

1  Capitalism & Socialism

2  Interpretive Issues

- **Descriptive** passages – passages of Scripture that describe what is happening

3 

Then fear came over everyone, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. Now all the believers were together and had everything in common. So they sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as anyone had a need.

Acts 2:43-45 (HCSB)

4  Interpretive Issues

- Descriptive passages – passages of Scripture that describe what is happening
- **Prescriptive** passages – passages of Scripture that prescribe or command a certain behavior or action

5 

“Repent,” Peter said to them, “and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

Acts 2:38-39 (HCSB)

6  Interpretive Issues

- General passages – passages of Scripture that speak to **all** of humanity or Christendom

7 

Then He said to [them] all, “If anyone wants to come with Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Luke 9:23 (HCSB)

for we walk by faith, not by sight

2 Cor 5:7 (HCSB)

8  Interpretive Issues

- General passages – passages of Scripture that speak to all of humanity or Christendom
- Specific passages – passages of Scripture that speak to a specific **person** or **situation**

9 

When Jesus heard this, He told him, “You still lack one thing: sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me.”

Luke 18:22 (HCSB)

“Come!” He said. And climbing out of the boat, Peter started walking on the water and came toward Jesus.

Matt 14:29 (HCSB)

10  **Definitions**

- Socialism: any of various economic and political theories advocating collective or governmental **ownership** and **administration** of the means of production and distribution of goods; a system of society or group living in which there is no **private** property

11  **Definitions**

- Capitalism: an economic system characterized by **private** or corporate ownership of capital goods, by investments that are determined by private decision, and by prices, production, and the distribution of goods that are determined mainly by **competition** in a market operating by **free** competition

12  **Socialistic passages?**

Now all the believers were together and had everything in **common**. So they sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as anyone had a need.

Acts 2:44-45 (HCSB)

13  **Socialistic passages?**

Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of his possessions was his own, but instead they held everything in **common**. And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on all of them.

14 

For there was not a needy person among them, because all those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the proceeds of the things that were

sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet. This was then distributed to each person as anyone had a need.

Acts 4:32-35 (HCSB)

15  **Socialistic passages?**

- Acts 5:1-11 (Ananias & Sapphira)
- Luke 18:18-23 [Matt. 19:16-22; Mark 10:17-22] (Rich young ruler)
- Matt. 20:1-6 (Parable of the workers)
- 1 Cor. 16:1-2 (Paul's call to support saints in Jerusalem)

16  **Capitalistic passages?**

For you yourselves know how you must imitate us: we were not irresponsible among you; we did not eat anyone's bread free of charge; instead, we labored and toiled, working night and day, so that we would not be a burden to any of you. It is not that we don't have the right [to support], but we did it to make ourselves an example to you so that you would imitate us.

17 

In fact, when we were with you, this is what we commanded you: "If anyone isn't willing to work, he should not eat." For we hear that there are some among you who walk irresponsibly, not working at all, but interfering with the work [of others]. Now we command and exhort such people, by the Lord Jesus Christ, that quietly working, they may eat their own bread

2 Thess 3:7-12 (HCSB)

18  **Capitalistic passages?**

- Proverbs 10:4; 12:11, 24, 27; 13:4, 11; 14:23; 28:19; 31:27 (Hard work & diligence)
- Deut. 24:14-15 (pay for hired workers)
- Ecclesiastes 11:6 (work hard)
- Matt. 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8 (always have the poor)
- Ex. 22:25 (lending allowed)

19  **Problems with Each**

1

- **Capitalism**
- Often leads to greed
- Often leads to dishonest gain
- Often leads to injustice (places value on money rather than people)

2

- **Socialism**
- Based on an ideal
- Often leads to greed
- Often leads to laziness

- Often leads to dishonest gain
- No way to ensure justice in real world

20  **Social Responsibility**

- The Bible teaches that Christians are to be **active** in social ministry
- Inside the church (**Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37**)
- Outside the church (**Deut. 24:17**)

21  **Conclusion**

- The Bible does not explicitly teach either socialism or capitalism
- The Bible is against **greed**, dishonest gain, exploitation of others, **injustice**, and **laziness**
- Passages that describe socialism, concern the **church** or Israel (not the whole of humanity) and they are **voluntary**