



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 28: Understanding the Rise of the Antichrist, Part 10

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Instructor: Steve Schmutzer

Review:

- We are presently studying those issues surrounding the rise of the antichrist: the future world conditions, and the various aspects about him which God's Word makes clear.
- Last week, we focused on the second half of **Daniel 11:39**. This part clearly states the antichrist's politics and his methods of governance.
- We noted three characteristics of the antichrist's leadership:
 1. He will work to tear down proven institutions and individuals of strength, resources, and influence.
 2. He will honor those who support him by giving them power and control.
 3. He will promote redistribution campaigns of land and resources.
- It is not difficult to see that these three things are hallmarks of a socialist-style leadership and I made the point that the antichrist will be the world's ultimate socialist.
- We looked at the history of socialism in our world and we explored why it has failed over and over wherever it has been implemented
- We looked at a number of specific examples, both those in history's view and those in current view. It's evident in the current view that socialism is now dominating the left's agenda.
- We saw how socialism is, at its core, a destructive and senseless design. It has always been this way, and the present thinly-veiled iterations are no different.
- Specifically, we asked ourselves three questions which guided last week's lesson:
 1. **What exactly is socialism?**
 2. **How has socialism become a part of our nation?**
 3. **What are examples in God's Word where we see the antichrist as a socialist?**
- The review of the first two points was mostly general, therefore we spent most of our time on the third point.
- We looked at multiple examples from Scripture that prove the antichrist will embrace socialism, and which show how he will take trends and ideas we see forming in our nation and in our world right now to a far greater level.
- I know it was an eye-opening lesson for a number of you. I gathered from some of the comments I subsequently received via email that these were matters some of you had not considered before.
- I also know last week's lesson made some of you uncomfortable. I understood from those communications that it had compelled a re-evaluation of some ideas that you'd been inclined to support.
- All things considered, I think it's a good thing that today we will explore one more question in response to this information:

I. "WHAT SHOULD BE THE CHRISTIANS RESPONSE TO SOCIALISM?"

- *I think all of us understand that we do not want to take any position, or form any affections which go AGAINST God's desires - at LEAST not if we want to be found faithful and true.*
- **NOTE:** As I often do with various lessons, I want to start with a high-altitude view and then get more granular as the lesson moves on. It's important to get us all on the same page.

- A. I want to begin by giving a series of True / False statements (NOTE: Some may seem obvious, but we need to start with those first):
1. The antichrist is someone who operates "instead of God, and against God."
 2. Satan is the ultimate depraved power behind the antichrist.
 3. The antichrist will persecute Christians who stand for their faith.
 4. The antichrist will restrict and prohibit the rights of anyone who does not conform to his political and economic system.
 5. The antichrist is against Israel and against the Jews.
 6. The antichrist will require conformity for individual benefit and common good.
- B. (NOTE: All the answers above are true. Now, let's go down another layer and get a bit more detailed with our True / False statements:
1. The antichrist will support the sovereign rights of individual nations.
 2. The antichrist will promote freedom of speech.
 3. The antichrist will promote tolerance.
 4. The antichrist will support one's right to have pride in their own nation.
 5. The antichrist will advance one's rights to own property and exercise independence.
 6. The antichrist will permit the free exercise of religion.
 7. The antichrist will create conditions favorable for healthy trade and business.
- C. NOTE: All of THOSE were false. Now let's go one last layer down. Here it gets a little bit more tricky, so think about it...)
1. The antichrist's political and economic ideals will be new ones the world has not seen before.
 - *F – There is "nothing new under the sun," and the various antichrist types, like Antiochus Epiphanes – prove the antichrist will build further on prior ideas.*
 2. The antichrist's supporters will be noted for their occultic affections, their thievery, their lawlessness, their rejection of God, their suppression of truth, their affection for deception, and their sexually deviant behavior.
 - *T – all of these qualities are specifically mentioned in Scripture as being characteristic of the antichrist's followers.*
 3. For the antichrist's system of political and economic governance to work, it will be important that all the facts of any matter are made clear to all.

- *F – he relies on lies. He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will throw truth to the ground.*
4. The antichrist will advance an agenda of globalist ideals, including the dissolution of traditional borders and control of the climate.
 - *T – Borders are what sovereign nations need to protect in order to survive as independent identities. There will be no sovereign nationalistic policies under the antichrist. Most of the Tribulation judgements impact the climate and the earth's welfare. The angel appeals for the recognition of God Almighty who made and controls the heavens and the earth, the springs of water, and the Two Witnesses take control of the environment to prove the authority of God, etc.*
 5. The antichrist's ideas, his economic system, and his political philosophy, will prove to be good for humanity.
 - *F – The Bible says in several places he will "cause astounding devastation...."*
 6. The antichrist will advance the principles of capitalism and a fair and free market.
 - *F – He will destroy 'mighty men' as all other socialist leaders have done, and he will promote redistribution policies.*

NOTE: Now let's start applying some basic logic and common sense as we address the question, "What should be the Christian's response to socialism?"

- D. The first point of common sense we need to apply here is this: "Satan supports socialism."
 1. This is not hard to see. In the ultimate rebellion against God, Satan works through the antichrist to promote the ultimate socialist system.
 2. The tenants of a socialist system are, in fact, counter to all designs of God. They go against God's laws and intentions for a law-abiding, free, productive, and prosperous society where individual rights are recognized and supported.
 3. **Proverbs 29:2** gives us a "cause and effect" insight on this very matter. It says, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked *man* rules, the people groan." There is a right way to rule, and a wrong way. Socialism is clearly a wrong way, and it's why Satan employs it.
 4. Frankly, this should be sufficient for all believers to have nothing to do with socialist ideals, and the people that promote them. The fact that it's so against God and His laws should be sufficient enough.
- E. That leads to the second logical point in this sequence, and it is this: "Socialism is, in fact, built on a basic rejection of God."
 1. Socialism envisions a set of perfect conditions, a so-called 'utopia,' a fantasy which is somehow achieved through humanity's own efforts and mutual goodwill.

2. Non-Christians find this idea an easy one to embrace. They believe mankind is essentially good, and they have rejected God. They refuse to acknowledge the truth that we are born into sin, and there is a God who will judge sin.
 3. Therefore, socialists' reason goes as follows: "If mankind is basically good, then why can't he become much better, and since God is not part of the equation, then why not achieve all this through human exertion and social engineering?"
 4. Socialism's underlying basic assumption that humanity can perfect itself through human engineered social means directly leads to one of its core tenants: a planned and tightly-controlled economy.
 5. Now think about this, it's straightforward: a planned economy needs planners. Along with this planning must come the need for control, as the plan is no good if people are allowed to go off plan. Therefore, EVERY aspect of individual decision-making must be diluted down.
 6. Control is more effective the more it is centralized, and so socialists see big government that calls ALL the shots as a good thing.
 7. It's important to understand that the socialist dream of extinguishing differences of class, wealth, social position, and so on, reeks of massive hypocrisy. Here's why....
 8. As I said, a planned and controlled economy requires planners and controllers (AKA "big government") who, by necessity, possess more power than any capitalist or any business owner could ever dream of possessing.
 9. While pretending to level the playing field for all people, socialism retains its planners and controllers, and adds more. All of them carry out the will of those at the top, proving that it is far more about power than it is about egalitarianism.
 10. It's easy to understand why socialized countries almost always end up being governed by insanely rich all-powerful tyrants and governing bodies who constantly seek to do away with individual liberties, and who constantly seek to suppress their expression.
 11. All of this, ALL OF THIS, can be tied back to a wrong view of God, and therefore, a wrong view of mankind's true condition. This is about disagreeing with the truth of the Bible on a very basic level, and Christians should have nothing to do with this.
- F. Contrast all this to the Christian view that God provides to each person individual liberty. Each person can choose for themselves an eternal future of blessing or curse.
1. The God you and I serve seeks a direct relationship with each individual person. This is something only He can do.

2. Human constructed social institutions that communicate with and control every human, and every human decision on the planet, reject those rights and liberties which God has provided.
 3. Christians believe in original sin, and in the fallen nature of man. The Christian view is one that understands that the only perfect state for humanity will come under the direct governance of Jesus Christ following His return.
 4. This is why Christianity has traditionally, and properly, viewed government as the preserver of freedom, order and justice under the laws of God.
 5. Socialists, on the other hand, think government is a revolutionary tool to be used by those who would choose to be their own gods. They want to reduce the population, promote evolution, and control the climate. Why? They believe the Creator's will and sovereign oversight is not the right approach.
- G. Here are some Biblical passages and principles to consider when pondering what the Christian response to socialism should be. There is no particular order to these, and this is only a partial list.
1. We know that, in this fallen world, the poor will always be with us. Man is not capable of engineering his own utopia.
 - a. Remember, material wealth is not necessarily an indication of God's blessing, in the same way poverty is not necessarily a sign of God's disapproval.
 - b. Jesus himself didn't have a place to lay His head (***Cf. Matthew 8:20***).
 - c. In fact, a Biblical concept that is taught over and over is it's often true that some are poor in material things but rich in spiritual things.
 - That is true for churches (***Cf. Revelation 2:9 'Smyrna' in poverty, but "rich"***).
 - It is true for individual people (***Cf. Luke 16:25 -Lazurus***).
 - d. The Bible frequently equates laziness, foolishness, immaturity, and lack of teachability as being causes of poverty. It's not always the case, but it often is (***Cf. Proverbs 24:33-34; 6:11; 13:8***).
 - e. Certainly, God never placed into His Word the principles of a welfare system where everyone depended on the government for their daily existence. In fact, the Bible extolls the virtues of hard work (***Genesis 2:15; Colossians 3:23-25; Ecclesiastes 9:10***).
 - f. Classes of people, like the poor, will always be with us in a fallen world: (***Cf. Leviticus 23:22***). While it's important to be considerate and compassionate, it's not reasonable from a Biblical standpoint to engineer their absence.
 - g. The very nature of the 10 Commandments suggests there are those who have and those who have not – “thou shalt not steal / covet, etc.”

2. What about nations? This is an issue many Christians and churches struggle with. Should we have nations / borders / nationalism, and so on?
 - a. IMPORTANT: Remember, if one is tempted to support a globalist ideal like “no borders,” then they are supporting an agenda that will ultimately be condemned by God (**Cf. Revelation 13:2-7**).
 - b. This has already happened before; an ancient globalist agenda was judged by God (**Cf. Genesis 11:1-9**). Nations were created at that point to AVOID a one-world governance.
 - c. As I’ve previously shared, even in the future Millennial Kingdom, a time of near perfection during Jesus Christ’s physical rule on earth, nations will still exist (**Cf. Revelation 21:24**). Individual nations are a part of God’s design.

3. What about private property and private ownership? One of the main thrusts of socialism is nobody should own anything that someone else does not own. Today’s leaders are even announcing, “You will own nothing and be happy.”
 - a. This is why nationalization of property or even redistribution occurs.
 - b. It is the transfer of rights of ownership from one individual to another, or even to one government (**Cf. Daniel 11:24,39 – both Antiochus Epiphanes and The Antichrist**).
 - c. The Biblical take on private property is one that takes seriously individual and familial ownership, (**Cf. Ezekiel 46:18** - *“The prince shall not take from the people’s inheritance, thrusting them out of their possession...”*)
 - d. Private ownership of property is so important in God’s economy that He instructed the Israelites in the laws of Jubilee, mandating the return of any alienated property to its original owner (or family) every 50 years.
 - e. And, in the story of Naboth’s vineyard (**1 Kings 21**), God’s displeasure with governmental confiscation of private property is made abundantly clear.

H. Summary:

1. **Man is not God, nor will he ever be.** It is man’s depravity that views himself as not needing God. Mankind is marinated in sin and completely incapable of engineering his own utopia.
2. **A rejection of God and His laws is what fuels socialism in the first place.** It is a godless agenda. It is why socialist efforts and policies have always failed; it’s why they are showing themselves as utter failures right now, and why they will fail catastrophically at the end of human history.
3. **Socialism is completely, 100%, totally, and unequivocally dependent on lies and deception.** Since the tenants of socialism do not work, truth must be suppressed, lies must prosper instead, and any means or person that provides the facts must be censored and silenced.
4. **In Romans 12:2, we are instructed to** “...not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Socialism wraps its ideals in

language that sounds inclusive, caring, and sensible on the surface, but which is completely destructive and deceptive instead. If we're supporting socialism's ideas and leaders, we are 'conforming to the pattern of this world.'

5. **I believe with all my heart that the Christian response to socialism should be a posture that is completely AGAINST it.** Socialism, and those various ideas that go with it, are not Godly, they are not Biblical. They have always brought ruin and a loss of liberties. God's Word makes it clear it is a system that will be judged. There is no room in any of it for the believer to support it.

NOTE: I want to begin concluding by looking at an example of some of these very matters. It concerns an issue we all endured, one way or another, in our recent past.

I bring it up here because it illustrates some of the points I have made, and I believe it is a problem that is likely to return. It concerns the government's efforts to control churches, worship, and conduct within Christian routines of fellowship via all the blatantly deceptive COVID-19 protocols.

Let's shoot straight with some plain truths here:

II. A BIBLICAL APOLOGETIC FOR AVOIDING THE CURRENT SOCIALIST CONDITIONING.

- A. First, Christ is Lord of all. He is the one true Head of the Church – and the ONLY Head of the Church.
 1. **Ephesians 1:22** says, *“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church.”*
 2. **Ephesians 5:23** states it simply, *“...the church is subject to Christ,”* and **Colossians 1:18** says the same thing, *“...He is the head of the body, the church...”*
 3. So, there should be no question here. Jesus Christ is the true Head of the church, and the church is therefore responsible to Him.
- B. Second, Jesus Christ is also King of kings— He is sovereign over every earthly authority.
 1. **1 Timothy 6:15** says, *“God is the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords.”*
 2. This self-evident fact is not only clear NOW, but also in the future. **Revelation 19:16** says about Jesus Christ upon His Second Coming, *“And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”*
 3. A church and a church leadership that is Biblically-grounded, will stand immovable on those two Biblical truths.
 4. As Christians, we are His people, and we are subject to Jesus Christ's will and commands as revealed in God's Word.
 - a. Therefore, I believe it is wrong to conform to government-imposed moratoriums concerning worship routines, including how many can attend, whether or not they can even attend, or sing, pass a communion plate, or engage in any fellowship of any sort.
 - b. Conformity of this sort is disobedience to our Lord's clear commands.

- C. Some will think my statements here are in conflict with the command to be subject to governing authorities laid out in *Romans Ch. 13* and *1 Peter Ch. 2*. These are the two main passages of Scripture many church leaders referenced as they conformed to government mandates.
1. I want to be clear: Scripture does mandate careful, conscientious obedience to all governing authority, including kings, governors, employers, and their agents. In Peter's words, "not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable." (***Cf. 1 Peter 2:18***). Certainly, there have been many unreasonable leaders!
 2. The directive is clear here: insofar as government authorities do not try to assert ecclesiastical authority, their authority is to be obeyed whether we agree with their rulings or not.
 3. In other words, ***Romans Ch. 13*** and ***1 Peter Ch. 2*** still bind the consciences of individual Christians. We are to obey our civil authorities as powers that God Himself has ordained.
 4. Remember, according to ***Daniel 2:21***, God "*sets up kings and deposes them.*" That includes all those who gained their positions of power fraudulently or whose laws and mandates are corrupt. Nothing is outside of God's sovereign control.
- D. But, the issue is very different when it comes to government orders that forbid our obedience to God's laws.
1. When any government issues orders unreasonably regulating worship (such as prohibitions against gatherings and services, partaking in communion, etc.), they step outside the legitimate bounds of their God-ordained authority.
 2. Instead, they are granting themselves authority that God grants only to the Lord Jesus Christ as sovereign over His Kingdom, which is the church.
 3. His rule is mediated to local churches through those pastors and leaders who are called to properly teach His Word.

NOTE: We have some hindsight on these matters now. Pastor John MacArthur's church is a great case in point, though they are by no means the only one. His church, and others like his, (Jack Hibb's church as another example) challenged these rulings to limit or suspend all meetings indefinitely. This included ultra-liberal states like CA, and these churches won their cases in court.

The Bible tells us we need to be wise and discerning. There is a time to comply, and there is a time to respectfully push back, and to tell our civic leaders that they have exceeded their legitimate jurisdiction.

CONCLUSION:

It goes without saying that we see the flames of socialism being fanned in our own nation today and unfortunately, we have too many lukewarm woke churches who are doing their part to fan those flames too.

I believe with all my heart that there is a huge population of people being conditioned to accept and support the principles of socialism today, and that includes too many Christians who are being deceived. In being deceived, they are helping to prepare for the arrival of the antichrist and his governing system.

So, what should be the Christian's response to socialism? I believe that the faithful Christian today should have NO PART of ANY agenda that seeks to administer a godless governing system that the Bible says Jesus Christ will ultimately judge. This posture is, in every way, one that is counter to God's Laws and truth.