

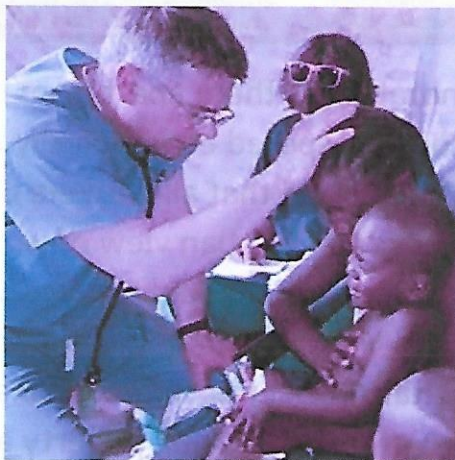
Child labor laws... A major tragedy of the industrial revolution was child-labor exploitation. People who greatly influenced governments to outlaw child-labor were English Christians like William Wilberforce, Charles Dickens, Thomas Carlyle and Anthony Cooper, aka. Lord Shaftesbury.

While child labor has been effectively outlawed in “Christian” western countries, it still is widespread in many non-western, non-Christian countries today. Countries like China, Thailand, Bangladesh, Africa, etc.

People who think that human charity and compassion existed as a result of mere civilization without the impetus and influence of Christianity are just plain misinformed.

George Grant says, “As missionaries circled the globe, they started hospitals, founded orphanages, started rescue missions, opened soup kitchens, incorporated charitable societies and changed laws... they lived as if people mattered.” Sympathy toward the poor is a concept that comes from Christianity; however, the elite and rich in the GRC despised them.

Hospitals and health care... The Greco-Roman world had a colossal void when it came to caring for the sick and dying. Because God loves everyone (**John 3:16**), Christians cannot please God unless they love one another (**John 15:12,13**). The early Christians rejected the inhumane treatment of the sick and dying. *They saw each person as having a redeemable soul and so, they needed to nurse and nurture each and every person regardless of the physical condition or social standing.* Saving physically frail people was an affront to the GRC. It violated their cultural norms. Seneca, 1st century Roman philosopher, said, “We drown children who at birth are weakly and abnormal.” Doctors and hospitals for everyone else did not exist until Christians established them.



Nursing as a profession was started by Florence Nightingale, a Christian who was greatly influenced earlier by a Christian doctor and his nurse.

It is an astonishing mystery that the Greeks and Romans, who built large temples in honor of their gods and goddesses, fashioned statues of all sorts, wrote a wide

variety of literature, built big arenas, built aqueducts and great roads, and NEVER built any hospitals for the regular people. The American church historian Philip Schaff said, "The old Roman world was a world without charity."

How Christianity has changed Labor and Economic Freedom:

The Greco-Roman world had an extremely low view of physical labor, namely that it was suitable only for slaves and the lower classes. At one time, Athens had five times as many slaves as citizens. The Roman philosopher Cicero said: "...vulgar are the means of livelihood of all hired workers whom we pay for mere manual labor..."

Christians assigned work honor and dignity for 3 reasons:

1. Jesus was a carpenter, a lowly profession.
2. Paul earned a living from a trade, tent-making.
3. They believed **2nd Thessalonians 3:10, Luke 10:7**

Hence, Christians saw work as a "calling" that was under the Lordship of Christ...

Colossians 3:17,23, 24



This view of work being honorable set them apart from the prevailing view but it also earned them derision because they prospered economically as a result of their strong work ethic. In today's world, it is simply assumed that all workers deserve a fair wage for the work that they perform. Until the Judeo-Christian view of work came to be, this wasn't true at all, as the majority of residents worked as slaves. As a result, there wasn't much of a middle-class in the GRC. The middle-class arose due to the Christian work ethic, especially the Puritan work ethic in the 1600's. **The Christian work ethic has been rightly credited with greatly reducing poverty and its by-product, disease.**

As an example, after WWII, Japan intentionally adopted Western economic and industrial values that were largely the product of the Christian work ethic. Once the effects of a cause have become operative, they can be utilized apart from the original cause.

How Christianity has changed Property Rights and Individual Freedom:

For the most part, private property rights for the common man were non-existent in the Greco-Roman world. Private property rights are vital to people's freedom. The two cannot be separated. Where there are no private property rights, there can be no human or civil rights.

Exodus 20:15, 17 "...you shall not steal and you shall not covet..." Both of these commandments assume the person has the right and freedom to acquire, retain and sell his property at his discretion.

Matthew 20:15 also supports this. Jesus only spoke against the over-attachment to material things; never to their exclusion.

Capitalism (or more accurately, free markets or free enterprise) is a by-product of Christianity's value of spiritual freedom applied to economic life and activities.

In countries where the free market is not permitted to operate, the gap between rich and poor is the widest – exactly the opposite of what we currently hear. Because of man's fallen nature, we may need to place some barriers on this system, but not too many.

Is it coincidence that the greatest amount of freedom and economic prosperity exist in countries where Christianity has had a dominant presence?

As Rabbi Daniel Lapin said, "It's no accident that a capital market has never arisen indigenously in any non-Christian country."

By giving dignity to work and accenting the spirit of individual freedom, Christianity has produced profound economic effects...

How Christianity Abolished Slavery:

Slavery is a common staple in every society that ever existed – including Africa, Arabia, Greece, Rome and the American Indians long before Columbus. With few exceptions, kings, pagan priests and philosophers approved of it. Slavery is not just about whites enslaving blacks – it's primarily about people enslaving other people. It exists today in many parts of the world, especially in the Sudan, where Muslims are enslaving Christian and others.



Christianity was the first major religion that was against slavery. **Galatians 3;28** Paul's statement was beyond revolutionary; it was ridiculously radical, and unheard of before in history.

Because of Christianity, slavery had become extinct by the 14th century in Europe. It was revived by the British empire's expansion in the 17th century, especially in the British colonies (including America). William Wilberforce finally ended slavery in England in the 1800's because of his Christian convictions. Most of the abolitionist movement (2/3rds) in America in the mid-1800's was made up of Christians and clergy. While there were some Christians who defended slavery, this doesn't nullify that fact that most Christians were against it and because of them, it ended here in America.

Slavery was first abolished in the Western world as a direct result of Christianity. To those who disagree, answer these questions: 1) Was slavery first abolished in countries where Christianity had a major influence or a minor influence? 2) Where slavery exists today, does Christianity have a major or minor influence in those countries? 3) For those countries that still practice slavery, which religion or political system is in place?

How Christianity Elevated the Sanctity of Human Life:

Infanticide is the killing of newborn infants. Historical research shows that infanticide was common in many ancient cultures such as the Greco-Roman world, India, China, Japan, and Africa, as well as North and South American Indians, among many others.

Throughout the centuries, Christians have never wavered in their condemnation of infanticide – in part because of **Matthew 19:14**. They have always called it what it really is – murder. The Roman Emperor Valentinian (sufficiently influenced by Bishop Basil of Caesarea in Cappadocia) formally outlawed it in 374AD.

The Greco-Roman culture (among many others) practiced **child abandonment**. In neither Greek, nor Roman literature can we find any guilt feelings over this practice. Clement of Alexandria, a church father in the later part of the 2nd century, condemned the Romans for protecting birds and other creatures better than its children. Christians did more than just condemn the practice; they often took these children into their homes and raised them as their own. This is one reason why the early Roman church wasn't very rich; as they expended a great amount of time and money on raising these children. When the Roman Emperor Valentinian outlawed infanticide in 374AD, he also outlawed child abandonment. Christians saw child abandonment as a form of murder.

Plato, Aristotle, Celsus and others had no problem with **abortion**, the killing of the unborn. While there was a little opposition (like Hippocrates), it was very little. Plato said it should be