

## ***Civics: A Christian Worldview. Fix the Law (10–15 minutes)***

### **TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY**

#### **Instructions**

1. **Objective:** Students will practice applying Bastiat’s definition of law by rewriting policy proposals so they protect life, liberty, and property (lawful defense) instead of using collective force to violate rights (perversion of the law).
2. Hand out a copy of Page 2 to each student.
3. Read this aloud: *“The law is the collective organization of every individual’s right to self-defense.” In other words: Law exists to protect life, liberty, and property—not to take from one person to benefit another person.*
4. Put students in pairs and have them analyze the four proposals and justify any revisions.
5. Call on students to read their analyses and revisions.

#### **Teacher Moves (to keep students on track)**

- If a group proposes any type of taking the money or property of some and giving it to others, ask them: “Whose property is being taken? Who is being forced?”
- If a group proposes more government regulation, ask: “Is this needed to protect against fraud/force/theft?”

#### **Tip**

Many students will try to “fix” proposals by adding more government programs. Keep redirecting them back to Bastiat’s test: protection of rights, not transfers of wealth.

#### **Answer Key**

1. **Proper Law.** Punishing those who violate the property of others (via vandalism) and lives of others (via assault) is the law’s proper function of collective self-defense.
2. **Perversion of the Law.** In this case, the force of government is being applied to steal opportunities of individuals and groups to form companies to produce and sell bricks.
3. **Proper Law.** Identity theft is by definition stealing someone’s identity to fraudulently make purchases—also another form of theft, so the law is totally justified in getting involved in stopping this.
4. **Perversion of the Law.** Teaching children how to read is a worthy goal, but taking money from some taxpayers and giving it to other individuals whose children need to learn how to read is theft. Some that the law forces to pay for this program have no children, homeschool their children, put their children in Christian schools, and so on. It is unjust to force them to pay for the education of others’ children—a form of stealing. **The law’s proper purpose is to threaten stealing and punish those who steal, not to participate in it!**

# Civics: A Christian Worldview. Fix the Law

## Directions (work in pairs)

For each proposal below:

1. Decide what Bastiat would call it: Proper Law or Perversion of Law.
2. Rewrite the proposal so it matches the proper purpose of law: protecting life, liberty, and property.
3. Write a one-sentence justification **using at least one of these words:** *life, liberty, property, self-defense, collective force, plunder.*

## Bastiat's Test

Law should be “the collective organization of the natural right of lawful defense.”



## Policy Proposals

1. The government punishes a group responsible for spray painting a restaurant and attacking its workers.

Proper Law    Perversion of Law

Your revision (protect life/liberty/property):

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Justification:

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2. The government grants a brickmaking company a license so competitors are not allowed to sell bricks.

Proper Law    Perversion of Law

Your revision (protect life/liberty/property):

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Justification:

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3. The government prosecutes a hacker who engages in identity theft and online fraud.

Proper Law    Perversion of Law

Your revision (protect life/liberty/property):

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Justification:

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4. The government funds an after-school reading program to help children struggling to read.

Proper Law    Perversion of Law

Your revision (protect life/liberty/property):

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Justification:

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