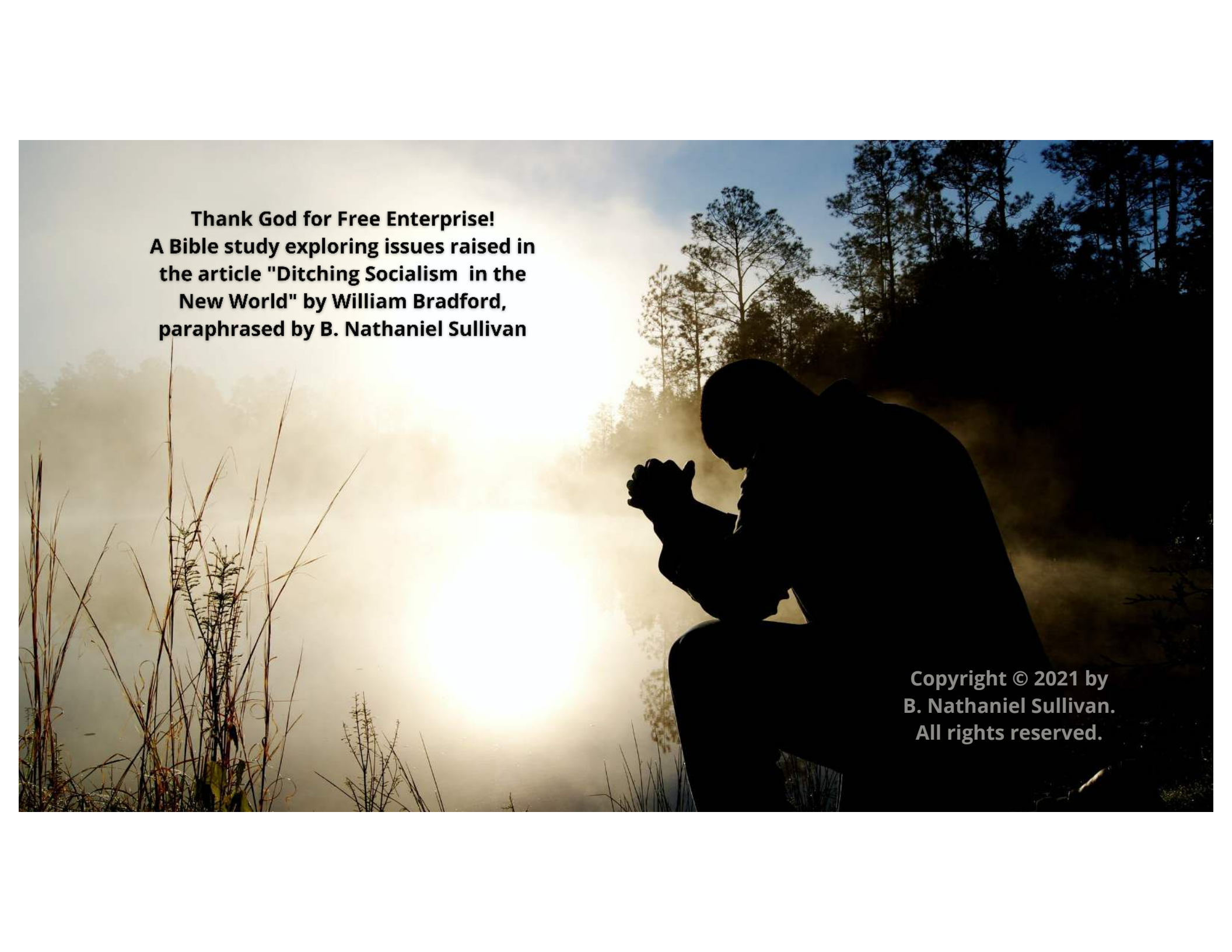


A person is shown in silhouette, kneeling in a prayerful posture on the right side of the image. They are facing a body of water, likely a lake or river, which is shrouded in a thick mist. The sun is rising in the center of the image, creating a bright, hazy glow that fills the sky and reflects on the water. Tall grasses are visible in the foreground on the left, and a line of trees stands in the background on the right. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

**Thank God for Free Enterprise!
A Bible study exploring issues raised in
the article "Ditching Socialism in the
New World" by William Bradford,
paraphrased by B. Nathaniel Sullivan**

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Thank God for Free Enterprise!
The Free Enterprise Economic
System Is Thoroughly Biblical





Jennie Augusta Brownscombe
Thanksgiving at Plymouth, 1925

not just a friend, but also a brother. His tribe, which a few years before had occupied the very land on which our settlement now was rising, had been wiped out by a plague. Had Squanto not been kidnapped and taken to Europe, he too would have died. He was able to make it back to his home, only to discover when he arrived none of the members of his tribe had survived. We became his new family.¹⁶

A Dead End that Would Have Killed Us All

The winter turned to spring, and Squanto became a great encouragement to us; but there was a problem that would plague us during the next two years. I come now to the heart of our story. A number of investors in London had financed our voyage to the New World. In turn,

they required us to work for them five days out of each week; the remaining two days per week we would be allowed to work for ourselves. After seven years, all profits would be divided equally between us and them. During the five days we worked for them, all our resources had to be held in common. In other words, *no private property!* No one owned any land or resources of his own. Whatever our team of workers generated had to be put into a common store, and individuals would take what they needed for their livelihoods from that same pool.¹⁷

As I said, for two years¹⁸ we operated this way. We faced obstacle after obstacle. Those who worked did so begrudgingly, and many would offer excuse after excuse not to work at all. Here are some examples.



Freedom and Property
Rights are inseparable.
You can't have one
without the other.
—George Washington—

If you tell me what you believe about private property, I can tell you whether you're a socialist or an advocate for free enterprise.

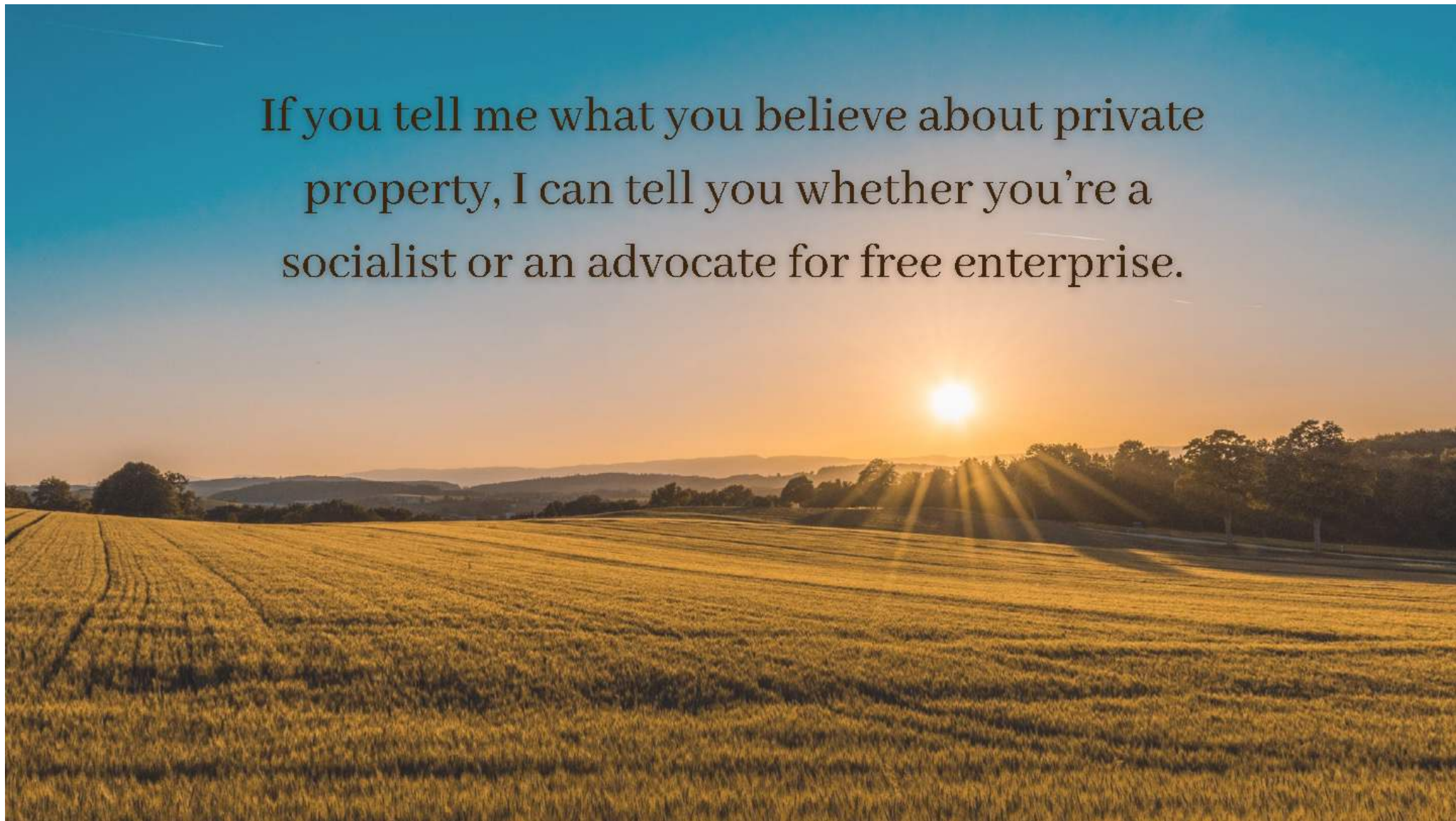
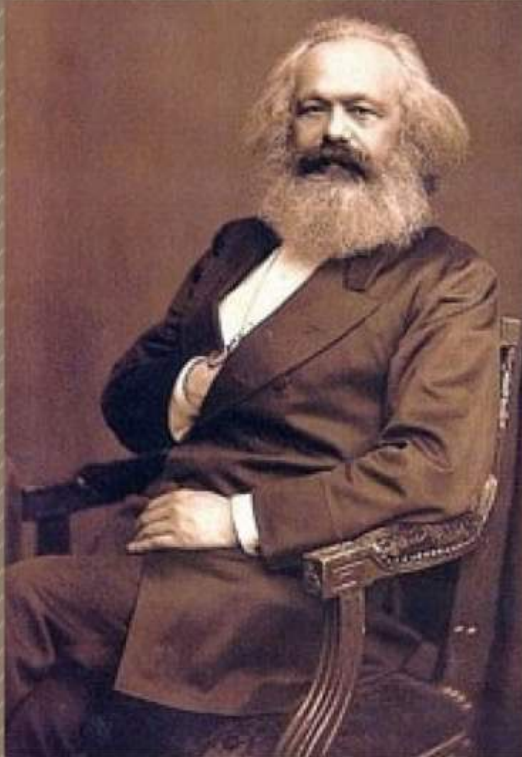




Photo by Joshua Hoehne on Unsplash



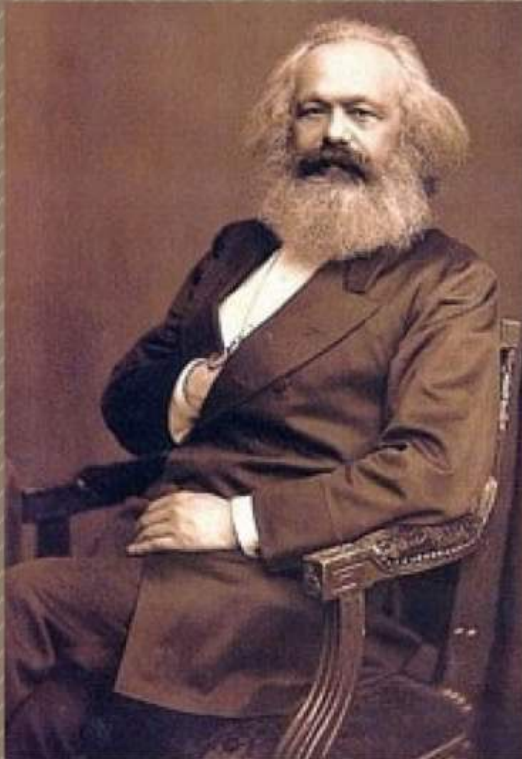
The theory of Communism may be summed up in one sentence: Abolish all private property.

In 2030...

You'll own **nothing.**
And you'll **be happy**

Based on the input of members of the World Economic Forum's
Global Future Councils

WORLD
ECONOMIC
FORUM

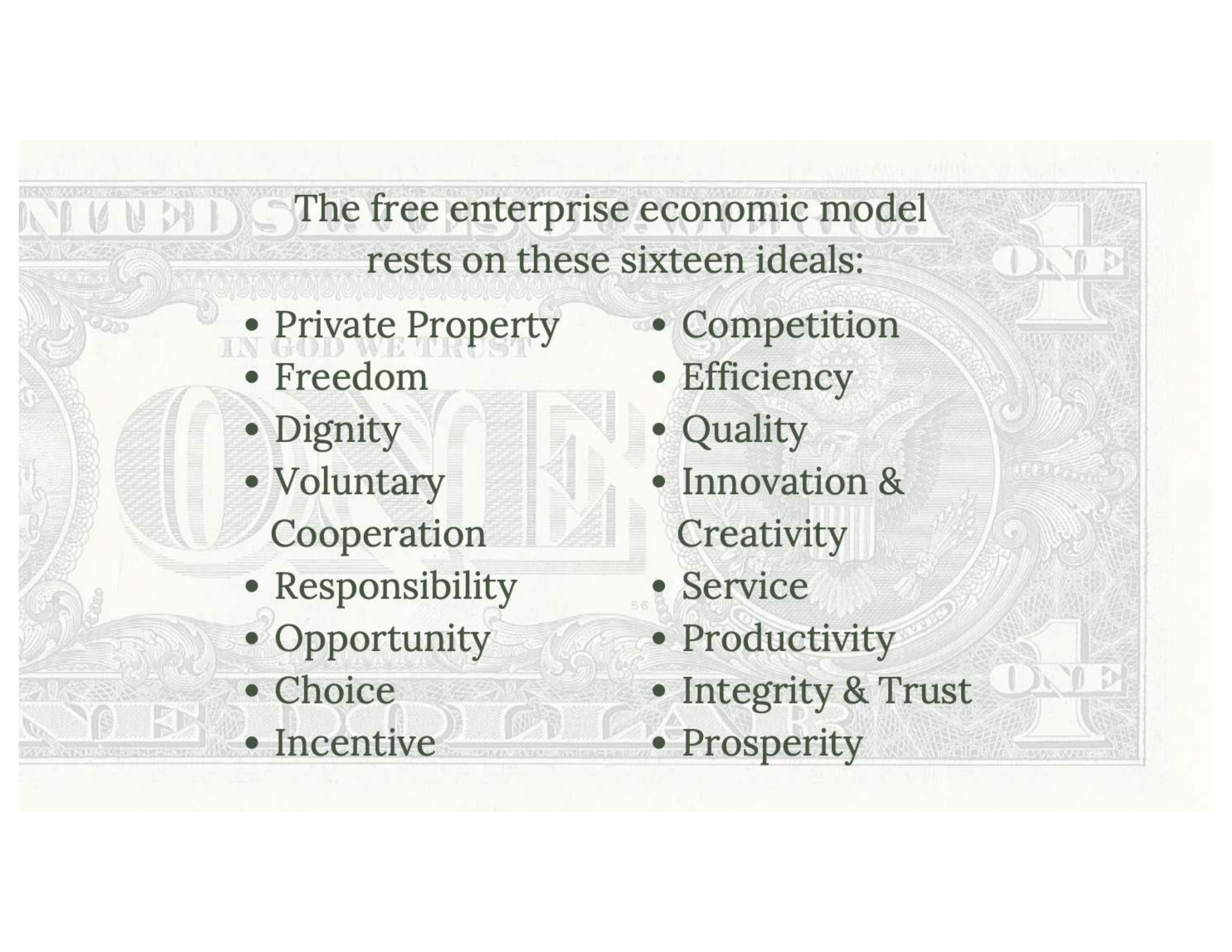


- Communism begins where atheism begins.
- My object in life is to dethrone God and destroy capitalism.
- There are, besides, eternal truths, such as Freedom, etc., that are common to all states of society. But Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion, and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis; it therefore acts in contradiction to all past historical experience.



Socialism is precisely the religion that must overwhelm Christianity....In the new order, Socialism will triumph by first capturing the culture via infiltration of schools, universities, churches and the media by transforming the consciousness of society.

—Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937)—



The free enterprise economic model
rests on these sixteen ideals:

- Private Property
- Freedom
- Dignity
- Voluntary Cooperation
- Responsibility
- Opportunity
- Choice
- Incentive
- Competition
- Efficiency
- Quality
- Innovation & Creativity
- Service
- Productivity
- Integrity & Trust
- Prosperity



Four Essential Elements of a Free Market Economy

- productive work
- rewards for work
- voluntary transactions
- property rights

Ditching Socialism in the New World

- The young unmarried men — those who were strongest and who had the most time and the greatest ability to produce — resented that they were, in effect, being made to work for other men's wives and children, without any additional compensation.
- Whether strong or weak, everyone working, whether he did much or little, would wind up with the same amount of food and other resources as everyone else. If an individual worked a full eight hours in a day, and another worked only two, each received the same. Those carrying the greater load strongly believed this to be an extreme injustice. Can you blame them?

Ditching Socialism in the New World

- Experience counted for nothing; the older men felt disrespected by those who were younger.
- Under the communal arrangement, the wives had to cook and do laundry for anyone and everyone — not just their own husbands and families. This angered the husbands, who, along with their wives, felt it was a form of slavery.

All of this was bad enough, but I'm convinced it would have been a lot worse if we hated each other. No one in our congregation was perfect — not by a long shot. Still, we were a people who had common goals and who sincerely wanted everyone among us to have the best. Our company had more than its share of honest and decent men and women.

Socialism is a philosophy
of failure, the creed of
ignorance, and the gospel
of envy, its inherent virtue
is the equal sharing
of misery.



Winston
Churchill



Seafront of Thessalonica in 1917

For even when we were with you, we commanded you
this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.

—The apostle Paul to the Thessalonian
Christians in 2 Thessalonians 3:10—

each family unit. Also — and this is key — so would the crops they produced. In this way, laziness naturally would be penalized, and hard work rewarded.

The change was remarkable and immediate! Whereas before the men had looked for excuses not to work and had complained when they did, they now labored willingly and eagerly.

The change was remarkable and immediate! Whereas before the men in our company had looked for excuses not to work and had complained when they did, they now labored willingly and eagerly. More corn was planted than would have been under any other system I or anyone else could have devised. It wasn't

just the men, either! Wives and children also worked in the fields, and they apparently wanted to! Before we adopted this system, urging a woman to till the ground and plant corn was thought to be oppressive and mean.²¹

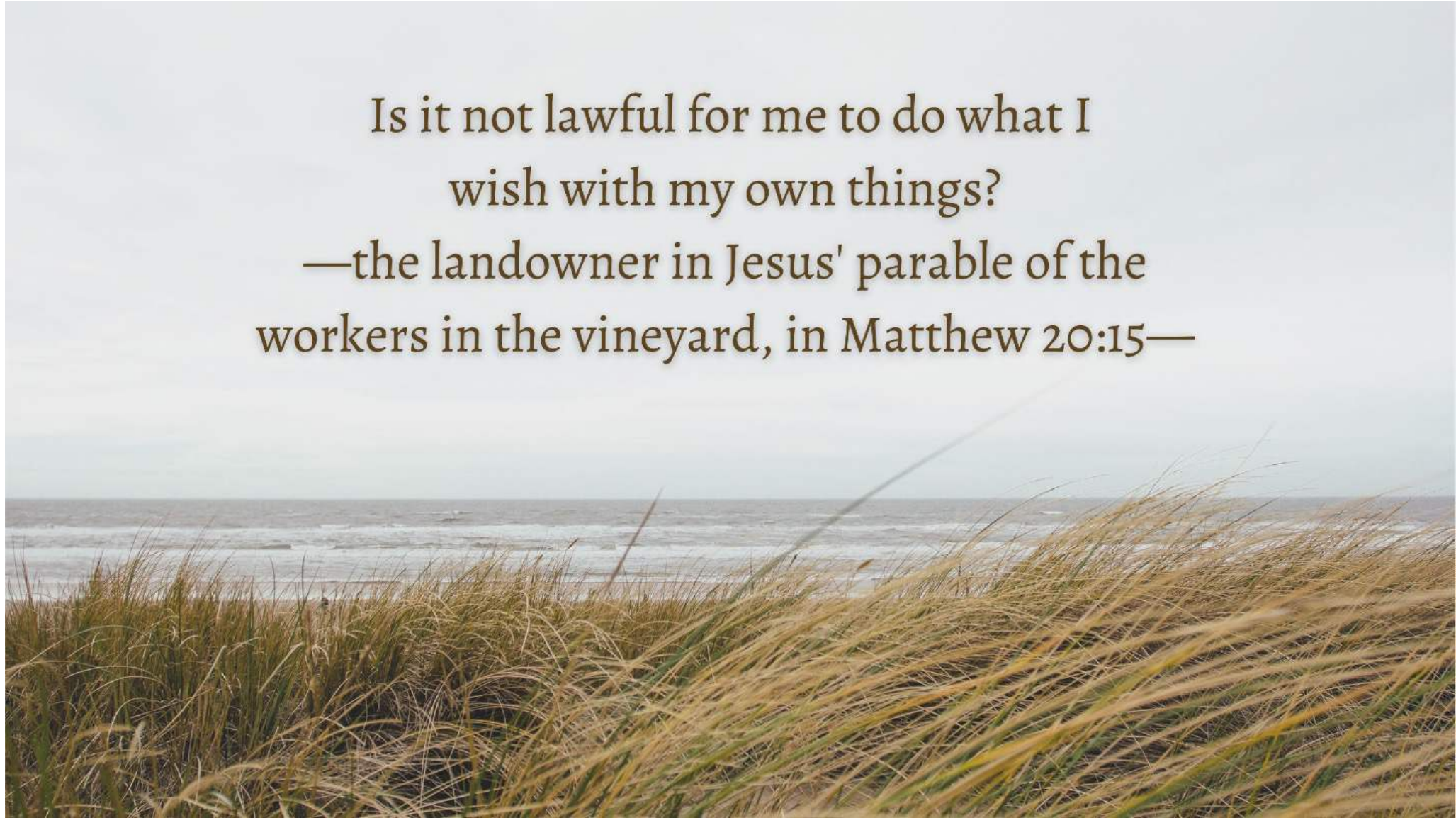
A Path to a Hopeful Future

There's more. Thanks for your patience as I explain even further. Be assured, though, I'm almost done. In November of 1621, the ship *Fortune* arrived²² with about 35 new colonists. The ship brought us mouths to feed, but no supplies; and our rations were cut in half. It wasn't that we wished hardship on anybody, but the additional needs among us made our task even more challenging.

The historical experience of socialist countries has sadly demonstrated that collectivism does not do away with alienation but rather increases it, adding to it a lack of basic necessities and economic inefficiency.
—Pope John Paul 2nd—



Is it not lawful for me to do what I
wish with my own things?
—the landowner in Jesus' parable of the
workers in the vineyard, in Matthew 20:15—



Ditching Socialism in the New World

hard to meet his own needs and has a surplus, and when he experiences the satisfaction of hard work and the fruit of his labor, he is free to think about others and to give of his own resources to help them and to meet their needs. As Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:28, "Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need."

The Dawn of a New Day

After the newcomers joined us, it wasn't that long until it was time to harvest our crops. We reaped a bountiful harvest that year, certainly because God had been good to us, but also because the members of the colony had worked hard in both planting and harvesting.

Ditching Socialism in the New World

In fact, we enjoyed more than enough! Some members of the colony even were able to benefit others because they had enough to sell. Also, through their transactions, they managed to benefit themselves as well by making a profit. Having worked hard, they deserved it!

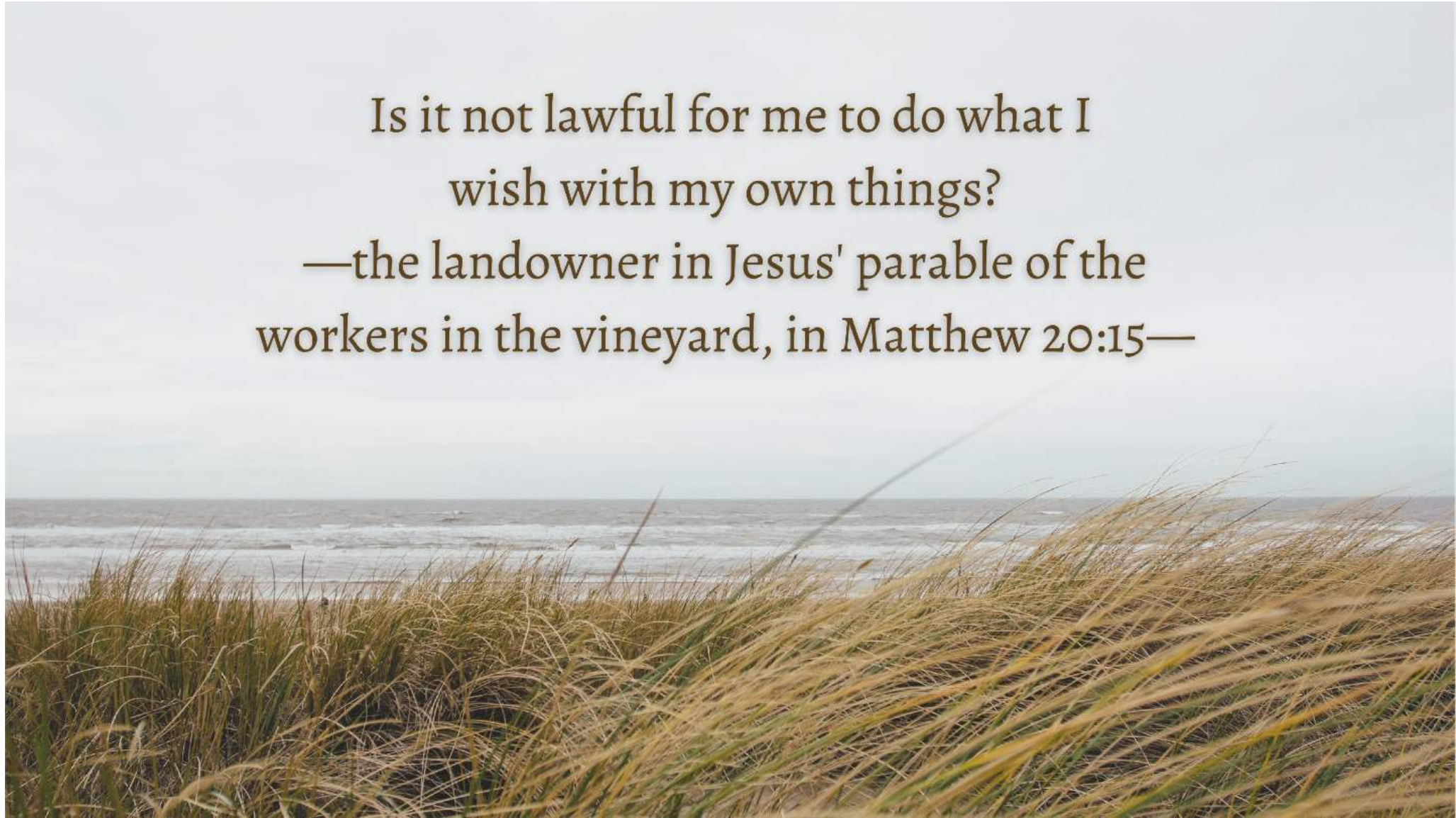
With God's help, we had turned a corner!²⁵

We knew we had much for which to be grateful, and we celebrated that year, thanking God for all His abundant blessings!²⁶

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Despite the hardships of the past, and despite other hardships that were yet to come, the future looked bright!

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The Death of Ananias, by Raphael

Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.” Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last.

—Acts 5:3-5—

Ditching Socialism in the New World

investments would they receive if all of us had starved? We traded the failed system for one that emphasized

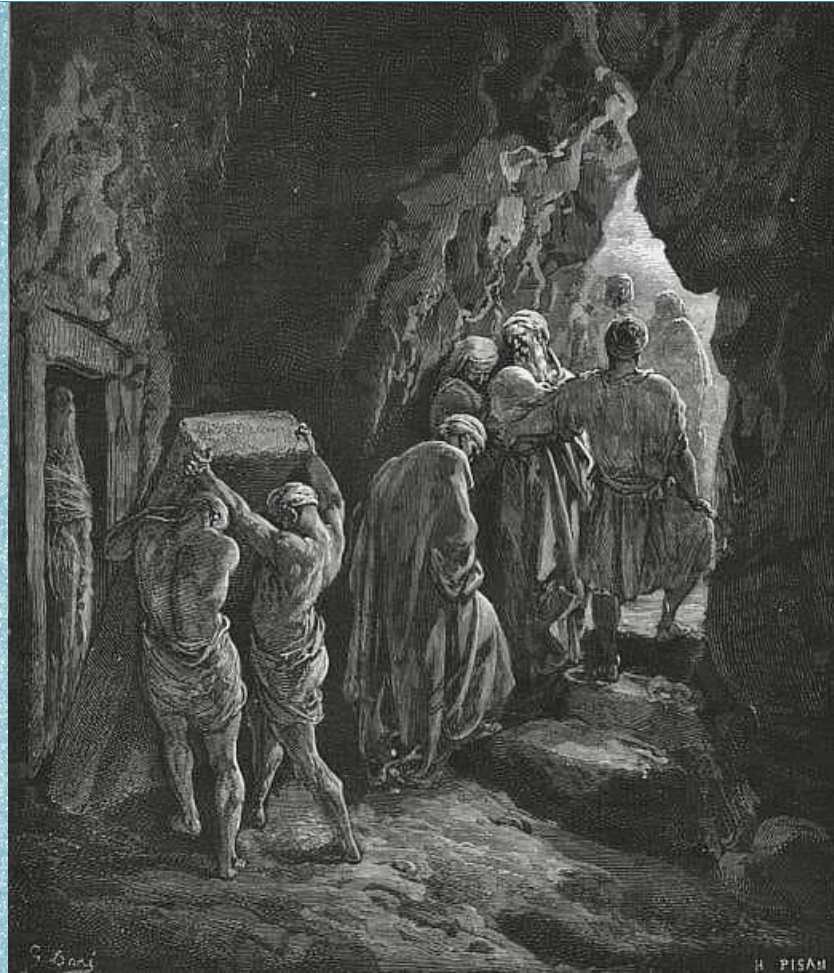
- the benefits of private property and
- the responsibilities of the owner(s) to effectively manage the resources in his/their charge.

As we assigned the land, we were mindful that larger families would need more resources, so we made our decisions accordingly. We weren't thinking about inheritance or other future matters, but mainly about immediate needs. Children who had been orphaned and other single individuals were assigned to families — and so management of work responsibilities would belong strictly to

You shall not steal.

**You shall not covet your neighbor's house;
you shall not covet your neighbor's wife,
nor his male servant, nor his female
servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor
anything that is your neighbor's.**

—Exodus 20:15,17—



Woodcut by Gustave Doré depicting the burial of Sarah in the cave



Jesus' parables in Luke 15

Ditching Socialism in the New World

had been around for a while. Isn't it interesting how all of us tend to view others — even friends and potential friends — with a mutual kind of skepticism?²⁴

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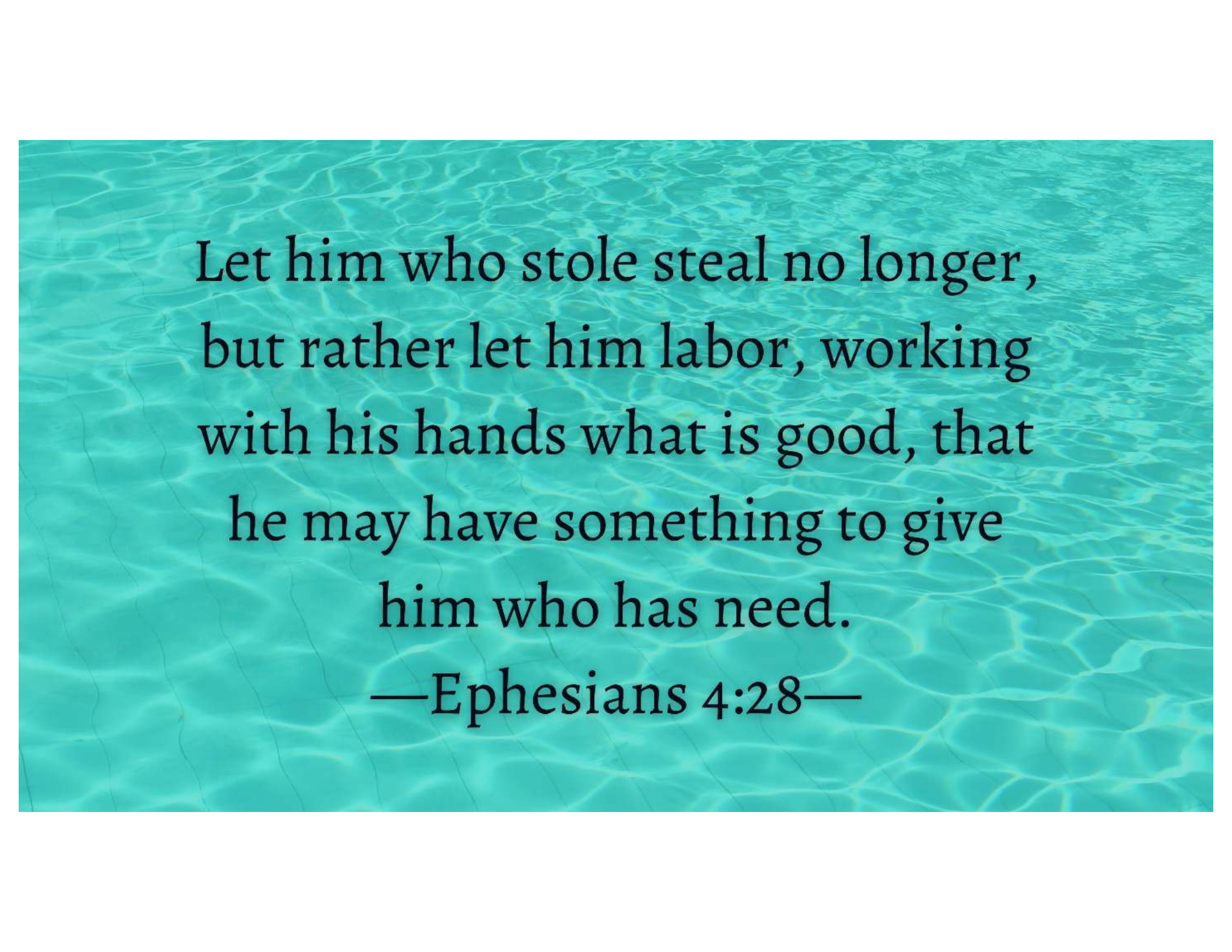
Editor's note: Don't let this section mislead you! This incident doesn't indicate that a free-market system breeds selfishness. Not at all! The tendencies to look out for oneself and to view others skeptically are natural. But the "other side of this same coin" is that with enough to go around, generosity can be encouraged and joyfully practiced. When a person has worked

Ditching Socialism in the New World

hard to meet his own needs and has a surplus, and when he experiences the satisfaction of hard work and the fruit of his labor, he is free to think about others and to give of his own resources to help them and to meet their needs. As Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:28, "Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need."

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Ditching Socialism in the New World

²⁶D. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe, *What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1994), 121-122. Kennedy and Newcombe write,

The result [of the Pilgrims' adaption of a free market system] was that the following harvest was a tremendous, bountiful harvest, and abundant thanksgiving was celebrated in America. Had they not gone into private enterprise, it is likely the Pilgrims would have died off. Note it well: When socialism was abandoned, Thanksgiving was established! When socialism is reinstated in America, thanksgiving will be abolished! That is the history of America — a lesson that we have all too easily forgotten.

²⁷ <https://bit.ly/3zrc8Pj>

**And you shall remember the LORD your God, for
it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that
He may establish His covenant which He swore
to your fathers, as it is this day.**

—Deuteronomy 8:18—

I shudder to think what would
have become of us if we
hadn't ditched socialism!

—William Bradford, paraphrased—

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a dark, textured wallet. A US dollar bill is partially visible, tucked into the wallet. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

Learn More!

To access a six-session Bible study series titled
Principles of Economic Liberty:
The Biblical Case for Free Enterprise, visit
discoverbedrocktruth.org/freemarketbiblestudy.