

## The Raft and the Pyramid: The Marxian Vs. Christian Perception of Surplus-Value

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### Abstract

Aspects of the Holy Bible vaunt and adulate the place of work/labor in the establishment of just entitlements. In other words, the conception affirms all of salary, inheritance, and profit as the (single or collective) sole bases of just entitlement. But of these three, only inheritance escapes Marx's or Marxian rebuff. For instance, while Christianity stipulates the pedestal for and adequacy of salary and adumbrates the decency of profit, Marxism articulates the inadequacy of salary and rejects the expropriation of profit. However, both conceptions have to do with the idea of labor and value. Basing on a critical review of available literature, this article articulates the broad and most basic contra-distinctions between Christian and Marxian conceptions of the idea of labor and reward for same. This work achieves this by adducing the metaphors of a raft (slackly foundation) and a pyramid (broad/firm foundation). Thus, it discovers that, one, while Christian ethos criticizes labor; Marxism adulates it above other factors in production; and two, what Christian ethos describe as profit (just earning, the raft) is what Marxism labels as surplus-value (exploitation, the pyramid). The work affirms, in conclusion that Christianity (religion) is, apart from being an opiate of masses, also rejectable being a ground for (and encourages) capitalist exploitation. It, however, recommends that Christianity be practiced with tendentious caution and the pursuit of Marxism be moderated by some realism concerning human nature.

**Keywords:** *Christianity, Marxism, Capitalism, Value, Surplus-value.*

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### **Background to the Study**

Aspects of the Holy Bible vaunt and adulate the place of work/labor in the establishment of just entitlements. The determining condition for just holdings or entitlement is often the focus of sociopolitical thought. For instance, in final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, John Locke, John Rawls, and Nozick amongst the many were so engrossed with it in their respective perspectives on justice. On its part, the Bible's conception affirms all of salary, inheritance, and profit as the (single or collective) sole bases of any just entitlement. And of these three, only inheritance escapes Marx's or Marxian rebuff. For instance, while Christianity stipulates the pedestal for and adequacy of salary and adumbrates the decency of profit, Marxism articulates the inadequacy of salary and the expropriation of profit. Both conceptions have to do with the idea of labor/work and value/reward. With Locke and Nozick in mind and basing on a critical review of available literature, there is the need to articulate the broad and most basic contra-distinctions between Christian and Marxian conceptions of the idea of labor and reward for same. This would be achieved by adducing the metaphors of a raft (slackly foundation) and a pyramid (broad/firm foundation). Thus, we shall pursue to expose that, one, while Christian ethos criticizes labor;

Marxism adulates it above other factors in production; and two, what Christian ethos describe as profit (just earning: the raft) is what Marxism labels as surplus-value (exploitation: the pyramid). The eventual goal is to affirm, in conclusion that Christianity (religion) is, apart from being an opiate for the mass of people, also rejectable being a ground for (and encourages) capitalist exploitation. Thus, we need to outline the characterization of what is meant by the raft and pyramid.

### **Theoretical Background: The Two Metaphors Explained**

Jointly and equally, both metaphors present profit in a given but contrasting platform/structure—which is very complex marvel comparison often downplayed if not ignored outright. Typically, a pyramid stands on its broad base, producing two equal angles at its base and progressively smaller ones towards its head; while a raft does the same but on the reverse posture, on its head. And while the trunk of the pyramid narrows as it tall up like a triangle 'Δ', while that of the raft widens, like a 'V' sign or inverted triangle. Apparently, the strength and balance of a pyramid would be more stable than that of a raft. It would then be wonderful and superb when a raft produces more stability; in this way, a raft would be superior to a pyramid.

Thus, in the metaphor, we compare the Christian perception of work/labor and profit to a raft, and that of the Marxists to a pyramid. While, according to the Christian thought, profit builds progressively as a raft (basing all other derivations on profit), the Marxian's weighs on like a pyramid (with disparaging applicability) as it tall on towards its eventual disappearance. Now, the analogy of the pyramid is such as believing the following:

That, two things, A and B, are being allocated to two individuals, C and D in a way that A is given to C, and B to D. That whether justice is done depends on how A's being given to C compares with B's being given to D. In this sense, Aristotle was right in saying that justice involves a proportion in which A is to B as C is to D. It is a requirement both of reason and

common thinking about justice that similar cases be treated similarly. That being so, justice is comparative, in which case it demands that if C and D are dissimilar, then A and B must be dissimilar (Frankena, 1975). That C and/or D is justified in or in not receiving A and/or B;

The socio-economy and political scenario remain the same for both metaphors. While Marxist thought considers justice a rejection of (surplus value) profit, Christian approach, however, on its part, seems to reject the metaphor of the pyramid in favor of one it owes to the liberalist theory of Locke and the classical theorists of freedom and bargaining according to which justice and reward is a raft which sits itself free of any anchoring on (or ties to) other than those purportedly related to freedom, the rule of law, and equality, without any moral or charitable moderation. In this respect, what counts as just is not a product of any meta-human postulation that has not satisfied any rational requirement but that which coheres with liberal, selfish, individualistic stipulations. This sense of justice may suppress the very essence of ethics/morality and human divine nature. This conclusion is based on an understanding of the Marxian and Christian's respective take on labor and reward.

### **Labor in Christian Outlook**

Christianity is the religion established by Jesus Christ—who was born in mysterious circumstances by Mary (who was betrothed to Joseph, as husband) in Bethlehem of Judea (Matt 1:18-25), and having heavenly blessings/gift of baptism at Jordan (Matt. 3:13-17), he then set out to preach the reality and imminence of God's judgment on all men (God's image creature—including those who had died, the living till the doom's day, and all yet to live on earth before the rapture), spelling out the route or obstacles to one making it to heaven and averting the anguish of hell. For the Jewish (and varied) tradition, Yahweh demanded righteousness and obedience to the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments) to merit heaven; still, the Jews were unrighteous. Hence Christ's teachings introduced the route of having to be born- again (one accepting Christ as the only son of and channel to God). The scope and content of his message (on all subjects) is contained in the New Testament of the Bible. Several aspects of the Holy Bible represent scriptural take on labor/reward. For instance, Gal. 6:7 where it is clearly stated that one “reaps what he sows” (which is an indication of desert, thereby approving of profit-making); Ex. 23: 16 extols “...the feast of harvest, the first fruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field...”; and II Cor. 9:6 says that “...He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully,” though 1 Tim 6: 10 warns that “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

More general detail about investment and profit abounds at Matthew 20, verses 1 through 16. Having just admonished the crowd on the virtue of humility and personal discipline to merit heaven, Christ declares thus:

1. For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.
2. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard
3. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

4. And said unto them; go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.
5. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.
6. 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?
7. 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.
8. So when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.
9. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.
10. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.
11. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house,
12. 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.
13. But he answered one of them, and said, friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?
14. Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.
15. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?
16. So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

Undoubtedly, the teachings contained in these verses (otherwise referred to as the Parable of the Vineyard) concern the relations of contract and desert—duty and obligation. Yet every contract/law also has moral conviction. However, the above passage presents an agreement entered between an employer and workmen/laborers on a wage to be paid or received at the end of a day's work not considering the time that the workman began his work but simply an agreement on the wages. Regardless of its exegetical context, what this means, from the emphasis on agreement, is that there is preference for contract leading up to some work done and the associated reward. In other words, length in time does not matter but that there, ultimately, is some acceptance to perform. However, the parable of the laborers in the vineyard is about the 9<sup>th</sup> (and 10<sup>th</sup>) commandment, about coveting—perhaps we covet what benefactors (God) chooses to give to others. The point here is not necessarily that other folks receive blessings from their benefactors (God) which we don't; that they get more or better or lovelier gifts from such benefactor. The problem is that they get (which they don't deserve) the same as or more than we do? It's about our frustration with the grace of God. Yet contractual relations may not do with grace or gratis. Also, it's about being the first and or the last. The parable itself displays a reversal of expectations.

Similarly, the biblical passage below (Matt 25) discusses the relations of resource allocation, business investment and responsibility. The text reads:

*14 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. 15 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. 16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. 17 And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. 18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. 20 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. 21 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. 22 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. 23 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. 24 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: 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. 26 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: 27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. 28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. 29 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. 30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Apparently, this parable (otherwise tagged Parable of the Talents) is meant to indicate clearly, the value of work as against idleness, also stressed by Paul in James 2 (verse 20) that “faith without work is dead”. Even though Romans 4, verse 5 thinks that righteousness resides in faith and/or work, yet, the indolent servant remains recalcitrant. For the understanding of this work, we would take 'talent' to mean skill or endowments conferred for a spiritual end, the powers of body and mind, natural or acquired abilities, rational capacity/understanding, eloquence, charisma, offices (civil or religious) and other authority over others, of which a good (wise) or bad (poor) use may be made (and requiring responsibility) (Whitby, 2009).

Most generally, the master gives the talents to his slaves. Does it become their own property to manage or does it still belong to their master? Or are the slaves just managers of their master's money? I'm inclined to think that the money became the slave's property since give or hand over seems to imply, “giving up control of”. While we often use “talents” to refer to one's abilities, the word in this text refers to a very large sum of money; and the master was apparently most generous. And the master gives no clear instructions.

### **Marxism on Labor**

Karl Marx had a profound knowledge of the academic ideas of John Locke, Malthus, Adam Smith and Ricardo which he carefully outlined in *Das Capital* (18.....) these great classical economics had at one time or the other theorized about value, what Marx did was to popularize the concept. The labor theory of value is used to explain how the bourgeoisie uses



the surplus value to the detriment of the proletariat—whether in the form of profit or workers' involvement in bond/share business, which itself is fictitious capital.

The labor theory of value is about the intrinsic worth an object has. The value of object may be defined following Locke, as natural object plus labor. An object may have many values such as exchange value, sentimental value and use value. Exchange value is determined by the amount of labor 'mixed' with the commodity or put differently, the amount of labor used in producing the commodity; by market forces, and by the labor time one put into producing it (Leen Barddat, 1988, pp. 155-56). Commodities do not acquire their value simply by the genius of the entrepreneur or the machinery of producing it. So supply and demand regulate nothing but the temporary fluctuation of market prices—explaining why market price may rise above or sink below its value, but never the value itself. Supply and demand make market prices oscillate around value. The labor theory of value assumes that it is labor (the human factor, creativity) which confers the absolute or real (intrinsic) worth to a commodity. The real or intrinsic worth of a commodity is the real values of that commodity. And this is different from other values a commodity has. Why labor confers the real or intrinsic value is that it is assumed that only labor (variable value) that can produce something greater than its own worth. Other values in the production process such as machinery and finance (constant value) do not add anything to the commodity that is greater than their worth. Yet it might be objected to Marx that not everyone's labor is the same; so no equal value. This problem is overcome if, according to Marx, we consider labor as the “socially necessary labor time—needed by a society to produce a commodity with the 'average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at the time.'” Such would de-emphasize experience, personality, and implications of skill. 'Living labor' is the labor put in directly by workers adding to the value of a new commodity; 'dead labor' is the one that was expended in the past and crystallized in the form of raw materials and machinery in the production process—the means of production. Thus the value of the dead labor is transferred to the end production when the means of production are used by living labor, so the resulting commodity has a value reflecting the total amount of labor, past and present, required in its production. This distinction becomes very important because it's only living labor adds new value to the end product.

So, by developing the labor theory of value, Locke aims to prove that one has a moral right to that which he has mixed his labor with. Hence by picking an apple from a tree or cultivating a virgin piece of land a man does not only become the owner of the apple or the agricultural product, but he also appropriates the tree he picked the apple from or the land he cultivated.

Thus, the labor theory of value by itself justifies the ownership of a man only on the product of his labor, not on the means of production (besides his own labor), such as the tree or the land in case. Mill, for instance, agrees with Locke that the foundation of the former property right is “the right of producers to what they themselves have produced” but maintains that this principle cannot justify private property in land since “no man made the land”. But as Day argues, “the right of producers to what they themselves have produced restricts the amount of property, which a man may rightfully possess to that which he himself produced or received in exchange for his products” (Day, 1966: 209). Thus, while Locke originally states that labor is the foundation of property, he also adds that such labor need not be one's own. Instead, it could

be that of another who was employed for the purpose, thereby overcoming the labor limitation on appropriation.

This contribution led Marx to make a distinction between concrete labor (which determines the use value of commodities) and abstract labor (which determines their exchange value. Another important distinction is the one between labor and labor power. Marx asserts that what the laborer sells in the market is not his labor but his labor power and the value of labor power, like the value of any other commodity, depends on the quantity of labor necessary for its production.

Thus the wage of a worker is equal to an amount that is necessary for the reproduction of his life activity as a worker. The value of labor power, like the value of any other commodity, depends on the development of productive forces and on the production relations to which they correspond. This leads to alienation—derived from the German, *Entfremdung* which translates as estrangement. With division of labor, the introduction of the use of money coupled with the growth of private property: man's alienation becomes acute reaching its apogee in modern capitalist society.

### **The Analysis**

The concept of exploitation is applicable particularly to the unjust economic and social relationships whereby the bourgeois class abuse the labor or the unfortunate condition of others (particularly the workers). Most generally, alienation regarded as exceptionally bad behavior by rogues, bosses and employers who pay wages below the socially accepted minimum. For Marx, alienation has a scientific connotation as “the systematic extraction of wealth by one group/class from the labor of another; and it is the rule under capitalism. Exploitation is oppression; it is unjust. Therefore, to categorize or characterize a relationship as exploitative thus presupposes a negative or immoral verdict on its justice” (Blackburn, 131). Thus the inadequate, disequilibrium, and dehumanizing reward for labor is exploitative; the lord could exploit the peasant because he is the political and economic ruler with actual or threat of violence; under capitalism, the worker owns none of the means of production; the only thing he has to sell is his labor power—which, under capitalism, itself becomes a commodity with a harmless freedom to choose whether or not to sell it.

Marx argues that the exchange value of the product is bought and paid for, but what is actually acquired is the use value of labor that creates the surplus value. Therefore, only a part of workers working day is spent in replacing the equivalent of his own value (the wage goods required to reproduce labor power for the next working day); and for the remainder of the day he works for the capitalist. Hence, surplus value is nothing but the “unpaid labor”. Again, under capitalism, this condition is antithetical to human value; it is worse considering expropriation. To these two ideas we now turn

The exploitation of labor and surplus value is at heart of the system of capitalism/business. In the production process, we have surplus values when what labor produces is greater than its own intrinsic value. The intrinsic value of labor is concerned about the price to hire and to feed labor and family. But graphically, surplus value is the excess in income derived when value of

the cost of hiring labor and tools is substance from the intrinsic value of a commodity. But differently in modern parlance, surplus value represents profit made by the owners of the means of production.

Driven by excessive penchant to make profit, the compradors force the proletariat to provide an excess which they (capitalists) keep to themselves. Instead of ploughing back the profit or using parts to uplift the working conditions of the proletariat, the bourgeoisie expropriate it which, as of right, does not belong or him. The surplus value, Marx argues, belongs to the laborers or the proletariat as of right. However, it is not all sorts of work that generate surplus value.

Hence Marx distinguishes 'productive' from 'unproductive' labor. Consider this. Given that under capitalism the laborer produces not for him, but for capital. It no longer suffices, therefore, that he should simply produce; he must produce surplus value. Thus is the idea of productive labor. Accordingly, there are three levels of productive labor. The first, the exploited (the worker); second, reserve army of labor (the unemployed); and overproduction. The point is that the use of the surplus value by the bourgeoisie is exploitative and capricious. This makes the capitalist to be a vampire, villain and parasite. The capitalist thus drives the proletariat to the level of subsistence. What the proletariat is paid is not enough to maintain himself and his family. The proletariat is then driven into alienation. Unfortunately, our biblical selections support expropriation of surplus value; it is thus both an opiate and a worse platform for exploitation.

Take a closer look at our first selection again: some employer “went out early in the morning...to hire laborers into his vineyard”, to work in his garden. The process was achieved at three different periods of the day (morning, afternoon, and evening), telling each succeeding employee that whatever was right he would pay them. One must state that the clause “whatever was right” is amphibolous (susceptible to several interpretations). Would it mean an “agreed” or the “expedient” amount? This is not clear. But at verse 8, it was time to pay each worker, beginning with those who were hired about the eleventh hour (the third/evening set). Notably, in verses 9 and 10, those who were among the last to be hired received a penny each just as did the first set.

Hence, the former (the first/morning set) had thought and murmured that their reward would be more. However, as would every capitalist, the employer (as God would) muzzled some defense in verses 13 and 14, explaining that he did nothing wrong since his action was hinged on agreement and his freedom to willfully expend his capital. But is willfulness the same as agreement? Or is every (legal) agreement morally backed? Consider the following analogy.

Embarking on a trip, Mr. 'A' gives his trigger-ready gun to his friend, Mr. 'B' to take custody of it, but to be given back to him (Mr. A.) on his return. Mr. B was shocked to discover that Mr. A had turned schizophrenic on his return. Now, considering the risk to Mr. B, should the trigger-ready gun still be submitted? It could just be that the employee was idle, hopeless, frustrated, and vulnerable (as indicated by verses 3-7); and the employer took the opportunity. Indisputably, given that everything about the quoted text is metaphorical; ought not biblical



accounts to be existentialized and instructive? And the scandal of this analysis is that the parable ought to inform some reciprocity for obligation performed.

More worrisome is the idea of justice—legal versus moral obligation—expressed in the account. Thus even when one could be right performing his legal obligation, most times such is tainted by some moral considerations (“use your mind” or conscience, in contemporary “stipulative” thought) (Asekhauno, 2005). So even though the master could be absolved of any culpability on the grounds of performing according to the agreement reached with each set of workers he employed, he is morally bound to the successive set of workers according to their time or period of work. However, Marx thinks that morality either non-existent or is contrived by the rich (employer). If all societies are class based, it therefore follows that the morality of such societies is the ideology or rationalization of the interests of the ruling class. All said, morality then is a matter of property interest. This means that man and his behavior is hasped wholly by economic interests and relationships. Ostensibly, the Marxist morality is a determinist one.

This is especially true since the account does not stipulate whether or not the basis of final pay was in view of volume of work done by each group. Since there was no complain of such, it is most likely that each set performed as expected. Consequently, the principle, whether justice is done depends on how, for instance, A is being given to C compared with B is being given to D, becomes relevant here. The action of the master does not meet this requirement of justice. In other word, the question of injustice would not arise if the master had not employed another set of workers with high reward for little job done. Compare the first set cunningly or slushily sat back awaiting (deceiving the master) more and more recruitment of workers in which case they, themselves would do less work while receiving the same pay agreed; yet, they did their best within longer hours which must have doubled and tripled the others' respectively. Curiously, moreover, the master's resort to and the claim of the abeyance of his freewill/freedom raises the question of the manifest or latent intent of the master in employing the first set of laborers in the first place. Truly, was it his freedom to pay simply as the “master” or was he bound by some agreement; it cannot possibly be both. Either he pays as agreed or according to his whim; in either or both cases, the master's attitude towards his first set of employee is the pinnacle of exploitation—even in their helplessness and incapacity to defend their dissatisfaction—again which contradicts the master's first resort to obligation on agreement.

Consider this analysis; say the total time of work is 12 hours in all. Then, if it is done by one man, he gets all the pay (say #12) for the work completed; by two men, then the #12 is divided by two, and so on. Now, imagine the first set/employee had done half the job before the arrival of the second—which implies that he had earned half the total pay, and other half left. The first and second sets had done half (3 hours) of the six hours left—which earns them #1.5 pay each, bringing the total for the first set to #7.5. The final hours (3) is left for all three sets, with the 3<sup>rd</sup> set deserving on #1 pay, and the first #8.5 pay—a sum finally settled at equal #4 for all instead of #8.5, in which case the first set is short-changed by #4.5—an amount appropriated by the employer. It might as well be assumed that the employer was just being generous, kind, or considerate to the later/successive sets of workers; but should that be at the expense/all-day

sweat of the first set? The generosity should have been fair at #8.5 for each set (totaling #25.5 instead of #12. It follows that the employer, despite his vaunted generosity appropriates #13.5. Ge should have been ruled by genuine conscience—a “judgment of the practical reason on the morality of a concrete action commanding to do what is good and to avoid what is evil” (Peschke, 1979: 145).

As a matter of overt fact, the second selection poses several critical issues. In the first case, the selection is silent on why the master had to travel: business trip, fun fare, health, or simply a ploy to trap. This information is crucial to justify the basis of his asking each servant for accounts. Similarly, what was the job like for the servants (investors, workers, or servants)?

What in the passage is meant by their “several ability” and how was such established in the first place? Moreover, the account does not indicate the instruction to each lad on what he should do with his allocation (for consumption or investment) so could be blamed or praised; perhaps each was left with his discretion, in which case no bases for blame or praise. Yet, investment was assumed in the account. Even at that, most disappointing is the fact that the whole content did not consider the numerous possible outcomes in a business investment, an investor's proclivity to success or the degree of opportunities open to him. Business is an investment in which the investor intends and wishes to make profit. There are three possible outcomes of business investment: success, failure, and break-even (no profit, no loss). Unfortunately, the relevant selection of our biblical text does not consider these possibilities. It simply records two outcomes: success and failure; that is, of the three recipients of the grant, while two are successful investors, the other regarded as lazy pessimist does not succeed. Even going by that, the idea in the account does imply that it could have been the reverse: that the two investors respectively fail in their attempt.

Hence the selection does not note the following categories, best represented by the three servants directed to invest their grants by a common master about to undertake some business trip abroad. One, it is possible for one of them to invest but eventually becomes unsuccessful; the second does his investment and eventually successfully; and the third, for whatever reason possibly deposits (hides) his own grant. Concerning this third case, one is left with a single conclusion: there is no probability of failing—even if the custodian outfit is robbed or bankrupt. Then the scenario becomes more interesting to contemplate. Further, imagine that the first two investors turn out (against the report in our working text) unsuccessful; that their master returns in frustration after his futile attempt. Hopefully, he expects to fall back on the success (es) of his servants-turned partners back home. Now that the supposedly 'wise and diligent' servants fail in their investment, will the third who securely and proudly produces succor for the rest still be the 'lazy and wicked' servant? 'Thanks to goodness; it is sure that he would be 'wisest of all men'. Such scenario describes the limitations in the verses of Matthew chapter 25. Check out the contradiction to this at 1 Tim. 6:11: “But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness”; and Christ did warn against laying for one's self treasures upon earth, noting at Matt. 16: 26: “what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world...”; Prov. 16” 12 “Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.” Further, 1 Tim. 6: 19 cautions “That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.”

## **Conclusion**

This work has tried to articulate two broad views on business, labor, and reward. Even though that Christian and Marxian ethos on work/labor and reward differ in their scope and direction, they pose an essential/common feature of business: profit. An analysis of the text on fair pay exposes the injustice done to the first set of employees; the profit only accrues from the exploitation of the set's sweat.

We conclude that both conceptions are vulnerable. The capitalist does not pay the workers/laborers for that value they produce; instead, workers are paid for their 'labor power', the ability to do a day's work! Unfortunately, the value of labor power, the wage, is simply the value required to reproduce the labor power, to provide the worker with food, shelter, clothing, and some other need, all less than the worker's creation. In other words, the capitalist gets a day's labor but only pays for a day's labor power. There-in lies the exploitation, surprisingly sanctioned by Christian ethos, but loathed by Marxian reproach. Both religion and morality do have the fervor for justice. But Marx thinks justice in the state is simply justice of the powerful and the cry of the powerless; socialism is a society beyond justice since the state and her apparatus for justice will wither away and the issue of 'fair' wages or 'just' distributions of wealth will no longer arise. Thus while Christian view approves of profit, Marxian view rejects it being a capitalist platform. Yet both (Christian and Capitalist) scenarios depict exploitation and both would eventually wither away. On its part, Christian view (capitalist) builds and triples the surplus value until its narrow base, the raft can no longer support it; the weight at the top would thus give in to the law of gravitation, thereby breaking the arms and destroying the structure. The Marxian construct of capitalism depicts a widening base (the exploited) and a narrowing top (profit), which cannot get beyond its possible limit at the point the two adjoining angles meet—which would mean the end of the structure. Even though Marxist alternative to capitalism has indications of abatement, it, however, would be that while Christianity and resistance to exploitative systems be practiced with tendentious caution, the pursuit of Marxism be moderated by some realism concerning human nature.

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