



## RESURRECTION DAY 2012: 'JESUS WAS A SOCIALIST'?

"I am for doing good to the poor, but I differ in opinion of the means. I think the best way of doing good to the poor, is not making them easy in poverty, but leading or driving them out of it. In my youth I travelled much, and I observed in different countries, that the more public provisions were made for the poor, the less they provided for themselves, and of course became poorer. And, on the contrary, the less was done for them, the more they did for themselves, and became richer." --Benjamin Franklin, "Management of the Poor" (1766)

In this Holy Week of Easter, one of the socialist communiqués destined for my "Know Thy Enemy" email folder was a promotion for a new "award-winning" film, "Jesus was a Commie." The film was described as "an avant-garde conversation about critical social issues," and it supports the errant pop-thesis that Jesus advocated socialism.



As absurd as that title is, liberal atheists and too many well-meaning but chronically nescient Christians regularly assert that the communist doctrines of Karl Marx equate with the teachings of Jesus Christ -- that the central message of Christianity supports socialism.

Most notable among this week's Easter crop of socialist propagators was Barack Hussein Obama, who was out stumping for income redistribution by invoking a Biblical reference from Genesis 4, "I am my brother's keeper," to promote "redistributive justice" for socialist welfare programs to benefit "the least of these" (Matthew 25). At the same time, Obama condemned free enterprise as "you're-on-your-own economics."

Obama elaborated that "spreading the wealth around," socialism, "coincides with Jesus' teaching that 'for unto whom much is given, much shall be required'" (Luke 12:48). Apparently in Obama's deluded interpretation of the Gospel, "Jesus was a Commie."

This fallacious equation of socialism and the Gospel of Jesus was also promoted by the father of American socialism, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who declared, "Here is my principle: Taxes shall be levied according to ability to pay. That is the only American principle." Of course both the Roosevelt and Obama references are paraphrases of the gospel according to Karl Marx, whose manifesto maxim was, "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs."

In reality, there is no basis for this equation, as there is no instance when Jesus ever suggested, even in the broadest interpretation of the Gospel, that taking care of the poor, the hungry, the homeless, the weak, the widowed, the sick, the downtrodden, was the role of the state. There is no instance where any of the apostles or any of the prophets suggests that the state is a suitable surrogate for our individual responsibility to care for each other.

In fact, when the Biblical nation Israel desired a king (government) in the place of God, as outlined in I Samuel 8, our Creator warned that the price of choosing government over God would be death.

Moreover, Jesus always preached *individual* responsibility for our brothers and sisters, not collective statist mandates, and He made clear that the most impoverished among us are not the materially poor, but the poor in Spirit.

Obama preaches that the so-called [socialist government gospel](#) is "a reminder not only of what binds us together as a nation but also what binds us together as children of God." In reality, socialism is [fatally flawed](#), and [socialist advocates](#) have succeeded only in binding generations of Americans to [dependency upon the state](#).

Indeed, the failure of socialist doctrine was evident long before the word "socialism" became part of the common lexicon, as Benjamin Franklin noted in "Management of the Poor" written in 1766. Unfortunately, that lesson is lost on the Left today, as they endeavor to undermine the authority of our Constitution by replacing [Rule of Law](#) with [rule of men](#) and enact economic policies that are anathema to Liberty and appeal to the worst instincts of human nature.

Ironically, I would note in this Holy Week, which begins with the unjust crucifixion of Jesus by Pontius Pilate's government, in the 20th century, socialist governments crucified tens of millions of innocent men, women and children, both through murderous purges and deadly failures of centralized agricultural and economic planning.

Obama has devoted his entire political career to the resurrection of those same socialist doctrines. He now wants another presidential term to fully implement them in order to achieve his objective of "fundamentally transforming the United States of America," and if collective ignorance prevails, he may get it.

I think it's fair to conclude that Jesus was not a socialist or a capitalist, and for those predisposed to equate the central message of Christianity with Obama's Marxist doctrine, here are a few additional Gospel revelations to ponder.

Jesus emphasized the primacy of the individual as having unique value, each an irreplaceable soul, and each a unique personality bearing an individual imprinted fragment of the image of the eternal, infinite God. He preached that the individual is vastly more than a communal unit or a fractional piece of a socialist aggregate.

Jesus' teaching refuted materialism, while socialist doctrine is centrally concerned with materialism and its redistribution.

In Matthew 6:24, Jesus declares that no one "can serve two masters ... serve God and mammon" (materialism). Further, Matthew 6:25-34 tells us not to worry about material provision for life, those provisions about which socialists insist must be forcibly redistributed.

Also in Matthew 6, Jesus counsels, "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. ... When you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do ... that they may have glory from men." Conversely, socialism undermines individual acts of charity and the success of socialist politicians is predicated on public acts of "charity," funded through the forcible usurpation of wealth.

Central to the teaching of Jesus in regard to the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37), the wealthy young man (Matthew 19:16-30), taxation and tithing (Matthew 22:15-22), the widow's mites (Luke 21:1-4) and "everything in common" (Acts 4:32-37), is the fundamental principle of individual responsibility for each other as opposed to statist collective responsibility.

Fortunately, the authentic Gospel message, including the story of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, transcends all the earthly machinations of evil men. As Jesus told Pontius Pilate (John 18:36): "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but My kingdom is not from here."

To that end, I invite you to read the Good News about Jesus. (To our readers of faiths other than Christianity, we welcome you to read on, and we hope that this edition serves to deepen your understanding of our faith -- the faith of so many of our Founders. To all of our readers, we wish God's blessing and peace upon you and your families.)



The Empty Tomb

"On the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground,

the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." -- Luke 24:1-6

[Ronald Reagan](#) offered these words to skeptics: "I still can't help wondering how we can explain away what to me is the greatest miracle of all and which is recorded in history. No one denies there was such a man, that he lived and that he was put to death by crucifixion. Where ... is the miracle I spoke of? Well

consider this and let your imagination translate the story into our own time -- possibly to your own home town. A young man whose father is a carpenter grows up working in his father's shop. One day he puts down his tools and walks out of his father's shop. He starts preaching on street corners and in the nearby countryside, walking from place to place, preaching all the while, even though he is not an ordained minister. He never gets farther than an area perhaps 100 miles wide at the most. He does this for three years. Then he is arrested, tried and convicted. There is no court of appeal, so he is executed at age 33 along with two common thieves. Those in charge of his execution roll dice to see who gets his clothing -- the only possessions he has. His family cannot afford a burial place for him so he is interred in a borrowed tomb. End of story? No, this uneducated, property-less young man has, for 2,000 years, had a greater effect on the world than all the rulers, kings, emperors; all the conquerors, generals and admirals, all the scholars, scientists and philosophers who have ever lived -- all of them put together. How do we explain that -- unless He really was what He said He was?"

However you choose to worship, if you choose to do so at all, let us all be grateful that we are free to do so because generations of [American Patriots](#) have steadfastly defended Liberty against the rise of tyranny, in particular the spread of the insidious socialist oppression advocated by those who seek to enslave others.