

SOCIAL SECURITY: Idolatry and Slavery

by Rev. Matthew Trehella

The Bible addresses all matters of life. In this pamphlet is an outline establishing that the Bible stands in opposition to the Social Security system enacted in America in 1935. Social Security is an unBiblical, idolatrous system for the following reasons:

1. Social Security is a violation of the 1st Commandment. God says in Exodus chapter 20, verse 2, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." He then says in verse 3, "You shall have no other gods before Me." This is the first commandment. In this commandment, God forbids us to have any other gods. He forbids idolatry. Hence, in the first commandment, God requires that we fear, love, and trust Him above all things. We trust God above all things when we commit our lives completely to His keeping and rely on Him for help in every need (Psalm 118:8,9; Matthew 6:25-34; Philippians 4:19). When it comes to Social Security, the State is demanding that we trust it for our needs in our old age. When the State demands that we trust in it for such needs, it is usurping the place of God because the State has no God-given authority to demand that it care for people in their old age. It is demanding that it be recognized as God. It is declaring itself to be a god. Therefore, Social Security is a violation of the 1st commandment.

2. Social Security is a violation of the 10th Commandment. God says in Exodus chapter 20, verse 17, "You shall not covet your neighbors' house, you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is your neighbors." In this commandment, God forbids every sinful desire to get our neighbors' possessions openly or by trickery. Hence, He requires us to be content with what He has given us. Dorcas Hardy, who was the Commissioner of Social Security from 1986 to 1989, in her book *Social Insecurity*, makes it clear that Social Security is not insurance, nor is it a pension. She states that Social Security is "a transfer of wealth from young to old." Social Security is the State taking money from one group of people and giving it to another group of people. It is old people coveting young people's money through the coercive arm of the State. The covetous nature is seen in old people by how vociferously they respond to any legislation which might touch Social Security (Colossians 3:5). They have an attitude of "I've paid all these years, so I want mine." Therefore, Social Security is a violation of the 10th commandment because it is based on covetousness and it breeds covetousness.

3. Social Security violates God's work ethic. The Bible has much to say against laziness. Sluggards and sloths are mentioned 15 times in the book of Proverbs alone. Proverbs 26:14 states, "As the door turns upon its hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed." The Bible extols the virtues of hard work, yet says nothing about retirement. God requires us to be honest and industrious and to help our neighbor in their need. Retirement is what Americans look forward to in order to pursue their own self-interests such as golf and fishing. Rarely is retirement used as an opportunity for further service to God. At the turn of the century, two-thirds of the men over age 65 were still working. Today, since Social Security was enacted, 5 out of 6 men over the age of 65 are not working. Social Security encourages laziness and self-centeredness, therefore, Social Security violates God's work ethic.

4. Social Security violates the jurisdiction of the Family and the Church. God has established four governments. 1.) Self-government 2.) Family government 3.) Church government, and 4.) Civil government. Each government has its own jurisdiction and function. The Scripture declares in First Timothy chapter 5, verse 8, "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." God has established that families provide for the needs of their members. Sadly, many children do not want to care for their parents in their old age. They like the State to care for their parents so that they can carry on with their self-centered life. God has also established that when the need is too much to bear for the family alone, the Church is to help with the needs of the family (Romans 12:13; Galatians 6:10). The Scriptures do not place care for the needs of the family in the hands of the State. Social Security is an attempt to bypass God's order and trust the State to care for our needs, or the needs of our parents, in old age, therefore, Social Security violates the jurisdiction of the family and the Church.

5. Social Security undermines the Family. The family's chief end is to glorify God, obey His laws, advance His kingdom, and enjoy His blessings, now and forever. The enemies of God and the family are all those who seek to destroy the family and tread upon God's Holy Law. When the State demands that we trust in it for our needs, it is usurping the place of God. It is demanding that it be recognized as God. The reason the State wants people to trust in it for their needs is because it wants to win the allegiance of family members to itself (rather than to one another). The State knows that if we trust in it for our needs, it will win our allegiance. Therefore, Social Security undermines our allegiance to our family members and to God. It is an attack on the family and a violation of God's Holy Law (Exodus 20:3,12).

6. A person who numbers his child with the State is giving him or her a mark. In Ezekiel 9:4-6, God instructs one of His agents to "put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done" within Jerusalem. All were to be slain except those who received the mark. They were spared death. They belonged to the Lord. In Exodus 12, the doorposts were marked with blood so that the destroyer did not touch those who belonged to the Lord. In Revelation 7:3, we see that God seals those that are His on their foreheads. Satan also wants to mark those that are his. In Revelation 13:16-17, he marks them in the forehead and hand with a number. A mark is a sign of ownership. Webster's Dictionary defines mark as "a letter, numeral etc. put on something to indicate quality, provenance, ownership etc." The Social Security number establishes a guardian/ward relation with the State. A number given by the State for such a purpose denotes ownership by the State, therefore we should not allow our children to be numbered by the State. Our children belong to God, not the State.

7. A person who numbers his child with the State renders unto Caesar that which is not Caesar's. Marriage is the joining together by God of a man and a woman in order to raise a family and exercise dominion. Children, under the parents' God-bestowed authority, are to receive education and discipline, and are to be trained as trustees of the family property. In the family, the husband, under Christ's leadership, is in loving authority over his wife and children, and both parents are in authority over their children as directed by the Bible. The Scriptures teach that children are gifts from God (Psalm 127:3-5). The Scriptures teach that God gives children to parents (I Chronicles 25:5). Parenthood is a right given by God, not a privilege granted by the State. Jesus taught, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mark 12:17). Children are made in God's image. They bear His inscription, not Caesar's. We are not to render them unto Caesar. A number given by the State denotes ownership by the State, therefore, we should not allow our children to be numbered by the State.

8. A person who numbers his child with the State enslaves his child. Jesus is Lord, not Caesar. Our children belong to God. They are not to be the slaves of men. What is the purpose of a number given by the State? Control. The State wants to control, which is to enslave our children by giving them a number. The Scriptures declare, "You were bought with a price; do not become the slaves of men." (I Corinthians 7:23). We are to be the slaves of God (Romans 6:22). We are to be the slaves of Christ (Romans 1:1; Galatians 1:10). He bought us. A number given by the State denotes ownership by the State, therefore, we must uphold the Lordship of Christ and not allow our children to be numbered by the State.

A Historical Perspective

Some years after the Revolutionary War, the U.S. Congress passed a pension plan for all veterans of that war. All veterans desiring a pension were to apply at designated places, show evidence of their military status, and dictate to a court clerk their memories of the war. The resultant memoirs give us vivid glimpses of that war. When you read these memoirs however, you notice a blatant lack of reference to religion or God or the Bible. You are left wondering, "weren't there any Christian people that fought in this war or lived in this era?"

The reason for these blatant omissions to religion, God, or the Bible is because no Christian veteran would apply for a federal pension, and the churches were united in their opposition to any such application. They believed that participation in a state or federal pension plan was morally wrong and idolatrous. They based their stand on many Old Testament and New Testament texts of Scripture. They saw their position summed up by I Timothy 5:8, "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." They saw it as their God-given duty to care for their own family members.

What a contrast to the Church in 1935 when Social Security was implemented. Churches stood by in silence and submitted to this act of aggression by the State into the jurisdiction of the Family and the Church. In fact, by 1954, clergymen were added to the list of those who could be a part of the Social Security system because the clergy in this nation begged to be a part of it.

If you would like a large packet of information in order to learn more about this important topic, send fifteen dollars to: Mercy Seat Christian Church 10240 W. National Ave. PMB #129 Milwaukee, WI 53227 262-675-2804

SOME FURTHER THOUGHTS REGARDING SOCIAL SECURITY:

Getting a Social Security number is voluntary. There is no law or statute which requires you to obtain one either for yourself or your child. A brochure which I obtained from the Social Security Administration in March of 1997, entitled Numbers for Newborns, asks the question, "Must My Baby Have A Social Security Number Now?" The answer given in the brochure states, "No! Getting a Social Security number for your baby is strictly voluntary."

Now, so often when the State says something is "voluntary", they use some other device to try and coerce you into "volunteering". For example, when it comes to the School to Work program which is being initiated in Wisconsin and throughout the nation, they will say "taking this Certificate of Mastery test is purely voluntary." But then they tell you, "Oh, but if you don't take the test you are automatically

excluded from getting the best jobs in society." This is the underhanded deception of the State. They will try to "coax" you into volunteering. The carrot is usually money. When it comes to Social Security, the State says getting a Social Security number is voluntary. But then the IRS comes along and says you cannot claim your child as an exemption on your tax return and get a refund unless you have a Social Security number for him or her.

The past. In the past, those who did not have Social Security numbers for their children and therefore did not put any numbers on their tax returns, simply received a letter of warning from the IRS, stating that they must have Social Security numbers on their return next year or they would be penalized. They would be told that the IRS would let it go this year, but next year they must have the numbers. My wife, Clara, and I received these letters for ten years. We were never penalized.

The present. In 1996 however, things changed. Section 151(e) of the Internal Revenue Code was changed by the GATT/WTO legislation. Three families in our congregation no longer merely received a threatening letter, but were sent notice by the IRS that they could not get their refund without their children having Social Security numbers. They were told they now owed the IRS money because they could not claim their children as dependents without the number. All three families wrote to the IRS stating that they have religious objections to getting their children Social Security numbers. Two of the three families have since received their tax refund without Social Security numbers for their children. The third family is still waiting to hear from the IRS.

(A side note. The family who is still waiting to hear from the IRS, formerly received Social Security benefits. The mother in this family had been married before. Her first husband died. The daughter from her first marriage was receiving survivor benefits from Social Security as a result. But because of coming to realize that Social Security is unBiblical and idolatrous, they wrote to the Social Security Administration to refuse receiving further money from it. So, here they refused to receive money from the State through Social Security, but now the State is harassing them over Social Security numbers.)

The future. 1997 stands to be an interesting year. In 1996, Congress passed the Small Business Jobs Protection Act which contained legislation which once again modified Section 151(e) of the Internal Revenue Code. The modification further strengthens the language that you must have a Social Security number for your children in order to claim them as dependents. (*Update: See article enclosed titled - What to do when the IRS sends you notice that they will not send you your refund because you don't have Social Security numbers for your children.)

Supplemental Security Income. The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is administered by the Social Security Administration. SSI gives \$5000.00 to \$20,000.00 "backpay" checks to drug addicts and drunkards (and for a host of other lame reasons) for their "disability." They then pay these people \$500.00 a month because of their "disability." This is not compassion. This money does not help these people, it hurts them. Why? Because they take it and booze up for a few days until their broke. This enables them economically to continue in their "disability", it does not help them. Many end up in hospitals after their livers finally fail. You're told that the money taken from your check each week for Social Security does not go toward SSI, but it really does, in part at least. Each year there is a surplus of money given to Social Security. This is not kept in some little account for you somewhere, rather the surplus is put into the "general" tax fund. SSI is part of the "general" tax fund. So, drug addicts and drunkards are rewarded by our government, but honest, hardworking families, like the one mentioned above from our congregation,

are harassed by it.

How Do We Respond To The UnBiblical Social Security System?

When a teaching like this is given, there is potential for people to become judgmental or harsh.

First, we must repent of the idolatry we have been involved in when it comes to Social Security, and we must call others to repentance too. We must recognize that God is the one in whom we are to trust, not the State. We must also recognize that while repentance and forgiveness are instant gifts of God's mercy and grace, it takes time, discipline, hard work, sacrifice, and perseverance to "rebuild the walls that have fallen down."

RESTRUCTURING OUR LIVES - WHAT INDIVIDUALS CAN DO.

A.) People who receive Social Security money. The elderly people who are receiving Social Security benefits, or are nigh to receiving benefits, should consider refusing to receive the benefits if they can financially do without them, or if they can continue to work. They should also see if their children or other family members can help them in their financial situation if they need it now, or if they cannot work as much or at all in the near future. Children should understand that it is their God-given duty before God to care for their parents in their old age (Exodus 20:12; I Timothy 5:8). However, those elderly people who are unable to do without their Social Security money because of their situation should not be held in ill repute for the following reasons:

1. They were deceived all of their lives by our government into thinking that Social Security was insurance, or a pension, or that there were little individual accounts that they were paying into and when they turn 65 they'll get it back. They were deceived all of their lives, therefore they were planning on having this money in their old age. They did not structure their lives to do without it. Now, in their old age, it could be impossible for them to restructure to do without it with as few years as they have left to live.
2. Many elderly people have children who refuse to do their God-given duty and care for their parents in their old age. These children have believed the Statist lie that their parents should be cared for by the State and not by them.
3. We are dealing with generational sin when it comes to Social Security. When the people of God see a sin which has been going on for generations in their midst, and repent of it, it can be so imbedded in the culture that it takes time and much restructuring to root it out (read Nehemiah).

B.) No young Christian should receive Social Security benefits. No Christian should be receiving SSI benefits. We should not get our children Social Security numbers. We should all work to see the Social Security system abolished.

(Important note. When your child is born at a hospital, the hospital personnel will come to you and ask that you fill out the birth certificate form and check the box to receive a Social Security number for your child. Refuse to do so. Just record your child's birth in your Family Bible. If they try to tell you that you cannot leave the hospital unless you fill out the birth certificate form and check the box to receive a Social Security number, just ask them "what are the terms of this kidnapping?" They will back off real fast.

Remember, receiving a Social Security number is voluntary. So is receiving a birth certificate. You are not required to sign for or fill out either. You need to know that many hospitals now automatically apply for your child to get a Social Security number when you fill out the birth certificate form. You need neither (regardless of what they tell you) and you're wise not to fill out or sign for either.)

RESTRUCTURING OUR LIVES - WHAT CHURCHES CAN DO.

God uses the wicked for His purposes. Sometimes He uses what the wicked do for good in His people's lives. What they mean for evil, God can use for good. Social Security looks like tyranny, and it is. But God could use it to get His people out of their safety zones. Upon recognizing Social Security for what it is, namely idolatry, Christians could begin new jobs, new trades, entrepreneurship could explode, a parallel economy could be established, Christian colleges could begin to set up their own accreditation boards rather than going to the pagans for accreditation. Or some of God's people might consider more earnestly going into the ministry or into missions. We need to have compassion, band together, and help each other out in restructuring our lives to be free and not part of the idolatrous Social Security system.

A.) Churches should preach about Social Security. The Bible speaks to all matters of life. The pulpits in America need to condemn this system for what it is - blatant idolatry. Pastors need to preach sermons about The Bible and Social Security, and expose it for what it is. In 1976, economist Jodie Allen, who is a socialist, wrote an article in the Washington Post entitled Social Security: The Largest Welfare Program. She details the response she received and what she learned:

I was deluged with calls and letters from the guardians of the Social Security system saying, "Gee, Jodie, we always liked you but how could you say this." I acted very politely and I said, "Well, what's the matter with this, isn't it true?" And they said, "Oh, yes, it's true, but once you start saying this kind of thing, you don't know where it's going to end up." Then I came to perceive that Social Security was not a program, it was a religion. It's very hard to reform a religion.

And it is a religion. Social Security is socialism. Socialism puts man at the center, and makes the State god. As a religion, the State has every intention of enforcing its law/order. By the State demanding that we trust in it for our needs, it is usurping the place of God. It is demanding that it be recognized as God. This idolatrous system should be condemned by pulpits in America, and people should be called upon to repent of their idolatry for receiving from it or paying homage to it.

B.) Churches should stand with those who are persecuted by the State. Our congregation has every intention of helping the family that's still waiting to hear from the IRS. Churches should make sure they stand with families who are harassed by the IRS. This includes helping them finance a fight in the courts, or staging an effort with Congressmen to get new laws passed to see that the harassment ceases.

C.) Churches should help those families that are in need. There are times when the burden to meet a family member's needs becomes too great for the family alone. In such times, the church should step forward to help. An elderly person upon recognizing the idolatry of Social Security might want to no longer be a part of it, but simply cannot afford not receiving all or some of the money. The church should consider what it might be able to do in such a situation. A system should be established within the church whereby people can approach the deacons when they are in serious need.

(Important note. We are not to be moving people from a statist welfare system to an ecclesiastical welfare system. It is primarily the family's responsibility to care for the needs of its members. The church steps in to help only when the need becomes too great.)

D.) Churches should help organize apprenticeships. This is important if we are going to see the next generation raised to know what it means to be a freeman. Churches could hold meetings with their men and women to brainstorm as how to live in this culture without a Social Security number. The meetings could also serve to hook young people up with other men or women in the church who could apprentice them in a trade. We must restructure and begin to rebuild the wall.

FINAL NOTE - the Church of old versus the present day Church.

Some will say, "Though I participate in the Social Security system, it is not idolatrous because I know in my heart that the State isn't God, nor am I trusting in the government to meet my needs."

We must remember however, idolatry is not just a condition of the heart - it is an action. The early Church could have easily said, "You know that I don't believe that the Emperor is God, Lord. I know he's a false god. You also know, Lord, that if I don't throw in this pinch of incense I will be jailed and well, I have a responsibility to provide for my family. You know my heart, Lord." They could have easily justified and rationalized throwing in the pinch of incense. But they didn't because they knew that idolatry wasn't just a condition of the heart - it was an action, and by throwing in the incense they were committing idolatry.

I considered entitling this article Social Security: None Dare Call it Idolatry. Why? Because we are all up to our eyeballs in this economic system (especially those who have national ministries or are in comfortable denominational positions and could therefore inform thousands about the idolatrous nature of the Social Security system). Many will therefore chafe at this position paper because they have so much treasure built up in this economic system they never want to see it fall even though the Social Security system is idolatrous and unBiblical. It is because their god is the god of money and not the God of the Bible that they dare not call it idolatry.

God help us to repent, and trust in Him as He has decreed!