

Here's Why Private Property Is Sacred

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Grasping creation can be an overwhelming thought. But a perspective to simplify it from an American view is to visualize it as a single sphere. Humans often need to compartmentalize ideas and concepts for discussion and understanding purposes. Yet, God's creation, as is discussed in the book of Genesis, is really a singular thing - creation, God's creation. Visualizing His creation as a sphere means that whether you are discussing or describing economics, social issues, morals, business, society, government, social compacts, etc., you are only talking about aspects

(compartmentalization) of the sphere; but, nonetheless, the same single sphere. The only differentiation is the distance from, angle of, and point on the sphere in which you are looking. But it remains the same sphere; Gods' creation.



Economist Jerry Bowyer, in a series of economic videos, God and the Economists,[1] describes how God is the creator who creates from nothing; and how man is also a creator - "God created man in his own image"[2] - but man, also a creator, creates from the resources created by God and gifted from God to man.

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it...Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground - everything that has the breath of life in it - I give every green plant for food." And it was so.[3]

God instructs man to subdue the earth; that is, utilize the resources created by God and gifted to man to produce. Productivity is the divine gift from God to man of man's ability to be a creator in God's image. God gifts each individual with specific skills and interests - that is, each one of us is blessed by God - so that each one of us can create from God's created resources, products or services based on our gifts, to service mankind.

“A man can receive only what is given him from heaven.”[4] It is when we take God’s created resources and combine them with our gifted skills and talents of labor (the labor of our body and mind) to service others, we create capital made in the image of God. We are created in His image, and our creations are a reflection of that image.[5] Since we are created in His image, we are subject only to Him; and, therefore, subject to no other. This places us into freedom, frequently referred to as liberty, to pursue our own desires and needs which God has placed within us. “A man being created according to God’s image,” writes the Reverend Samuel Rutherford in his profound 1644 treatise, *Lex, Rex*, “he is res sacra, a sacred thing...Every man by nature is a freeman born, that is, by nature no man cometh out of the womb under any civil subjection to king, prince, or judge, to master, captain, conqueror, teacher.”[6]

Another manifestation of being created in God’s image is respecting this image in others. “Men have a duty,” writes author Gary Amos, “to respect and honor the image of God in other men and the duty to refrain from interfering with another man’s righteous efforts to take dominion over the earth.”[7] Therefore, property rights are directly correlated to man being created in the image of God. One’s fundamental right to one’s property, person, conscience, and family are all a direct expression of man being created in the image of God. This is the very reason property rights, in all its dimensions, is foundational to a civil and just society; and its direct connection to the first covenant, man as producers (creators) from that which God created (raw materials) from nothing.

[1] Jerry Bowyer, May 9, 2012, “God and the Economists, the Video: How Sounds Economic Policies Lead to Prosperity,” *Forbes.com*, [<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jerrybowyer/2012/05/09/god-and-economics-the-video-how-sound-economic-policies-lead-to-prosperity/>].

[2] Guideposts, *The Guideposts Parallel Bible* (Carmel, NY: Guideposts), New International, Genesis 1:27, p. 4.

[3] Guideposts, *The Guideposts Parallel Bible* (Carmel, NY: Guideposts), New International, Genesis 1:28-29, p. 4.

[4] Guideposts, *The Guideposts Parallel Bible* (Carmel, NY: Guideposts), New International, John 3:27, p. 2696.

[5] Developed during, Pastor Jay Harvey, February 23, 2013, “Significance” sermon series, (Pendleton Christian Church, Pendleton, IN).

[6] Rev. Samuel Rutherford, 2014 (originally published in 1644), *Lex, Rex: The Just Prerogative of King and People*, “Question XIII: Whether or No Royal Dignity have its Spring from Nature, and that is True, “Every Man is Born Free,” and How Servitude is Contrary to Nature,” (Lexington, KY; Edinburgh, Scotland: Robert Ogle and Oliver & Boyd), p. 51.

[7] Gary T. Amos, 1989, *Defending the Declaration: How the Bible and Christianity Influenced the Writing of the Declaration of Independence*, (Brentwood, TN: Wolgermuth & Hyatt, Publishers, Inc.), p. 107.