

Unions: Why A Faithful Christian Cannot Belong To Or Support Labor Unions

I am always reticent to combine politics with theology. In this case, I am going to make an exception, in order to try to separate the two in this particular instance.

As Christians, this [the Bible] is our rulebook. Many within the church abandon biblical principles because of the cares of this world, greed, envy, or covetousness. But, as Christians, we should go by what the Bible says. Pleasing God is far more important to the Christian than any job, job security, good wages, comfortable working conditions, and big pensions. Pleasing God is far more precious to the faithful church than the approval of men. What pleases God? Obedience. What does his Word say about labor and how can we show obedience? What does Scripture teach?

The conflict between my Christian walk and this subject has never been an issue, because it could simply be avoided. However, the way the law is written in Alaska, where I now live, as in other places, tries to force people to violate their Christian principles in order to further a political agenda.

When I moved to Alaska five years ago, one thing that struck me was that Alaska embodies many of the ideals that made the United States a great nation. Most Alaskans want limited government. Also there are more churches per capita in my little town than in any city I've ever seen. Well, except Vatican City.

But – and this is a big “but” – there are no “right to work” laws here. Meaning, if 50% plus one person votes for a union, then everyone is forced to join and support the union.

Now, I find this appalling that unions can violate specific rights that are spelled out in the U.S. Constitution. We are supposed to have the right to freedom of association, and the US Supreme Court has ruled that this applies to a freedom of disassociation, as well. Why the government of Alaska (and 27 other states) supports an open and blatant disregard for the Constitutional rights of individuals, I don't know. A National Right to Work Law that has been introduced into the US Congress, but why it takes a law to enforce a Constitutional right, I'll never know. I have communicated with state congressmen, U.S. congressmen, and I have emailed the governor, and I have not been able to get a single politician to give me a straight answer as to whether or not they personally support this unconscionable forced unionism. (Although one did say, “I don't know enough about it”, the rest simply gave me doublespeak, or did not answer at all.)

However, the purpose of this study is to look at unionism and why a faithful Christian cannot belong to, nor support financially or in any other way, a labor union.

In order to get the clearest perspective possible, we will look at the political and economic implications, the biblical directives, and the way they correlate to one another. Because of their interaction, we are going to look at the political and religious conflict.

Thomas Jefferson had a few choice quotes about democracy:

“A democracy is nothing more than mob rule, where fifty-one percent of the people may take away the rights of the other forty-nine.” “All, too, will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will to be rightful must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal law must protect, and to violate would be

oppression. "Experience hath shewn, that even under the best forms of government those entrusted with power have, in time, and by slow operations, perverted it into tyranny."

Contrary to urban legend, Thomas Jefferson was not hostile to Christianity. In fact, while it is debatable as to whether or not he was a Christian (evidence seems to indicate that he was, but only he and God know), he embraced many Christian ideals. His idea of "separation of church and state" was in light of the Constitutional mandate that the government is to neither endorse nor establish a particular religion, but that it was to not deny an individual's right to worship freely. (Of course, one individual's rights cannot infringe upon another individual's rights in the pursuit of his worship, so sacrifice and torture and things such as that are out of the question.)

Thomas Jefferson was wise enough to see inherent dangers and pitfalls in certain political systems, including pure democracy in which the rights of individuals are curtailed at the expense of others.

Unions artificially inflate wages, which pushes other economic indicators in an inflationary cycle, which leaves things where they were in terms of buying power, but puts a person into higher tax brackets, which hurts the poor and middle class. Money is not pulled out of thin air, and the company isn't simply going to pay it out of the goodness of their collective heart, and lowering their profit margins below an acceptable level. They are there to make money.

In other words, as in my personal example of driving a bus, the union extorts more money from the bus company. They demand more from the government to pay for the services. The government has to raise taxes to pay the extra to the bus company. The person working at McDonald's has to have a raise to pay higher rent. ("Wait! Property taxes are paid by the property owner!" If you don't think the owner passes along the cost of property taxes by increasing the rent, I have some nice oceanfront property in Kansas I'd like to sell you.) The carpet layer has to raise his rates to buy McDonald's. Homebuilders have to raise their prices to pay the carpet layer. The bus drivers have to pay more for a house.

The ripple effect is not linear. Everyone has to pay more in taxes, so everyone has to pay more for every other service, and you are right back to the beginning in terms of real dollars, except you are paying more in taxes and now you are paying union dues. You are paying union leaders and politicians for the privilege of paying more and having less.

Most people seem to have difficulty with the concept of inflation-adjusted dollars. One way of looking at it is that what cost you \$100 in 1980 would have cost you \$268 in 2006. What you paid \$100 for in 2006 would have cost you \$37 in 1980. In terms of real dollars, gas is still cheaper at \$3.35 per gallon that it was in 1980. But, since most people are blind to inflation adjustment of money, union leaders and politicians can use it to create fear among the people.

I have had sincere Christian people tell me that they think that God created rules simply to test people. God didn't create rules in the Bible to be difficult. God's rules serve a practical purpose. For example, the provision for his people not to eat pork helped prevent the spread of trichinosis, which is no longer a concern. (In fact, I have had atheists tell me that they think that smart people saw the need for these rules, attributed them to some mystical being, and they were codified into the Scriptures.)

God's rules serve a purpose not only as they relate in types to our spiritual lives, but they serve a

practical purpose in our daily lives.

God set forth rules for the way we are to work and do business, and unions subvert these rules and create a spirit of rebellion from the way God ordained things.

God set forth ideals that promote free enterprise, and a system of capitalism in the Scriptures. We have the examples of the servants who are given talents and pounds, and they are expected to generate income and have an increase, through wise investment, not through extortion of their employer.

Matthew 25:14-30: For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine. His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

These are his servants, and he expected them to make money off his goods. But, what about simple laborers?

Matthew 20:1-15a: For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day [Not a penny in the modern sense, but a *denarius*, the chief silver coin of the Romans at this time, and of the value of about seventeen cents. We must remember to reckon according to the rate of wages in that day. A denarius was regarded as good pay for a day's work. It was the pay of a Roman soldier in Christ's time. In almost every case where the

word occurs in the New Testament it is connected with the idea of a liberal or large amount. So, he's treating them fairly.], he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

Here, he goes out and hires laborers. He pays them what they, as individuals, agree to, which is a decent amount. The landowner deals with the laborers personally. They agree upon a fair wage, they work, and they are paid for it. They have the option to decline the work and look for a better job, or they can accept the offer. Labor unions usurp this authority!

This is an agreement between employer and employee. I have this same option in my work. If I am unhappy with the wage, I can ask for a raise, and I can seek other employment if my request is declined!

To do that which is right in your own eyes is lawlessness; it's willful sin, and the Bible teaches extensively on this. You can justify union membership and union extortion any way you wish, but it's still sin.

"Oh, you're overreacting. What the unions do is not extortion!" Oh, I'm concerned I'm not reacting strongly enough! The Online Etymology Dictionary gives us this history of the word "extort": c.1300, from L. extorquere "wrench out, wrest away," from ex- "out" + torquere "to twist". WordNet from Princeton says that extortion is "unjust exaction".

You may say, "Oh, but something has to be done!" Covetousness, which the Bible calls idolatry, is caused by materialism, and often leads to doing what is right in one's own eyes; lawlessness; iniquity. There are severe consequences for lawlessness or willful sin.

Matthew 7:21-23: Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And

then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

This passage is aimed at individuals in the family of God. 1 Corinthians 12:3 tells us that none can call him “Lord” except through the power of the Holy Spirit. Can an unsaved person access the Holy Spirit? It says that not everyone who calls him “Lord” shall enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens. This is talking about an entrance into the Kingdom. Doing the will of the Father is necessary work if a child of God wants to enter into the coming Kingdom.

In verse 22, we get a list of things that are not the will of the Father. We see prophecy, foretelling the future, extra revelations from God other than through the Word of God. People are doing that today. They’re casting out demons. The King James Version says “devils”, but it’s the word “demons”; there is only one Devil, but many demons. “And in thy name done many wonderful works?” This is talking about miracle working.

In verse 23, he tells them, “I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity”. “You workers of lawlessness”; you who do what is right in your own eyes, contrary to the will of the Father. This is a passage of denial. Election is special knowledge of those who will do what it takes to enter in, and this is a special denial of those who are not interested in doing the will of the father, and therefore not interested in doing what it takes to enter in.

These workers of iniquity don’t know the Word of God; therefore, they don’t know the will of God, even though it’s laid out in the Scriptures. They’re interested in the sensual and external signs, wonders, and miracles. Unions, through materialism and covetousness appeal to the sensual, and they will lead you down a path of lawlessness, and by your membership or your support, whether moral or financial will make you a worker of iniquity. Do you want to hear, “I never knew you; depart from me”?

What kind of people are we, as Christians, to associate with? With whom are we to yoke ourselves? 2 Corinthians 6:14 tells us, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”

Scripture calls the believer to brotherly communion only with fellow believers and forbids fellowship with the ungodly. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers...” The unions are “brotherhoods.” According to their own constitutions, they are brotherhoods. A Christian who is member of a union expresses that he views unbelieving, ungodly men and women as spiritual brothers and sisters (obviously the unions are not referring to physical brotherhood); a union member is saying that he shares their principles and goals regarding labor and that he cooperates with them — is “yoked together” with them — in achieving their goals as member of their family. This is flagrant breach of biblical principles!

Scripture teaches that the Christian may give unconditional allegiance only to God. “It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” (Matthew 4:10) Unions require the member to swear, or pledge, unconditional allegiance and obedience to the union. Typical is the oath required for membership by the International Typographical Union:

I hereby solemnly and sincerely swear (or affirm) that I will not reveal any business or proceedings of any meeting of this or any subordinate union to which I may hereafter be attached, unless by order of the union, except to those whom I know to be in good standing thereof; that I will, without evasion or equivocation, and to the best of my ability abide by the Constitution, By-Laws and the adopted scale of prices of any union to which I may belong; that I will at all times support the laws, regulations and decisions of the International Typographical Union, and will carefully avoid giving aid or succor to its enemies, and use all honorable means within my power to procure employment for members of the International Typographical Union in preference to others; *that my fidelity to the union and my duty to the members thereof shall in no sense be interfered with by any allegiance that I may now or hereafter owe to any other organization, social, political, or religious, secret or otherwise . . .* that I will not wrong a member, or see him or her wronged, if in my power to prevent. *To all of which I pledge my most sacred honor* (emphasis added).

This is idolatry.

Scripture instructs the Christian to seek the Kingdom of God first, and not earthly things. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [food, drink, clothing] shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33) The labor union puts wages and benefits above all else, and they ask you to put your faith in them to provide, instead of God. This is pure and unadulterated materialism! This is greed and covetousness.

Joining a labor union puts the Christian under the discipline of ungodly people.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10: Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

As a Christian, I have the possibility of inheriting the Kingdom. There are several catalogs of sins listed in the Bible that will get one excluded from the Kingdom of the Heavens. The passage above lists a few of these sins.

Do you want to be associated with the ungodly? You can be guilty by association if you support them. Let’s look at the tactics the unions use to get their way.

There was a truck driver murdered by having a concrete block dropped on his head simply because he worked. In New York City, because the newspaper would not grant amnesty to workers who had been charged in different incidents, they hit workers in the head with bricks. One newspaper driver was assaulted and his vehicle destroyed, and with 300 witnesses, no one “saw a thing”. The newspaper union in New York has open Mob ties, and has been convicted of many criminal charges, yet continues to openly violate federal labor laws. Four of the last eight Teamster presidents have been convicted of various felony counts and one admitted to being controlled by mobster Nick Civella. A 2002 article in the pro-union magazine, *New Republic*, noted that the IBT

is “still plagued by corruption; ex-felons and people with reputed mob associations lurk around the edges of key Teamster locals seeking influence over the union.”

The manager of Labor Ready, Matthew Kahn, helped guide replacement workers to Hollander Home Fashions after its Los Angeles-area plant was struck by the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in March 2001. Ramiro Hernandez and several UNITE organizers ambushed Kahn on May 18, 2001 in Labor Ready's parking lot. Khan suffered a concussion and multiple head lacerations.

The Teamsters union was on strike against Overnite Transportation between October 1999 and October 2002. In Overnite's resulting RICO lawsuit against the Teamsters, Memphis-based federal District Court Judge Bernice Donald said that 55 shootings and additional brick and projectile attacks against Overnite's non-striking drivers were related to attempted murder.

While driving a company vehicle near Memphis, Tennessee, 20-year Overnite employee William Wonder was shot in the abdomen on December 1, 1999. Teamsters president, James Hoffa, Jr. said, “Overnite bears a heavy responsibility here,” in a statement that tried to capitalize on Wonder's near-fatal injuries. “Overnite can end this strike at a moment's notice with a binding agreement.” He tried to blame the employer instead of the attempted murderer! To date, no one has paid for shooting William Wonder.

David C. Horn, vice president and general counsel of AK Steel Corporation, testified before the House Education and Workforce Committee, that negotiations with the United Steelworkers of America and AK's Mansfield, Ohio plant faltered in March 1999. A company billboard soon sported a poster that read: “Wanted — good reliable small arms, unused explosives (C-4 preferred) names and addresses of all salary employees. Payback time!” The following September 25, two, 1-gallon explosive devices with nails were found on plant property. The fuses had been lit but failed to detonate the devices.

A Molotov cocktail burned beside an oxygen-hauling truck near the facility on October 15th of that same year, and one of two pipe-bombs tossed into the plant exploded the following November 11, thankfully injuring nobody.

On December 6, 9, and 11, 1999, the home mailboxes of three salaried AK employees exploded. On the 11th, another bomb damaged an S&S Transportation truck that indirectly supplied AK scrap metal, which injured Jamie King of Leesville, Ohio, who was then 22, who was asleep inside the vehicle. She temporarily ended up on crutches.

After additional violence, a union representative anonymously told a reporter for a July 18, 2000 story: AK's “going to get somebody killed by not coming to the [negotiating] table.” Once again, blame the employer, not the person who is trying to commit murder.

On 12/28/07, Teamsters' actions required 40 police in riot gear to be dispatched to a waste service in Somerville, Massachusetts because they were trying to force their way in, even though many employees didn't want them there. One Teamster attacked the company's owner with a knife.

Rod Carter, a linebacker for the 1989 University of Miami Hurricanes and former 10th round draft pick for the Dallas Cowboys wanted to support his family, so he continued to work during a strike.

He didn't support the strike, and as a result, he received a threatening phone call at his home. Records prove that the call was made from the home of the Teamsters Local 769 president Anthony Cannestro Sr.

The next day, "loyal" union members, a bunch of union criminals, tracked Carter down on his route, pulled him out of his UPS truck, and beat and stabbed him repeatedly with an ice pick. One of the attackers shouted, "I'm going to kill you!" After the assault, at least one of the assailants returned to the picket line to continue in the strike activities, before any arrests were even made. The union used union funds to bail out the assailants, and arranged for legal representation, **as had been promised before the bloody attack.**

Sworn statements show that Cannestro called a meeting just before the strike began and encouraged this type of behavior. He promised cash bonds and legal assistance for any union member that participated in illegal activities. Union official suggested there would be no repercussions for their actions, no matter how illegal, and they were promised a get-out-of-jail-free card. In just four day, during this strike, there were more than 100 illegal acts committed against non-striking workers who simply wanted to work.

The unions claim they have a "moral authority". Whose morals? I guess these examples could be called "union morals".

"But", people exclaim, "Without the unions, businesses would mistreat us!" The crimes committed by the unions upon which we have touched are just the tip of the iceberg. According to the NLRB, in 2005 alone, unions faced a total 6,381 allegations, and 82% of those involved illegal restraint and coercion of employees, and 594 charges were filed concerning illegal discrimination against employees. In 2004, there were 6,917. 80% of those complaints were filed by individuals. From 1998 through 2004, the biggest and most violent offenders, the Teamsters alone had 6,909 charges.

According to media accounts, there have been 2,193 acts of violence committed by unions between 1991 and 2001. Out of these, only 62 individuals were arrested, and only 10 people were punished.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers..." If these unions are faithful brethren, we're in trouble! Matthew 12:50 tells us that our brethren are those who are being obedient to the Father. People who are participating in this type of behavior are **not** our brethren! Unions prey upon materialism and greed, which is counter to biblical principles. Unions pressure us to behave with our employers in a way that is contrary to what the Bible teaches. Unionism destroys personal freedom and individuality.

Through the Scriptures, God has structured the rules for labor in such a way that the owner of the farm or business has authority from God to govern. The business owner also has responsibility from God toward the workers. The business owner is commanded to give the workers "that which is just and equal," or "fair" in Colossians 4:1 which says, "Masters, give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." 1 Timothy 5:18 gives instruction that says, "For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward."

But, most importantly, the employer has authority given by God, and the duty of the employee is to submit and obey. (I will add here, however, that if the employee has fulfilled his contractual

obligation, i.e. two week notice or fulfilled time, he does have the right to seek out a new employer.)

There are many reasons why labor union membership is sinful, and we have looked at several of them. But the central issue is this: in the realm of labor, the owner, or management, has the right to rule, so a Christian worker must submit.

Since Scripture orders our life in so many areas, it would be extraordinary if it did not instruct us how to live in regards to labor. It would be culpable failure on the part of God to leave us in the dark on how to behave in this area that is so central to our earthly life. ***God is not guilty of such a failure!*** Scripture addresses the matter of the Christian's behavior in the realm of labor. It addresses the matter repeatedly. Usually, it addresses this aspect of the Christian's earthly life in connection with the other spheres of life: marriage, family (parents and children), state or civil government, and church.

Let's look at a few passages that regulate the life of a Christian in the realm of labor:

Ephesians 6:5-8: Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

Colossians 3:22-25: Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

1 Timothy 6:1: ***Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour***, that the name of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed.

Titus 2:9: ***Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and*** to please *them* well in all *things*; not answering again;

1 Peter 2:18: Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; ***not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.***

James 5:1-11: Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the

earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Also, in Philemon, Onesimus, the runaway slave is sent back to his master to serve him again. Not only was he told to go back, but also he was responsible for what he stole from Philemon. Although Paul volunteered to repay it, Onesimus owed it.

The passages that we just read clearly set forth the will of God for the Christian when it comes to labor. These are all passages giving rules on the relationship between the employer and the employee or servant. “Doulos” is a “servant” in a socioeconomic sense, and everyone who “sells themselves” or works in gainful employment is a servant.

Many people try to evade the will of God for the laborer, ignoring biblical instruction regarding labor, by claiming that the New Testament passages refer to the relationship of master and slave. This is just a way of ignoring biblical mandates.

Scripture sometimes refers to hired laborers, who are not owned by the master, but work for a wage. This is the case in 1 Peter 2:18, which speaks of “servants”, not “slaves”. This is also the case in James 5, which speaks of the “hire of the laborers” in verse 4. Although it is true that slavery was common at that time, the principles laid down by Scriptures still apply, not only to slavery, but also to all forms of labor in all ages.

Simply because a laborer was sometimes a slave does not detract in any way from the responsibility of the free worker to submit. In fact, it ***emphasizes*** this responsibility. If slaves had to submit for God’s sake, Christian employees today, whose circumstances are in any case far better than those of slaves, especially in the United States, must submit that much more.

Labor unions promote rebellion against the lawful and godly authority; the employer in this case. Labor unions, and by association, all their members, are guilty of rebellion against godly authority, as a rebellious child against his parents, or a revolutionary against the state.

A labor union is an organization of laborers, not only for the purpose of collective bargaining, but also for the purpose of regulating the business or industry ***according to the will of the laborers***. Labor unions enforce the will of the laborers using the threat of the strike. Enforcement of the will of the laborers against the will of the employer (which is of the very ***essence*** of the union) is rebellion, pure and simple. It is rebellion using the threat of strike, using violence, and using intimidation, as the power to destroy the business and ruin the owner if he doesn’t give in to their demands. And law forbids the employer to hire new employees.

Out of this unholy and ungodly fundamental evil of labor unions is born all the violence that is characteristic of labor unions. Unions are committed to the class struggle put forth by Karl Marx, and many labor union constitutions state such. A strike, which becomes an act of violence, breaks

out in destruction of property, physical threats, injury, hatred of “scabs” (workers who work during strikes), and murder.

Another reason for objecting to labor union membership is often overlooked. The Word of God demands that we promote the Kingdom of Christ with our money. This is an aspect of our stewardship regarding all our life in the world, for which we shall also give account in the final judgment.

Luke 19:11-27: And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

Labor unions spend billions of dollars every year to support the most liberal political candidates and their anti-Christian agendas. This money comes from members’ dues paid to the unions, either voluntarily or taken forcefully. Using members’ money in this way, labor unions aggressively (and very effectively) promote abortion, the homosexual movement, outlawing of capital punishment, and other unholy and ungodly things. Labor unions, through their political lobbyists, are one of the most powerful forces driving the liberal agenda in the United States. Many unions have moved beyond merely supporting liberal candidates, and have moved into funding liberal causes, such as abortion-on-demand and school-based sexual-health clinics, and actively opposing conservative causes such as school choice and welfare reform.

By his union membership, whether voluntary or forced, the member of a labor union contributes to and promotes the swelling tide of corruption in our country. Knowingly and willingly, he paves the way for the coming of Antichrist.

Not only does the Bible condemn the concept of labor union membership, but labor unionism is anti-American. Demanding that a worker join a union in order to have or keep a job, and excluding a citizen from the workforce because he refuses to join a labor union are contrary to the U.S. Constitution. One of the greatest earthly freedoms we have is guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, and that is the right to work. Everyone, especially politicians, who supports big labor by working for forced unionism is an enemy of freedom.

Because of biblical mandates and instruction, every Christian must refuse membership in the union. If a Christian is already a member of a labor union, he must get out. Every Christian must do this willingly, in obedience to the Word, out of respect for the authority of God, as an act of discipleship of Jesus the Christ! A Christian who supports the open rebellion and the extortion and the covetousness and the thievery perpetuated by labor unions is in danger of losing his reward; his inheritance; his place in the coming Kingdom of the Heavens! He is in danger of Gehenna fire!

“Oh, but preacher, I’m saved! I don’t have to worry about going to hell!” Oh, but sinner, if you’re saved, you don’t have to worry about going to the lake of fire forever and ever, but the warnings of Gehenna are given *only* to saved people! Those warnings are given based upon actions and works, and labor unions either directly or by association cause the Christian to stumble and to be a stumbling block to others. Matthew 5:29-30, which is part of the Sermon on the Mount, which is a message given to people who are already in the family says, “And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.”

In this verse, “hell” is not “hades”, but “Gehenna”. The word “Gehenna”, commonly translated “hell”, is made up of two Hebrew words, and signifies the valley of Hinnom. This valley was at one point in the past a pleasant valley near Jerusalem, on the south side. A small brook ran through it and partly encompassed the city. The idolatrous Israelites, before their captivity, devoted this valley to the horrid worship of Moloch. 2 Kings 16:3 talks about this where it says, “But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel.” 2 Chronicles 28:3 tells us, “Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.”

In that worship, the idol of Moloch, which was made of brass, and was adorned with a royal crown, had the head of a calf, and his arms extended as if to embrace anyone. When they offered children to him they heated the statue from within by a huge fire, and when it was burning hot they put the child into his arms, where the heat soon consumed the child. In order that the cries of the child not be heard, they made a lot of noise with drums and other instruments about the idol. These drums were called “toph”, and therefore a common name of the place was Tophet. (Jeremiah 7:31-32: And they have built the high places of Tophet, which *is* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded *them* not, neither came it into my heart. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet, till

there be no place.)

After the Jews returned from captivity, this place was so abhorred, held in such abhorrence that, by the example of Josiah in 2 Kings 23:10, this place was made into a place to throw all the dead carcasses and filth of the city, and often was the place of public executions. This place became extremely offensive and the sight was horrid. The air was polluted and was full of pestilence. To try to purify it, it was necessary to keep fires burning there constantly. The extreme loathsomeness of the place, with the filth and decay and the corruption of the atmosphere, along with the fires blazing by day and night, made it one of the most appalling things with which a Jew was acquainted. It was called the “Gehenna”, and was the image that our Savior often employed to denote the future punishment of the wicked.

The lake of fire is literal, but Gehenna is figurative. It’s figurative for a filthy, disgusting, and loathsome place in which people that are in the family of God are in danger of suffering for the works they did in this life. Unions embody many of the behaviors that can cause the Christian to stumble and be liable for this future punishment. Although you might not personally participate in such behavior, do you want to show support and give validation to such behavior? Do you want your money to go to causes that are in direct rebellion to God’s commands and all that is moral and right? Do you want to help destroy our national economy? Do you want to support the murder of unborn babies?

1 Peter 2:18-21: Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward [crooked]. For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

One thing that the Christian is promised in this life is persecution because of obedience. If he is to be obedient, the Christian must be prepared to suffer loss. The world doesn’t like truth. John the Baptizer lost his head over the truth. But, the Christian is promised great blessings and glory in the age to come, if he is obedient and endures to the end!

Despite the clear warnings of Scriptures, there are two basic arguments that Christians will use to try to justify joining a labor union. These two arguments are very powerful arguments, and they both boil down to, “If I do not join the labor union, I will suffer.”

One argument is that employers are all a bunch of blood-sucking leeches, and without unions, workers have suffered and will suffer. Although workers today may have benefited from the unrighteous actions of unions in the past (this is debatable), that does not justify such rebellion. The Christian’s rights do not extend to extortion, robbery, and theft.

Even soldiers were told to be content with their wages: Luke 3:14 tells us, “And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.”

He doesn't say, "Throw down your spear and quit the army". He gives them instruction on how they should behave as soldiers. There were many soldiers stationed in the area, and many of them helped the publicans, and as such stood to gain by immoral means. Even soldiers other than the ones helping publicans often stood to gain by extortion, through several different means.

In this passage, they ask him, "What shall we do?" The first part of his response is, "Do violence to no man". This is a common expression in ancient Greek, and in the Septuagint, but is found only here in the New Testament. The literal meaning of the word is to shake thoroughly, and doing that, to terrify. It came to mean to extort by intimidating. Socrates referred to it as a process of blackmail. This was a constant temptation to soldiers, not only to try to get some loot from those being intimidated, but if they didn't pay up, the soldiers could turn them in for rewards that were offered for arresting those who committed certain crimes.

This idea ties in with the second instruction: "Neither accuse any falsely." The soldiers would often intimidate someone by using physical force in order to gain monetarily, but people would also stand to gain by informing on individuals who committed certain crimes. Accusing someone falsely could gain a nice little reward, or it could exact revenge upon an enemy.

Jesus doesn't tell the soldiers to quit soldiering, but he does tell them quit intimidating and extorting and quit falsely accusing people.

He also told them something else: "And be content with your wages." Discontent with wages was a major complaint for many of the mercenary soldiers. The word for "wages", "opsOnion", was originally anything that was cooked and bought. It's from "opson", which means "cooked food", and "Oneomai", which means "to buy". It was originally anything that was eaten with bread, such as broiled fish, and it eventually came to mean whatever is bought to be eaten with bread, and later it came to mean a soldier's pay or allowance. "OpsOnion": "Rations"; "pay"; "wages".

This word is used in only four places in the New Testament. 1 Corinthians 9:7 uses this word. It says, "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?" That word "charges" is the same word. In other words, "Who goes to war supplying his own rations or wages". Who provides our rations or our wages? God. In 2 Corinthians 11:8, Paul is speaking and he says, "I robbed other churches, taking wages [of them], to do you service."

What I want you to see is in Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal [age-lasting] life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rations; pay; wages; food. Death [thanatos] is the diet of sin. It's the rations of sin. Is that what you want? Death in the age to come: That's what your life of extortion, theft, and covetousness will get you.

The second argument that is often used to try to justify ignoring clear biblical mandates against labor unions is just as emotional as the first: "I have to eat!" The knee-jerk logic says that if a person is unwilling to join a union, then he can't work; if he can't work, then he and his family will be on the streets and they will starve.

The Bible quite effectively shoots down both of these arguments.

There is no doubt that there are ungodly, evil, and wicked employers who take advantage of

employees. Their only concern is profits for themselves. Profits are necessary, but profit is not the only thing the employer is to be concerned with. They consider employees to be a means to that end and they are disposable.

James 5:1-7: Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

Scriptures talk about unjust and wicked employers. James 5:1 says, “Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*.”

These were the farmers for whom the Christian laborers of James 5 were working. These farmers kept back the hire of the laborers, thus killing the righteous employees. James 5:4-6: “Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth [“Lord of hosts” transliterated from Isaiah 5:9]. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you.”

However, injustice and cruelty, does not give authorization to the workers to resist and commit acts of violence, such as a strike. Instead, James 5:6 says the laborer “doth not resist you”.

But, to the Christian worker who is treated unjustly, James 5:7 says, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.”

Jesus the Christ, who will one day judge the world, will punish the unjust employer who defrauds his employee. James 5:3 says that a person such as this “has heaped treasure together for the last days”.

Malachi 3:5 tells us: “And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and ***against those that oppress the hireling in his wages***, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his right*, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.”

The employer who has exploited his employees may feel remorse in his old age and try to assuage a guilty conscience or buy his forgiveness and leave a legacy, but these things will not lessen his punishment. This is not to say that he cannot be forgiven, but he cannot buy his forgiveness. Only repentance can bring about forgiveness, and repentance is much more than simply feeling sorry that

you get caught doing something. But he will have wasted much opportunity for righteous living.

Christ will also reward the suffering and patient Christian worker. James 5:11 says, “Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

Even Henry Ford recognized the importance of treating employees well. He hired a bunch of undesirables and paid them double the going rate. He had a happy and productive workforce, and everyone, with few exceptions knows the commercial success of Henry Ford.

As to the argument that we must eat, the biblical refutation is that the Lord will provide us with our necessities, and even eating is not the “bottom line” in the life of Christians. For the Christian, the only thing that is absolutely necessary is being obedient to God. When eating conflicts with obeying, as it often has in history, eating is given up.

Karl Marx and his disciples in the labor union movement are wrong in their teaching that the material is everything. We have been made great promises contingent upon our obedience, by a God who is able to keep those promises.

Anyone who forsakes all else and makes eating the main thing in this life, is a glutton. His belly is his god. Some god! This is not to say that it’s wrong to eat. It’s not even wrong to enjoy eating. Some of us obviously enjoy it more than others!

Anyone who says, “I must eat at all costs!” will one day also take the mark of the beast. One day, in the time that we commonly call the Tribulation, without that mark, one will not be permitted to buy or sell. [Revelation 13:17: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.] Whoever takes the mark will be permitted to eat. He will also be able to drink. But, they will “drink of the wine of the wrath of God”, according to Revelation 14:10.

This [the Bible] is our rulebook. Scripture tells us how to be obedient. Although many within the church may abandon biblical principles because of greed, envy, and covetousness, we don’t have permission to do so. As Christians, we need to go by what the Bible says. If Scripture is our basis in the matter of union membership, the issue is clear and conclusive. Scripture condemns labor union membership as revolution against the authority of the sovereign God. Scripture forbids the disciple of Christ to join a union and requires him to renounce membership, if he is presently a member.

Thankfully, even in states with no Right to Work laws, there is provision in U.S. law that permits an individual to file an objection to membership and be excluded on religious grounds, and although the unions can still extort the money from you, you can direct it to charity instead of the hands of wicked union leaders. Why it takes letters and sometimes court cases to be permitted to exercise your Constitutional rights, I don’t understand. But, the Bible does say that we will be persecuted for righteousness.

We refuse to become members of the Union because we condemn the principles of utter materialism of the Union. We refuse to become members of the Union because the Union demands

an oath or pledge of loyalty to itself even though this loyalty to the Union would bring us into conflict with the interests of the Church of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. We refuse to become members of the Union because the Union seeks to gain its ends by force, strikes, and boycotts, all of which militates against the Word of God which we hold dear and which is the first and last criterion for our conduct on this earth. We refuse to become members of the Union because we want to be found faithful, and one day want to hear, “Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”