

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

LABOR LAWS FROM THE BIBLE

Selected Biblical Labor Laws

1Tim 5:18 "The laborer deserves his wages."

James 5:1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. 3 Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. 5 You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; 4 Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

Lev 19:13 "Do not defraud or rob your neighbor. "Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker..

Deut 24:14 Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns. 15 Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it. Otherwise they may cry to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin.

Deut 25:4 Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain. cf 1 Cor.9:9

Jer 22:13 "Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice, making his own people work for nothing, not paying them for their labor.

Mal 3:5 "So I will come to put you on trial. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me," says the LORD Almighty.SUMMARY of all Biblical Labor Laws

Workers must be treated well and fairly ...and must be paid fully and promptly [i.e.- as per contract]

Workers must fulfill employers expectations

No harsh or unsafe working condition; rest periods: one day a week and holidays

Workers may decide to change employers

All commands re personal morality apply

Productivity is expected--profit-making is expected, BUT

Not at expense of the workers- no exploitation

No jeopardizing resources

Private property rights/ownership must be honored

No peonage or slavery

No usury

Profits and products must be made available to the destitute

The Government and Courts are to enforce these Laws: Justice

[Note: there is nothing here about Government Welfare or State Socialism]

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 12:10

LABOR DAY THE RIGHT WAY

God has spoken: "Six days you shall labor" [As He did] Exo.20:9

Paul commands us to work also: 1 Thess 4:11; 2 Thess 3:10-12

5 Standards for Work as God intends it to be

The Biblical mandate to rule & subdue (have dominion over) the earth and its creatures is consistently misused. All kinds of selfishness, greed, waste and exploitation are justified with it. A standard is needed to decide whether specific work is as God intends it to be. When is a specific work activity (or work environment) bad and to be rejected.? What is the Standard to judge?

That standard is the "image of God". It enables us to answer these questions biblically. God did not say: "I have made human beings. They have my authority to rule the earth." God said: "I have made humans to be like me, my image.

Because they are my image, they are to rule the earth." The Image is not itself the mandate to have dominion. The Image determines how we are to have dominion. Human beings are to obey the "cultural mandate" as bearers of the image of God. The image is meant to govern the entire enterprise. This has practical implications: to act according to the image of God is to act according to the characteristics of God, as follows:

1. The Personal- the "person"

All that we do must value and respect "persons" above all- not simply "people", but all that is meant by "person". A "person" has infinite value. A "person" is defined by the ways in which God is a "person". It means a living being who is self conscious, knowable, who communicates meaningfully and can share in "personal" relationships; a person has a will and makes considered judgments. Like God, all Persons have the faculties of rationality, creativity, morality, communality and spirituality. Work which demeans, exploits, neglects, injures or destroys persons is evil

2. The Rational- rationality

God thinks and makes decisions in a reasonable, logical, orderly way All of creation reflects these qualities of its creator.

Work of any kind which is essentially, characteristically, unreasonable, illogical or chaotic is not acceptable

3. The Creative- creativity All work should seek, in appropriate ways, to be creative, artistic and beautiful, as is God and the natural world He has made.

Work which is uncreative, boring, deadening, repulsive or ugly should be rejected

4. The Moral- morality All work must be moral, righteous and just, as God defines those terms in his Word.

Work which is immoral, sinful or corrupt, must be rejected

5. The Communal- community

The work of cultivating and of culture must be done in, of and by a community ("Community" could simply be one's co-workers, a team or unit. It could be a Company. Community could be neighborhood or town. etc.) Work must seek to promote the welfare and good of all members of the (appropriate) community. We are our brothers and sisters keepers, accountable for the welfare of all. Work that is good will serve the good of the whole. Work which is done for selfish purposes or for self aggrandizement is not good. Work that harms

the community or violates personal relationships in the community
sinful.

SUMMARY

Allowing the image of God concept to guide us, requires these 5 principles. All employment, every project and work environments should be evaluated on these terms. Work that respects and protects persons and is reasonable, beautiful, moral and good for the community is good work. Work that is dehumanizing, unreasonable, ugly, immoral or selfish is bad work

Christians are not to engage in "bad" work or support the work of others that will knowingly harm, ruin, destroy or otherwise exploit themselves, their community or the Creation. Taking this stand and explaining why, would be a strong witness for God, the Creator.

Posted by Cal in Bible Topics at 11:34

THE LIMITS AND PROPER FUNCTION OF GOVERNMENT

The State should have minimal but essential involvement in our marriages, families, education, churches and commerce and culture. The Biblical basis for this is "Sphere Sovereignty".

The following material outlines the basic God-given structures, or systems of influence, of Society. They are grounded in the creational ordinances found in the Book of Genesis. This is an important theoretical and idealistic concept basic to Neo-Calvinism. Each of these Spheres has specific functions and norms or boundaries. They are permanent forms even though the actual members of them at any specific time and place may vary.

Marriage and Family

Individual men and women are meant to live together as husband and wife, as "one flesh", i.e.- in a committed, covenant relationship. Ideally, they are to be "fruitful", i.e.- have children (if possible) and live together as an inter-generational family, i.e.- as the basic "Covenant Community". It is absolutely integral to God's Plan for Society. When a son marries, he and his wife begin another family, but these new family units together are intended to be an extended part of the original family, always responsible for each other. That includes the responsibilities of worship, work and providing an education for the children and practical welfare for members of the Family going through tough times.

In practice, the family that most closely follows this Biblical Model is the rural farm family. The challenge now, of course, is how to follow this Model in our modern urban, non-agricultural Society. It can be done, as demonstrated in cities with ethnic enclaves where "the old ways" are still practiced.

Church

Ideally, Christian Families in a local area are to assemble, worship and share their lives with other Families (and minister to even others) as a wider Community of Faith (aka "a church").

Civic Associations

The primary function of the basic Sphere of Marriage and Family is to act as God's agent in His world, obeying God's command to our original Parents to reproduce and go forth to care for the Natural Environment (Creation) and continue God's work of cultivating it for the common good of all. This is called the Cultural Mandate, another important neo-Calvinist concept. To this end, other Spheres will naturally arise. To cultivate is to develop culture. As culture and the necessary organization and technology that it requires develops, the result is a Civilization. There will be voluntary

Associations for research & development, work, production and distribution of goods and services (Business and Commerce). Associations will also arise for Education, Communication, the Arts and Recreation. These are all extensions of the Creational Ordinances. None of these Spheres are the responsibility of Civil Government nor are they autonomous. They must cooperate with each other and function according to the laws of God, accountable to Him. The essential preface to this entire discussion is knowledge of the Torah. The Law of God is the absolute Foundation upon which to build social policy and the benchmark or yard stick by which to measure all the options that necessarily arise on these Topics.

Civil Government is also a Creational ordinance.

Each Creational social system has its own authority known as "Sphere Sovereignty", but none of them are absolute or autonomous. Marriage-Family (including Education), Church and Community Civic Associations (including Commerce) are meant to cooperate but must not interfere with each other's responsibilities.

Because all the individuals involved in the Spheres are sinners, there will be injustice. As systems, the Spheres will malfunction or fail in their respective responsibilities. The main function of Civil Government is to respect the Sphere Sovereignty, but control or stop transgressions within or between Spheres, wherever they may occur under established Law and Constitutional Order. In this regard Civil Government is good and to be supported. However, Civil Government is not to usurp or curtail the responsibilities of the other Spheres. It has a tendency to do exactly that and so it too must be restrained. The concern is not with the size of Government, but with Civil Government becoming abusive with its authority or becoming intrusive in the affairs of the Spheres.

An additional related concept applies here: "Subsidiarity". Government should not do for people what they can or ought to do for themselves. And larger organizations must not replace or override what can be done by smaller or subsidiary organizations. Local is best. Less is more.

Posted by Cal in Social Issues at 10:08