose goals and the means to fulfill these goals. He also has the capacity to build Godly character, assisted by the Holy Spirit in choosing the right and resisting the wrong II Corinthians 4: Man acts; he values and prefers. He is a purposeful being. A third premise is that God as Creator and Lawgiver James 4: These spiritual laws reveal to humankind how to love God the first table of four laws and how to love neighbor the second table of six laws, as summarized in Matthew To obey and live within these eternal principles of human action or conduct is to bring about harmony, peace, economic prosperity, and liberty James 1: As Michael Novak put it: Living in defiance of these moral laws is the definition of sin: Moreover, sin entails offenses. Since much of human activity is economic in nature, it follows that many penalties will be in the economic realm as well. The fourth premise is that God has given mankind a

stewardship role on the earth Genesis 1: God has given man the responsibility to care for the earth, though God still retains ownership of all the earth Psalms According to North, the Hebrew conception of property rights was covenantal. It set boundaries on the power of individuals and the state to administer property. God delegates to mankind the responsibility of acting as stewards of His property. They need to possess a knowledge and understanding of economic cause and effect. For example, would abolishing private property in the means of production socialism be an appropriate means to a more productive, efficient economy? Would higher minimum wage legislation be an effective policy to raise labor income? Knowledge of the Ten Commandments does not directly answer these questions. Godly wise stewards must also understand the intimate relationship between moral laws and economic cause and effect. Otherwise their economic behavior or advocacy of public policy may contradict their moral standard. How can these economic laws or principles be discovered? Economic Methodology The key to understanding Christian economics and the generation of economic principles lies in the second paradigmatic premise. The Bible Clearly shows through numerous examples that when dealing with human action, the scientific method of hypothesis and controlled experimentation is inadequate.

**Chapter 6 : Does the Bible Endorse Free Markets? – Acton Institute PowerBlog**

*The Invisible Hand: god of the Free Market Page!9 of!11 God is not some isolated transcendent 'Other' who merely created the laws of nature (Providence). God is 'Other' in the sense that God is distinct from the familiar gods of those with authority and power (Rieger, ).*

A Sermon on Isaiah It was spring of and I was a junior in college. One evening, it was long after the dining hall closed, I was halfway through a paper, and I was so hungry. And Finale was the fancy-schmancy dessert place that made tiny, perfect desserts topped with gold flakes and architectural spirals of chocolate. One thousand, five hundred people. Fifteen minutes before the reception was supposed to begin, the library lobby was as crowded as a mosh pit, and security guards were standing like bouncers at the library doors. Then the food arrived: Hundreds of students lunged for the food. There was screaming and shoving and scratching. The student body president, fearing for his safety, started throwing burritos into the crowd as a diversionary tactic. I saw one girl stuffing four or five quesadillas into her pants. And I do not mean the pocket part of the pants. The food was gone within seconds. My feet made only the most fleeting contact with the ground as the crowd began to stampede toward the doors. All for some free burritos. What was wrong with us? It would have been understandable if we were starving. But no one in that library lobby was starving. And I know that because you needed a valid student ID to get in, and every student was required to buy a full meal plan. I think in the Great Lamont Riot of , I saw a particularly dramatic expression of this dark part of human nature – a drive to conserve our resources and lay in supplies. It happens around a lot of things, but it happens especially around food. You see it on that television show Hoarders – have you ever watched that show? These people just cannot stop acquiring stuff, and their houses fill up and become unlivable and hazardous and unsanitary, and so often their fridges and cupboards and whole kitchens are full of more cans and boxes of food than they would need for the rest of their lives. You see it when you look at the sizes of drinks you can buy at Starbucks shops and convenience stores and movie theaters – we buy coffees and sodas in these bucket-sized cups, as if we were preparing for a month in the desert! And you see it when fifteen hundred college students stage a riot over burritos and chocolate cakes. We sometimes let stuff – and food – take over our lives. We are sometimes deeply afraid that there is not enough, and sometimes we let that fear drive our shopping and our consuming and how we treat one another. Nothing is wrong with planning ahead, and nothing is wrong with being prudent with the resources you have, and God knows nothing is wrong with not having much money to spend on food. But something is wrong – very, very wrong – with the way our society relates to food, and stuff, and money. Unlike the young grapevines, assured of constant irrigation and hydration, farmworker Maria Jimenez had to do without water as she labored in the fields in direct sunlight on a degree day in May After almost nine hours of work, Maria became dizzy and collapsed to the ground. Her boyfriend Florentino Bautista ran to her, held her in his arms, and begged for help. By the time she arrived at the hospital, her body temperature was So on the one hand, we have this society which wants cheap food, free food, at all costs; and even if we only pay two dollars for the bottle of wine, even if a hamburger can be purchased for a dollar, there are other costs. Costs to the environment, costs in the lives of farmworkers and food workers and their families, and costs to our own bodies. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. A marketplace that speaks not to our fears and anxieties, but to our needs and, yes, our delights! But that idea of covenant – that idea is crucial; because part of the idea of covenant is that we are called to relate to one another as human beings, not to take advantage of one another in order to get ahead. Go ahead and harm people, if you want. Costly grace is the love which calls us to transformation. Costly grace means taking a hard look at ourselves and our world, and knowing that we are good and beautiful and beloved and worthy, and so are all the other people around us, and trying to live that out even when it is really, really difficult. Costly grace means entering into the hard and scary task of standing up to a world that crushes people. Cheap grace is a two-dollar bottle of wine. Costly grace is trying to live as if food is from God, and the earth that produces it is from God, and the farmers who grow it are from God, and the workers who transport it and sell it are from God, and our bodies that need it for nourishment are from God. And trying to live that way is hard.

It is about a lot more than food. It is about treating people as if God made them and they matter. It is about naming and resisting the things in the world and our own minds that tell us that we should be afraid, and anxious, and fighting all the time. It is about seeing one another as human beings rather than objects. But in a way, it is about food as well, because every spiritual teaching we have in Christianity plays out simultaneously in the tangible, material world of food and eating. Every single high-minded, abstract theological idea we have — grace, redemption, creation, justice — is connected somewhere in our scripture and tradition with what we put in our mouths. We embody what we believe through communions and coffee hours, feasting and fasting, saying grace and sipping wine. The Christian tradition is full of food stories and food teachings and food rituals because food is one of the places where what we believe meets how we live. It is really difficult to break away from a world which tries to teach us to fear scarcity and look out for only ourselves. So this is not about guilt and shame and feeling bad every time you buy something other than organic, fair trade quinoa. But it is about imagining what it would look like if the ways that we bought and sold and ate food honored what is sacred. Maybe it looks like pausing to give thanks before meals, and seeing how that changes things. Or maybe it looks like this: In that movie, two sisters live in a rural village in Denmark, leading a small Christian sect that their father founded, practicing total austerity and solemnity. One day, a French woman arrives at their door, a friend of a friend, fleeing political persecution, and asks them to take her in as their housekeeper because she has nowhere else to go. For ten years, she lives with them, making their terrible bleak soup and cleaning their cold and dreary house, until one day she gets word that she has won a large sum of money. She asks the two sisters whether she can prepare a feast for them and their friends as a gesture of gratitude for welcoming her in, and they agree. They start to regret their decision as her supplies begin to arrive — rare and expensive wines; live turtles in crates; exotic fruits that they have never seen before. What is this, they wonder? It must be sinful to eat so extravagantly; maybe even satanic. They meet in secret with their church, and they agree that everyone will eat the feast, but they will all do their best not to take the slightest pleasure in it. But as they gather and Babette expresses her love and gratitude through the medium of food, a transformation begins to take place. The austerity begins to break; there are smiles and laughter; old grudges are mended and old romances are rekindled. It is costly grace, freely given. It invites us to care for one another, to share out of our own abundance when we can, rather than fearing scarcity. May we have the courage to try.

**Chapter 7 : Free market - Wikipedia**

*A market economy is a system where the laws of supply and demand direct the production of goods and services. Supply includes natural resources, capital, and labor.. Demand includes purchases by consumers, businesses, and the governme.*

Shawn Ritenour, economics professor at Grove City College, offers an insightful biblical defense of free markets. Paul Kengor, executive director of the Center. Shawn Ritenour, before we get into more detailed questions, give us a synopsis of your book and your motivation for writing it. The book demonstrates that the foundation of economic laws are derived from a Christian understanding of nature and humanity; explains basic economic principles of the market economy and applies them to various economic problems; and shows that Christian ethics regarding property implies a free economy. I wrote the book because I had not found any other book that satisfactorily integrated systematic economics rooted in human action with the Christian doctrines of man and creation as well as the Christian ethic of property. Professors at Christian colleges and universities are mostly left to supplement one of the standard works with articles from an explicitly Christian perspective. Many of these materials do not advocate biblical principles in the area of the state and economic policy but merely offer interventionism dressed-up in Christian language. If so, is that Scriptural? The foundation of economic activity and policy is private property. All action requires the use of property and all economic policy is about how people can legally use their property. To benefit from the division of labor, we must be able to exchange our products, which requires private property. Private property is definitely Scriptural. The Bible explicitly prohibits theft, fraud, moving property barriers, debasing money, violating labor contracts, as well as coveting. These prohibitions apply to both citizens and rulers. In my text, I apply this conclusion to issues such as confiscatory taxation, government subsidies, business regulation, and monetary inflation. I find it very telling that Karl Marx was first and foremost against private property, not to mention against God as well. Abolition of private property. A student of mine had a teacher at a private Christian school in Ohio who instructed the class that as Christians they should be communists. Can you address this argument? Communism can be condemned strictly on the basis of the Christian ethic of property among other reasons. Nothing in Scripture either commands or implies that the means of production should be controlled by the state. The various Christians still owned their property, but were generous in sharing whenever they saw a need. When Peter rebukes Ananias in Acts 5, he explicitly says that both the property that Ananias and Sapphira sold and the monetary proceeds from selling it were theirs to do with what they wanted. That is not the gospel according to Marx. I see no other way around that conclusion, especially when we realize that, in our day of mass democracy, the state usually accomplishes policies of wealth redistribution by inciting envy and covetousness among the populace. We have people in this society who portray profits as greedy or unjust. Profit is the reward entrepreneurs receive for more successfully producing what people want. This is no easy thing to do. Entrepreneurs must invest in present production of goods they sell in the future. Neither entrepreneurs nor government bureaucrats know exactly what future demand will be. Therefore, production necessitates bearing risk. If the entrepreneur forecasts future demand incorrectly, he will waste resources and reap losses. If he forecasts the future correctly, he serves his fellow man by producing goods people want. It seems only right that such producers are rewarded with profit. In a free market, the only way entrepreneurs earn profits is to serve customers better than anyone else. Certainly the Scriptures are clear that when we see our neighbor in real need, we are called to do more than merely wish him well. We are called to share our material possessions whether that is food, clothing, and shelter, or money he can use to pay for such goods. However, the Bible never calls upon the state to force people to do so. All of the charity we see provided by Christians in the New Testament was exactly that: It was voluntary sharing by caring Christians. That is how we truly love our neighbor. It cannot be done. It also fails to achieve the explicit goal of its advocates. Government spending must be financed by taxes, borrowing, inflation, or some combination of the three. Economics teaches us that all three ways hamper the market economy and result in capital consumption, which causes relative impoverishment, not prosperity. Violating the morality of private property has disastrous

consequences. Shawn Ritenour, this book is much needed. Where do you recommend that readers go to buy a copy of your book? The book is for sale at the usual places on-line: You can also order it direct from the publisher at [www](http://www). It has been a pleasure.

**Chapter 8 : Feminist Pastor: God's "Free Market" Economy**

*At its most basic, a free market economy is one that is governed strictly by the forces of supply and demand with no governmental influence. In practice, however, nearly all legal market economies must contend with some form of regulation. Economists describe a market economy as one where goods.*

Robyn Morrison *The Invisible Hand: God of the Free Market* Robyn J. Adam Smith, founder of modern capitalism, referred to an invisible hand. Subsequently other economists have relied on a faith-based belief in the invisible hand of the market as a natural law, or form of Providence. An underlying belief in the invisible hand of the market as the protector of the common good has been a dominant force in economic thought. Capitalists have, and continue to, promote free markets as a modern day absolute or god. This paper provides an introduction to the ideology of the invisible hand, and compares that ideology to Wesleyan Christian theologies. The paper compares and contrasts 18th Century contemporaries Adam Smith economist and John Wesley theologian with 21st Century contemporaries Thomas Piketty economist and Joerg Rieger theologian. What wisdom can we gain from Piketty and Rieger as we look forward to Capital in the 21st Century? No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. The most idolatrous claim of the Christian right is that the invisible hand of the free market He first introduced the concept in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, written in 1759. In this work, however, the idea of the market is not discussed, and the word "capitalism" is never used. By the time Smith wrote *The Wealth of Nations* in 1776, the invisible hand is more directly linked to the concept of the market Sen, Amartya. In both instances, Smith used the phrase an invisible hand, not the invisible hand. Smith advocated that self-interest works to promote public good because of the laws of nature divine Providence. For Smith, and his followers, any human intervention especially by *The Invisible Hand: Contrary to most modern economists, Smith rejected the idea that selfishness is a virtue. The Theory of Moral Sentiments* was written to defend certain virtues, including altruism. An invisible hand would make nearly the same distribution of the necessities of life which would have been made had the earth been divided into equal portions among all its inhabitants Smith, Critics point out that Adam Smith appeared to be ignorant of the growing inequality and plight of those at the bottom of his own society "the beggars, child laborers, and majority of factory workers Heilbroner, Since the time of Adam Smith, the self-regulating nature of free markets has been a dominant belief. Smith did not believe in wealth accumulation, he had a disdain for the vanity of riches Heilbroner, He believed accumulation would lead to investment in machinery, leading to more demand for workers. Smith also believed that population growth would eventually force wages toward subsistence. Accumulation of wealth would first raise the wages of the working class, and then in turn there would be an increase in the number of children who would grow to a working age, increasing the supply of labor. Has the economy actually worked this way? Smith predicted very long term economic cycles, in the long term the growth momentum of society would come to a halt. Smith once mentioned two hundred years as the longest period over which a society *The Invisible Hand: Smith believed government did have a role in a civil society. For Adam Smith, the great enemy to free markets was not the government per se but monopoly in any form Heilbroner, Unlike Adam Smith, Wesley was very familiar and concerned with the plight of the working class poor and the unemployed in England. Wesley regarded the markets and the whole realm of business and labor as one in which Christian ethics ought to be given an opportunity to function Madron, Wesley believed that at times governmental planning and control were necessary to alleviate conditions that were harming the poor, especially during times of economic crisis. In contrast the followers of Adam Smith not only possessed a belief in the infallibility of unimpeded free markets, they paired that with a belief in the Providence of private property rights. John Wesley went so far as to advocate the practice of a community of goods among Methodists, to bring them as close as possible to the practices of the early Jesus movement Madron, However, Wesley was not an early socialist he merely promoted a spirit of cooperation rather than cut-throat competition. Schumpeter predicted the demise of capitalism. I do not think it can. According to Schumpeter, it would be the success of capitalism that would eventually undermine the social institutions*

which protect it. Writing in , Schumpeter predicted a kind of ennui, a loss of belief in capitalist ideologies Heilbroner, , would overtake the capitalist world. His was not so much an economic prognosis as a social one, a judgment about the direction from which the winds of cultural change would blow. Whereas capitalism has worshipped the power of the free market, there is an emerging super class of powerful capitalists elites exerting their power to control markets for their self-interest as evidenced in corporate tax cuts, government bailouts and subsidies to protect corporations from the consequences of their losses, and corporate influence on politics and the courts impeding the administration of justice. While Adam Smith believed an invisible hand of the market would protect the common good “ over two hundred years later it is rather obvious that was merely a myth. Free markets may have produced economic growth “ but the rising tide has not lifted all boats Reiger, In *Capital in the Twenty-first Century*, Thomas Piketty focused his research on economic inequality and its effects. He cautioned against a belief in an economic determinism the invisible hand of free markets. The ideology supporting market fundamentalism is based on claims of faith “ images of Providence “ notions the ultimate reality God. It is important to understand the myth of the invisible hand as a myth, rather than the ultimate truth. Joerg Rieger, a 21st Century Wesleyan theologian, raised theological questions similar to those raised by John Wesley when Wesley responded to Adam Smith and emerging laissez-faire capitalists. The financial elites who are increasingly hoarding wealth and power have risen to power because of capitalism. This God is the God who led the Israelites out of captivity in Egypt. This God is the God of the Hebrew prophets giving them voice to speak truth to power and wealth. We should realize that self-interest is human nature, and necessary for our survival. And yet, we need to imagine the Sacred Other. If God is within, as well as beyond the Other, then we cannot love God without loving our neighbor as ourself Mark Our connection, or interrelationship with the Sacred Other is not idealism, it is the hidden truth of nature, the economy, and markets. Conclusion and continued inquiry Is capitalism destined to consume the social structures that allowed its success as Schumpeter predicted? There is no longer any absolutely free market if there ever was. There is no invisible hand of the market. There is no natural law that will prevent the concentration of wealth and power. We do not have a name for the economic system and political system that is or might be arising after over two hundred years of capitalism and democracy, but it is not the capitalism envisioned by Adam Smith. *Capitalism and Christianity, American Style*. *Capital in the Twenty-first Century*. *Theology, Economics, and the Future*. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. *The Wealth of Nations*.



**Chapter 9 : The Inseparable Link Between Morality And Economics**

*In economics, a free market is an idealized system in which the prices for goods and services are determined by the open market and by the laws and forces of supply and demand are free from any intervention by a government, by a price-setting monopoly, or by other authority.*

He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the Lord, he gave them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars. Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal. These were the clans of the Zorathites. These were the sons of Etam: These were the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem. Ashhur, the father of Tekoa, had two wives, Helah and Naarah; And if we sit here, we die also. So now come, let us go over to the camp of the Syrians. If they spare our lives we shall live, and if they kill us we shall but die. But when they came to the edge of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no one there. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas which means son of encouragement, a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you. O Lord my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent. He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters; he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind; he makes his messengers winds, his ministers a flaming fire. He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved. He placed forces in all the fortified cities of Judah and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim that Asa his father had captured. The Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father David. He did not seek the Baals, but sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not according to the practices of Israel. Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand. And all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor. And Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon, for the tent of meeting of God, which Moses the servant of the Lord had made in the wilderness, was there. But David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem. Moreover, the bronze altar that Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, had made, was there before the tabernacle of the Lord. And Solomon and the assembly sought it out. And Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah the firstborn, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh. And Obed-edom had sons: Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sachar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth, Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peullethai the eighth, for God blessed him. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So

also he who had the two talents made two talents more.