

PERSPECTIVES OF LABOR AND ECONOMICS

Pre-Christian Perspective

Greco-Roman

- Labor is demeaning
- Labor is only for slaves
- Free citizens do not labor

Hebrew

- Labor is honorable (Ex. 20:9)
- Laborer deserves his wages (Deut. 25:4)
- Property rights enjoined (Ex. 20:15: "You shall not steal")

Christian Perspective

- Labor is honorable (2 Thess. 2:10; Ex. 20:9)
- Laborer deserves his wages (1 Cor. 9:9; Deut. 25:4)
- Labor is a calling (*vocatio*) from God
 - John Tauler (14th cent.)
 - Martin Luther (16th cent.)
- Work ethic enjoined
 - Martin Luther
 - John Calvin (16th cent.)
- Dignity of labor produced a middle class
- Profit motive is honorable (Matt. 25:15–30: Jesus' parable of the Talents)