

Can Christian Socialism Be Reconciled With The Ten Commandments?

Can there be such a hybrid as **Christian socialism**?

The very concept of Christian Socialism is difficult to define because it implies that there are other denominational species of socialism...Jewish socialism...Muslim socialism...Hindu socialism...well you get the idea.

Where did this idea come from? It's not scriptural. So here is...

(Click on the tabs below to open a panel. Reclick to close to minimize scrolling.)

A short history of socialism

The attempt to integrate man-made **economic theory** with Christian God-revealed **religion** began in the middle of the 19th century with the rise of the industrial revolution...when entrepreneurs produced goods and services on a large scale.

This concentrated significant wealth in the hands of those creative people and companies. While the rest became workers producing and laying the vast miles of railroad track needed to move people and goods...or weaving the cloth that sewing factories would make into clothing...or importing tea or coffee or wine into countries that couldn't grow those things. And so on.

Christian socialism appeared at the beginning of the industrial revolution and coincided with the publication in 1848 of Karl Marx's *The Communist Manifesto*.

Then Anglicans and Catholics...unmoved by the centuries old rich-overlord/poor-serf relationship...developed troubled consciences that the rich-industrialist/poor-worker relationship was neither *fair* nor *just* according to...**unspecified**...Christian principles.

And thus began religion's attempt to close the gap between the poor and the industrialists...on the theory that the effects of competitive private ownership of property...which is *capitalism*...undermined Christian “ ideals” (not principles) of what economics should do **to** the rich and **for** the poor.

So let's compare the two...

Christian socialism and the gospels

If the Christian ideal is to keep [the covenant with God](#)...and so it must be...then Christian socialism becomes a *contradiction*...and contradictions never represent truth...for they are always false. Here's why...

Christian socialism can't replace or enhance Christian charity (Mt 6:1ff; 7:12; 10:42) because churches **invite** your charitable donation to the welfare of others. You may decline the invitation for any reason whatsoever. Charity is voluntary.

Socialist welfare giving must be implemented by force through taxation policies of a ruling dictator or elite politicians. Your consent is not required and you are not free to decline.

One important injustice inherent in Christian socialism is that Christian churches are exempt by law from contributing to the tax monies...that must be obtained from productive working people...to fund any socialist program.

Such forced 'giving' has no spiritual merit even if it is called Christian socialism. Or even if such Christian socialism has the approval of some Christians. Baptizing something and naming it Christian socialism doesn't make it Christian. (For example...if you baptize a monkey...does that make it a Christian?)

God's way with us is by mutual consent through covenants and never by force.

Much of what is called Christianity is about social justice and helping the poor. Yet...

The gospels do not indicate that Jesus came to save the world from poverty through Christian socialism
...but to save it from sin... which is violating the covenant with God.

Yet...Jesus was not insensitive to the poor...and encouraged helping them (Mt 19:21). However...he does not view legitimately earned wealth as unfair to others (Mt 20 1-16).

And he does not propagandize for a vague form of "social justice" that requires wealth transfer from society's producers to the non-productive through confiscation by unelected bureaucrats.

That would be a contradiction (and contradictions are always false) because you cannot provide justice to one person or group by inflicting injustice on another.

Every child understands this injustice when a parent forces one sibling to give her toys to a younger sibling.

It's probably a good guess that most Christians have not read the tenets of socialism to understand why Christian socialism is incompatible with God's Ten Commandments. And also to notice how many of the Manifesto's tenets are already in operation through socialist government programs. And so here are the Marxist commandments which underlie Christian socialism...

The ten 'commandments' of Karl Marx

1. **Marx: Expropriation of property in land and all rents of land to public purposes.**

Expropriation means taking by the state. This is a violation of God's Commandment "Thou shalt not steal". God makes this specific (Deut 2:3ff) where he tells Moses that even he may not take what belongs to others but must pay for everything he and the Israelites eat and drink **with silver**. And God tells Moses that he is not entitled to so much as foot of land belonging to others. By this Commandment God recognizes and affirms private property ownership.

2. **Marx: A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.**

When Peter was confronted by the tax collectors to know if Jesus did NOT pay their tax...Peter agreed Jesus did NOT (Mt 17:24-25). Again Jesus is confronted with whether it is lawful to pay Caesar's taxes (Mt 22:15-22) and Jesus looks at the coin with the emperor's image on it and says "Render to Caesar what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God." The word render does not mean "to give"...it means "to give back".

Today (March 2009) there are reports in the news that various states are attempting to give back to Caesar federal reserve notes ...which have no intrinsic value... by not accepting his "stimulus package" (Google "states assert sovereignty") or by making gold and silver money the money in commerce (Google "Montana gold and silver dollars").

3. **Marx: Abolition of all rights of inheritance.**

Your children cannot inherit what was expropriated through coercion by the state.

4. **Marx: Confiscation of all property of all emigrants and rebels.**

If you protest socialist government policies or try to leave the jurisdiction of the socialist government it will confiscate all of your property. ***This includes your body*** because...as you will see below...you have a liability to the state to enforced labor according to its dictates. This violates God's Commandment "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods." As above...in this Commandment God affirms the right to one's private property.

5. **Marx: Centralization of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly**

The private central bank has existed since 1913 as the Federal Reserve. All of the notes in circulation as paper money or as computer digits are borrowed and must be paid back at interest. Every time the Congress borrows...in your name...a billion here or there for a socialist program...your children and grandchildren will have to pay that back. That is the reason why the enforced labor provision...and the inability to escape it...is central to socialist government. (Google "US domestic army"). This amounts to stealing the labor and resources of future generations in violation of God's Commandments about not stealing and about not coveting thy neighbor's property.

6. Marx: Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.

This is already a practice through the FCC's control of the airwaves. Also...through the [501c3 application](#) churches cannot express their lack of support for politicians who are morally degenerate or habitual liars. That is...such churches that have contracted to be supervised by the government cannot fulfill their moral obligation to enforce God's laws against bearing false witness or stealing or partial birth abortion in violation of the Commandment "Thou shalt not kill".

7. Marx: Increase of factories and instruments of production owned by the State, the bringing into cultivation of waste-lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.

The socialist government will control the means of production which will get rid of competitors from the private sector. Without private sector competition...the socialist government will determine the cost of everything. Currently (March 2009) the state is buying up banks (Google "bank bailouts") to fulfill the fifth of Marx's planks above. The socialist government will control the land and what is grown on it. That way the socialist government can manipulate the food supply keeping its subjects dependent on it for life's sustenance. By controlling the food supply and outlawing private farming (Google "private farms outlawed") state policy determines who gets to eat and who starves (refer to the "common", not "private", agricultural plan above). The ability to decide who eats and who starves potentially violates God's Commandment "Thou shalt not kill".

8. Marx: Equal liability of all to labor. Establishment of industrial armies especially for agriculture (see above).

Almost a hundred years before Marx...the German philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote that the highest morality a person could participate in was his duty to the state. Non-socialist Christians would hold that one's highest moral obligations are to God's laws which supercede socialist state laws. Kantianism and Marxism violate the First Commandment..."I am the Lord thy God...thou shalt not have strange gods before me". For Christians...the Ten Commandments dictate morality...not Kant and Marx who turn God into the state.

9. Marx: Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more equitable distribution of the population over the country.

It was a characteristic of slavery that any individual slave...man...woman...or child could be taken from any place at any time and "distributed" somewhere else. Husbands...wives...children could be moved at will. This makes it impossible to fulfill God's Commandments "Honor thy father and thy mother" if you don't know who or where they are. And "thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife" if a government official can "redistribute" someone's wife to meet the allocation needs of a socialist government. (School busing was an early experiment in redistributing the population...and parents had nothing to say about it. It is reported that today there are more than 800 detention centers on American soil ready to redistribute dissenters. In the First Commandment God tells us he freed us from slavery to the state so that we could be free and willing participants in a beneficial contract with him. Google "detention centers").

10. Marx: Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labour in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, &c., &c

Education in public schools makes it impossible for parents to pass on to their children God's Ten Commandments (especially since those children may be "redistributed" elsewhere). All children will be educated to socialist government propaganda in its schools. They may never learn of the existence of God's laws (Google "Ten Commandments outlawed"). They will not be children of God...they will be children of state bureaucrats and will go to school part time and work part time where the government needs them in order to fulfill the other tenets of the socialist program. This violates the First Commandment..."I am the Lord they God...thou shalt not have strange gods before me."

The comparison between God's law and socialist laws is made only to show that they are completely incompatible...and that Christian socialism is a contradiction.

Many people the world over choose to live under socialism. And they know that's what it is. It is not Christian charity disguised as Christian socialism. There can be no such thing as "Christian Socialism" without redefining both words.

Irreconcilable differences between God and Marx

1. **God**...always invites us to be in a relationship with him through contracts or covenants. We can choose freely to be or not to be in a relationship with God. This

covenant is a set of mutually agreed upon benefits. It is binding on each party by their consent.

2. **Socialism**...is a relationship imposed by a ruling elite class of humans who enforce their will through law and physical force without consent (slavery).
3. **God**...binds himself to act in certain ways guaranteed in the contract or covenant. (For example Mt 19:16ff...God promises eternal life...you promise to keep the Commandments.)
4. **Socialism**...the ruling elite bind themselves to nothing...and only guarantee that those subject to their rule will act in certain ways with or without their consent (for example...school busing that redistributed children according to government directive). Anything promised by a socialist government is a privilege...not a contractual right...and can be withdrawn on a whim.
5. **God**...There is a penalty clause in every covenant starting with [Adam and Eve](#). This is invoked only if the agreement is violated...by going back on one's freely given word to perform in a chosen manner.
6. **Socialism**...penalties and punishments are meted out for failing to obey the arbitrary will of the ruling elite. People can be incarcerated without charges...without recourse to courts and without assistance of counsel. (For example "enemy combatants" held in Guantanamo).
7. **God**...forgiveness for violating the contract with him is readily available.
8. **Socialism**...does not seek repentance from those who violate its rules. It only seeks to punish. (For example...the fourth socialist plank above does not provide for return of confiscated property of those who dissent from...but later obey...the imposed rules.)
9. **God**...you are free to live life as you choose as long as you abide by the covenant of the Ten Commandments.
10. **Socialism**...all aspects of life are determined by the state.


As humans we have choice...without which there is no sin and no morality...and can choose who our master is to be. People can be children of God...or children of the state as defined in the Manifesto...but not of both. Christian socialism is still socialism even if it's not Christian.

To establish a new religion and call it Christian Socialism is like trying to mix oil and water. The concoction may shimmer with iridescent color and please the eye...but the oil only covers the water...the oil does not blend with the water.

And like many things in nature that look pretty...the mixture is poisonous.

Who would...

- drink water mixed with oil?...
- bathe in water mixed with oil?...
- fill a gas tank with water mixed with oil?...
- baptize with water mixed with oil?



Mixing the life-giving water of Christianity with the oil of political economic theory cancels the meaning of both and results in a nullity.

If *ministry* is as we have defined it...then it is difficult to see how ministers can ever bring themselves and the people closer to God through state-sponsored socialism...even if it is called Christian socialism.

Return from [christian socialism to separation of church and state](#) to see how churches invite government interference in their affairs through contracts.

Make sure your ministry is capable of bringing you and your congregation safely home to God. Start by making sure you're doing ministry for God according to [the covenant](#), God's contract with us, and not for a worldly government.