

When a Nation Forgets God

Lessons we must learn from Nazi Germany

A Bible Study utilizing the book by
Erwin Lutzer

Lesson Two – *It's Always the Economy*

Dr. Paul Jehle

1

The Biblical Principle of God's Individuality

- Genesis 2:19-20a – ...*whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof...* Adam gave names to all.
 - Call out by name, or assemble by similarities – unity of *ideas*
 - To mark individuality, variety, differences – diversity of *expression*
- This Biblical principle, introduced in Genesis, yields the following characteristics of economic productivity:
 - Freedom of choice as to which tree to partake of for food
 - The “market” was internally governed – self-restraint was expected
 - Character and work ethic yields the fruit of one's *labors*
 - Private property was the basis for the family and its legacy

2

God's Unity with Diversity: One and Many

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."
1st Corinthians 12:4

"Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular."
1st Corinthians 12:27

Internal Unity

- Individual created by God
- Call out similarities
- Begin with harmony in Christ
- The health of one soul

External Diversity

- Expressing his image distinctly
- Respect distinctions / variety
- End with diversity of expression
- Determines the health of group

3

Deception of Individualism and Collectivism

"...every man did that which was right in his own eyes."
Judges 17:6

"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."
Exodus 23:2

Evolution of the Individual Individualism – selfish capitalism

- Company exists for individual
- Profit-motive the goal
- Company / CEO autonomous
- I live any way I want with riches

Group (State) brings equilibrium Collectivism - socialism

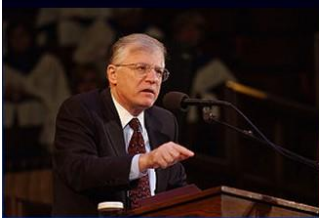
- Individual exists for the group
- Community welfare the goal
- Take from owners - redistribute
- No one richer than another

4

The German Economy post World War I

- *He (Hitler) could never have come to power if the German economy would have remained strong after World War I*
- *He cleverly exploited the economic crisis... inflation was triggered by a huge increase in the nation's money supply because of the heavy reparations assigned to Germany...*
- *By 1923 it took 1 trillion marks to equal one US dollar!*
- *Treaty of Versailles blamed Germany, assigning impossible reparations, result: bitterness / hatred for Jews-Bolsheviks*
- *Hitler's oratory was a religious experience (demonic)*
- *Hitler promised to restore the mark and Germany to power!*

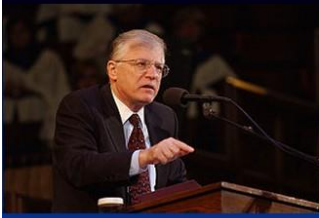
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Chapter 2 *It's always the Economy*

- *“If a dictator arose who... could bring order out of chaos, we'd be willing to let him have... power...”*
- *“An economic crisis is always a gift to a leader who wants to capture a nation....”*
- *As long as the economy was strong, people didn't care whether they had freedom...”*
- *“Hitler holds such a fascination... his dictatorship enjoyed such wide support of the people”*
- *Churchill said in 1937 that his achievements were “among the most remarkable in the whole history of the world.”*

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Chapter 2

It's always the Economy...

- *“Predictably, anarchy erupted, particularly in the big cities. Gasoline was siphoned from cars; whatever was not nailed down was stolen and whatever could be bartered was used in exchange for food or clothes.*
- *“At the height of the continuing inflationary cycle, the people cried out... for a strong leader – a dictator who would be able to put an end to the charade and have a new beginning...”*
- *In 1932 the Nazi party received 37.3% of the vote, and though not a majority, by an amendment to the constitution, all legislative powers were granted... to Hitler personally.*

7

Hitler's Dictatorial Report Card

- *His report card is filled with such astounding achievements that many Christians saw him as an answer to their prayers.*
- *Some Christians, I am told... took a picture of Christ from the wall in their homes and substituted a portrait of Hitler*
- *His legacy includes the travesty of some of the following...*
 - *Thousands of pastors swore personal allegiance to him*
 - *The German people surrendered their rights to him*
 - *Eight million people were exterminated (mostly Jews)*
 - *50 million died in World War II in order to defeat him*

What began as an economic miracle ended with a moral and political nightmare

8

Marxist Economics and Hitler's Germany

Economic goals of *Communist Manifesto* and Karl Marx

- Abolition of private property
- A heavy, progressive income tax
- Abolition of rights of inheritance
- Centralization of credit by State
- Centralize communication
- Production owned by State
- State owned health care
- Free Education in Public Schools

Economic achievements of Nazi Germany and Adolf Hitler

- Private-public regulations of land
- An initial moderate, income tax
- Eugenics to eliminate unfit races
- Nationalized banks and credit
- State control of all media
- Wage / Price Control, govt jobs
- Universal nationalized healthcare
- SS youth 14-18 for indoctrination

9



The “Confessing Church” Remnant

- Majority of Lutheran Church sided with Hitler
- Bonhoeffer (and Niemoller) led a minority to leave
- Even the new Synod, when mandated to swear allegiance to Hitler in 1938, refused to take a stand, leaving pastors exposed and alone to decide whether to take the oath or not...
- About 800, led by Bonhoeffer and Niemoller, were arrested and imprisoned as a result... (only 5.7% of the pastors stood!)
- The people at large did not care that 800 Pastors and Priests were jailed... *they just wanted financial security...* p. 45-46

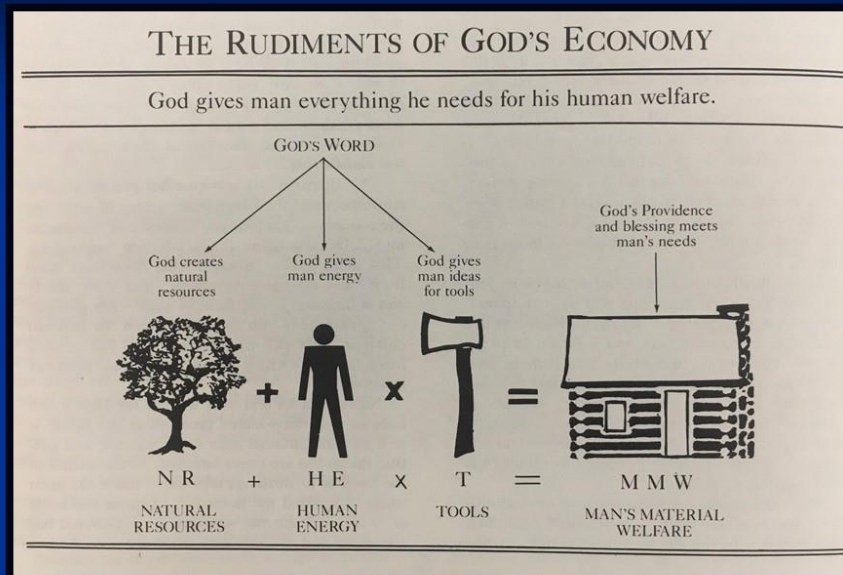
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Is there a Biblical model of Economics?

- Lutzer says on page 48 *“The Bible does not specify which type of economic theory should be adopted by governments.”*
 - I do not believe this is true, since God’s Word address all areas of life
 - However, some of the details of economics are left to each nation...
- A Biblical model – both Old and New Testaments; include
 - Currency backed by silver and gold – precious metals
 - Right to private property and inheritance
 - Freedom to try, buy, sell and fail – wants and satisfaction
 - Productivity (labor) establishes wages and prices

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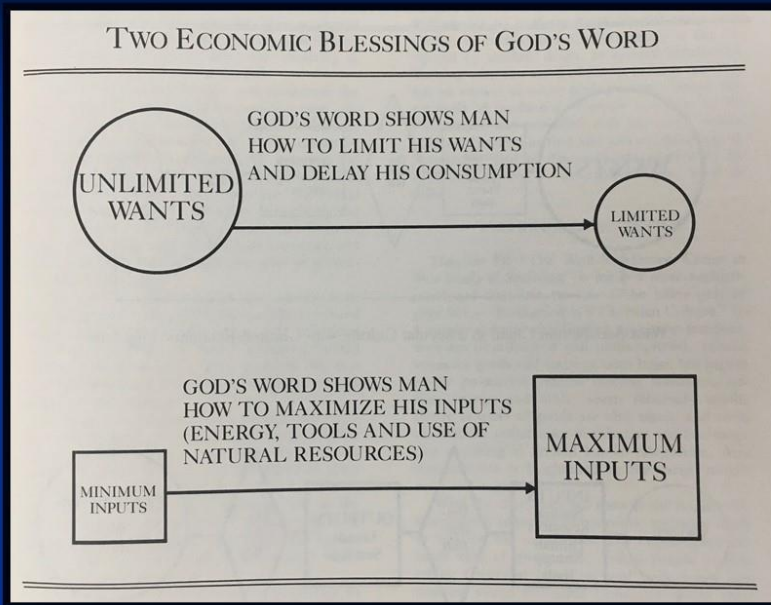
The Economic Freedom Formula (C Wolfe)



Source:
*Guide to
American
Christian
Education in
the Home and
School*
Charles Wolfe
(pages 393-424;
chart on page
400) –
www.achi.org

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The Want and Satisfaction Chain (C Wolfe)



Source:
Guide to American Christian Education in the Home and School
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chart on page
412) –
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Our Original Constitutional Economics

- To Coin Money – *government coins, not mines, our money*
- Only coined money is legal revenue – Article I, Section 8
 - *Taxing by tariffs, national sales, and poll (during wartime only)*
 - *Spending – debts, defense, general welfare*
 - *Borrowing – last resort, central bank?*
- Protecting the Freedom Formula – Article I, Sections 8
 - *Regulate commerce – everyone plays by the same rules (no favorites)*
 - *Promote private invention – copyrights / patents / natural monopoly*
 - *Protect private contracts – government cannot interfere with contracts*
 - *Laws on how to fail – bankruptcy / debtors and protecting creditors*

14

How we lost our Economic Freedom

- Creation of a National Bank – (recognized as a mistake)
- Acceptance of paper currency for debts and govt. revenue
- Creation of the Federal Reserve – 1913 – private bankers
- Creation of fiat currency not backed by silver and gold
- Money created “out of nothing” and loaned to the US!
- Printing money as a solution for everything – creates debt!
- Now digital money not backed by even paper money!
- Solution? – *abolish the FED, a great reset to silver and gold*
The Nation must live within its means – a balanced budget

15

Economic Lessons from Nazi Germany

- *After the fall of the Berlin Wall a cartoon appeared in a Russian newspaper picturing a fork in the road. One path was labeled freedom; the other path was labeled sausage. As we might guess, the path to freedom had few takers; the path to sausage was crowded with footprints.*
- *Unfortunately, given a choice, many people would prefer economic equality along with tyranny rather than economic opportunity with freedom...*
- *To vote for the candidate who promised you the most money is stealing (since your entitlement is actually someone else's money). It might be legalized stealing but it is stealing...*

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So how do we guard economic integrity?

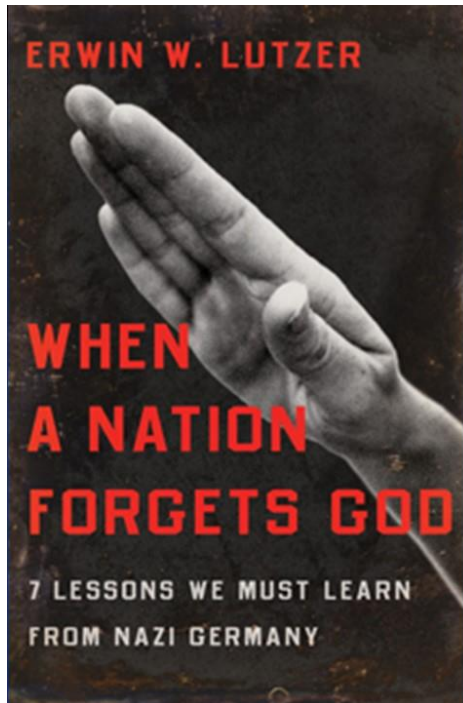
- *Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life...* - John 6:27 (Jesus transforms our labor)
- Don't be fooled by government promises and money from the right or the left as if it is a solution to improve the economy
 - Monroe, Jackson, Tyler, Polk, Pierce, Grant, Arthur, Cleveland...
 - Madison's early warning on the misinterpretation of Welfare clause...
- Prepare for economic inflation and the challenges for the basics
- Be creative and gracious, preparing to bless your neighbors
- Local will be God's focus, and where the power will reside!

17

Madison's Warning on General Welfare – Feb 6, 1792

If Congress can apply money indefinitely to the general welfare, and are the sole and supreme judge of the general welfare, they may take the care of religion into their own hands; they may take into their hands the education of children, establishing in like manner schools throughout the Union; they may undertake the regulation of roads, other than post roads. In short, everything from the highest object of State legislation, down to the most minute object of policy, would be thrown under the power of Congress; for every object I have mentioned would admit the application of money, and might be called, if Congress pleased, provisions of the general welfare.

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Suggested Reading from Lesson Two

- Read Chapter Two (pgs. 35-55)
 - *How might you distill one key lesson for today from the economics of Germany?*
- Consider the *American Economics* high school course by Paul Jehle, on one flash drive – 110 audio files, notes, homework / quizzes / answer keys – all for \$199 plus s/h = \$210

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