Economics: Capitalism vs Socialism

The gods We Imagine—part 8

November 15, 2026

DAY 1: This week…

1. A staggering 41% of Gen-Z'ers (ages 18-29) now favor socialism over capitalism. Why? They believe socialism would do far better. Are they right? What does the bible have to say on economics and human nature?

Review of "The gods We Imagine"

2. In our current sermon series, we are exploring "The 'gods' We Imagine" cultural ideas, people, movements, worldviews and narratives that secular (and some Christians) believe are THE answers to human dilemmas on one hand, and human satisfaction on the other.

3. Genesis tells us there is a moral framework to life: a moral order and moral laws. Proverbs helps us gain ***understanding*** of how the world really works, not the world we wish it would be. Foolishness is insisting on living in the world as you want it to be rather than the world as it is.

The "gods" We Imagine are rooted, not in reality
but in the world we want it to be.

Psalm 119:130 The unfolding of Your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simpleton (utopian).

4. Why do so many reject capitalism? People reject capitalism for a variety of reasons:

a. Many equate capitalism with ***crony capitalism.***

Secularists believe we can take the "crony" and greed out of human nature by going to socialism.

b. The longing for fairness, equality, etc.

Many secularists define fairness and equality by having **equal outcomes**. "Everyone 'ought' to have the same."

c. A redefinition of "work;" rejection of work as it often is in the real world.

Some secularists define their job, their work in terms of a route to satisfaction, the ability to use their interests and talents to not only provide a core satisfaction, but also to see a tangible benefit to the world, especially the less fortunate.

d. A rejection of the difficulties and demands of work.

For the vast majority of people work is "*work*." There are responsibilities, duties, deadlines, pressure to perform, difficulties in working with co-workers or a boss that hardly uses any talents, interests, strengths, or one's degree from the university.

e. A rejection of the reality of human nature

Secular beliefs minimize the reality and power of biblical virtues like incentive, diligence, flexibility, initiative, etc. that provides the drive and ability to "get ahead." (A strong work ethic).

5. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: What does the bible say about economics?

1. Though the bible does not use the word capitalism or socialism, the biblical principles of economics and work clearly point to what we call capitalism.

2. You will find that biblical economics coincides with how the bible describes human nature. It deals with the reality of both our dignity and depravity.

3. Underneath each of the biblical references look for the virtues, promises, and consequences described as to economics. Due to space not every virtue will be seen in the following verses, but virtues include: a healthy work ethic, saving, generosity, integrity, incentive, diligence, laziness, the sluggard, fairness in dealings, good will, etc.).

*Proverbs 10:2 Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit, but righteousness delivers from death. **4** A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. **5** He who gathers in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame.*

Proverbs 11:1 A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is his delight.

*Proverbs 11:24 One gives freely yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.**25** Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.*

Proverbs 12:11 Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.

Proverbs 12:27 Whoever is slothful will not roast his game, but the diligent man will get precious wealth.

Pro. 13:11 Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.

Prov. 13:25 The righteous has enough to satisfy his appetite, but the belly of the wicked suffers want.

Prov. 14:23 In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty.

Prov. 14:31 Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.

4. We will continue this study tomorrow. So, far what strikes from these verses?

DAY 3: What does the bible say about economics? (Continued from yesterday)

1. Underneath each of the biblical references look for the virtues, promises, and consequences described as to economics. Due to space not every virtue will be seen in the following verses, but virtues include: a healthy work ethic, saving, generosity, integrity, incentive, diligence, laziness, the sluggard, fairness in dealings, good will, etc.).

Prov. 14:27 Whoever is greedy for unjust gain troubles his own household, but he who hates bribes will live.

Prov. 16:8 Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice.

Prov. 16:11 A just balance and scales are the Lord's; all the weights in the bag are his work.

Prov. 16:26 A worker's appetite works for him; his mouth urges him on.

Prov. 18:9 Whoever is slack in his work is a brother to him who destroys.

Prov. 18:15 Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep, and an idle person will suffer hunger.

Pro 19:17 Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed

Prov. 20:4 The sluggard does not plow in the autumn; he will seek at harvest and have nothing.

Pr. 20:13 Don't Love sleep lest you come to poverty; open your eyes and you will have plenty…

Galatians 6:5 For each one must bear his own load.

1 Timothy 5:8 If anyone does not provide for his own relatives, and especially for his own family he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever

Ephesians 4:28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

2. Look back at the verses you read yesterday. Add the verses from today, jot down the virtues that the bible teaches as to economics.

DAY 4: Important observations about economics and human nature.

Proverbs 24:30-32 Behold, I passed by the field of a sluggard, by the vineyard of a man without sense, and lo, it was all overgrown with thorns, its ground was covered with weeds and its stone wall was broken down.

Then I saw and considered it; I looked and received instruction. [33] A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, [34] and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.

Proverbs 6:6 Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways and be wise. [7] Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, [8] she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest. [9] How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? [10] A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest,[11] and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.

1. No system of economics is perfect. And because of our sin nature, no economic system is immune from "cronyism", corruption, or greed. Capitalism does provide the opportunities to:

a. Take responsibility for your work for higher reasons than just working for the state.

b. Enjoy the rewards of your labor

c. Suffer the natural consequences of slacking off, being lazy, putting in minimal "effort," etc.

d. Develop the virtues associated with "honest pay for an honest day's work."

2. The bible highlights:

Incentive. Why should someone be diligent? (1) To provide for your needs and the needs of your family/ relatives. (2) To "pay your own way," and not be dependent on others. (3) To save for an uncertain future. (4) To advance your career, thereby providing more resources for you family. (5) To be able to voluntarily help others who would benefit from your generosity.

Diligence. Diligence is rewarded. The sloth, the lazy, and the sluggard suffer the consequences of their slackness.

Integrity. Honesty and integrity are eventually rewarded, while dishonesty eventually catches up with debilitating consequences.

Generosity. Generosity is not forced (like taxes). Generosity allows the worker and giver to make a difference with their lives through their hard work. A legitimate sense of purpose and meaning is added to the value of your work.

3. Look back over the verses and virtues we've studied.

4. Personalize this study. Is there an attitude to change about work or money? Is there something you'd like to do better regarding your work ethic and why you work?

DAY 5: Some contrasts of socialism with capitalism:

1. Socialism is a system based on collective or government ownership of goods and services, as opposed to private ownership or markets. Socialism is driven by class warfare, the claim that the "workers" are kept down and exploited by wealthy, powerful forces, and that only the forced seizure and redistribution of capital will produce a more egalitarian and just society.

2. Socialism claims to want equality of outcome for everyone. The bible's focus is on individual responsibility to do the best you can do, regardless of outcome.

3. Under socialism, (a) Private property is eventually abolished and (b) Property and industries now belong to the states. The bible sees private property as something of value. This is especially seen when Israel moves into the Promised Land. God gives the twelve tribes specific boundaries and land in which to operate, work, and live. Private property was to be passed down through the generations as an inheritance.

4. Socialism virtually strips away personal incentive to work hard, to be diligent, go the extra mile, etc. The "god" we imagine (socialism) is at odds with the realities of human nature.

5. The history of socialism demonstrates the terrible ultimate consequences of socialism. About twenty-three nations have tried socialism. Eventually, countries either do a U-turn like England in the 1980's, Sweden in the modern era, or go into economic collapse like Eastern Europe under Russian socialism, Cuba or Venezuela.

6. There is no system of economics that has the capacity to lift people out of poverty like capitalism.

7. Socialism almost always ends up in communism no matter how you dress up socialism as "democratic" socialism.

8. Socialism is not just an economic system. It is also a moral, governmental, and philosophical system. It always starts out by being touted as an economic matter, but history tells us that once the socialist train starts down the tracks it always adds its own brands of moral, government, and philosophical ways of life. The historical consequences drive countries toward *economic* debt, loss of jobs, and an economy with increased taxes, prices, and decrease amounts of goods and services. But the country is usually driven toward a national collapse, and many times, the deaths of its own citizens.

9. As we we've seen in our series, The gods We Imagine," ideas that are primarily rooted in humanism, Marxism, universalism, post-modernism, etc. do not align with the reality of the moral world God created, nor do they align with human dignity and human depravity.

10. When our thinking and ideas reflect reality, not how we wish the world was, then we have the opportunity to live lives based on genuine understanding of who we really are and how the world really is. In short, we have the opportunity to be wise, to build our lives, families, finances, businesses on a foundation of bedrock and not on the shifting sands of how we wish the world was. That is how "fools" (a technical term in Proverbs) live.