

Civics: A Christian Worldview. The Bible, Perversion of the Law, and Plunder **(20–25 minutes)**

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Instructions

1. **Objective:** Students in groups of 2 or 3 will learn what the Bible says about perverting the law, rephrase in their own words, and apply this and Bastiat's *The Law* to True/False scenarios.
2. Hand out a copy of Page 2 to each student.
3. Put students in pairs/small groups and tell them they have 15 minutes to (A) complete Part 1 and Part 2 individually, then discuss in their pairs/groups, (B) complete Part 3 individually, then discuss in pairs/groups.
4. When students are finished, discuss **as a class**. Ask for volunteers!

Answer Key (Part 1)

1. Rulers or judges who get drunk risk clouding their minds, so their judgements are unjust, perverting the law.
2. A judge who takes a bribe from someone whose case he is hearing perverts justice (he's not ruling according to righteousness, but to reward the person who bribed him).
3. A judge/ruler who perverts justice is cursed.
4. A prince (ruler, king, judge) should punish those who commit violence against and steal from others, and be a threat to those who are thinking about it, so that ruler ideally will "remove" it from the kingdom.
5. The job of a ruler/judge is to rule justly and punish thieves, helping victims of theft get justice.

Answer Key (Part 2)

The law's job is to punish theft and intimidate those who are thinking about stealing with the threat of punishment. When the law participates in theft (no matter how nicely they name the program, or talk about how it helps people), it turns the law upside down—the law is participating in what it's supposed to be preventing or punishing!

Answer Key (Part 3)

1. F
2. T
3. T
4. T
5. T
6. T
7. F (Sometimes victims unwittingly support it, too!)
8. F (Forced giving is *not* voluntary charity.)
9. T (When those who benefit from plunder get used to it, they come up with all kinds of "reasons" why it should continue as it is; no surprise there!)
10. T

Key Takeaway

Ask students: "Do you see how Bastiat's points on the purpose of the law match up really well with what the Bible says that rulers/judges/governments should do about theft and justice and violence and so on?"

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Part 1: Read the following passages about the perversion of the law/plunder, and sum up each one in your own words:

1. “It is not for kings...to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and **pervert** the judgment of any of the afflicted” (Proverbs 31:4-5).

Summary: _____

2. “And thou [a ruler] shalt take no gift [bribe]: for the gift blindeth the wise, and **perverteth** the words of the righteous” (Exodus 23:8).

Summary: _____

3. “Cursed be he that **perverteth** the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow” (Deuteronomy 27:19).

Summary: _____

4. “Thus saith the Lord GOD; Let it suffice you, O princes of Israel: remove violence and spoil [robbery, theft]” (Ezekiel 45:9).

Summary: _____

5. “Thus saith the LORD; ‘Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled [those who have been robbed/plundered] out of the hand of the oppressor’” (Jeremiah 22:3).

Summary: _____

Part 2: Explain briefly why the law’s participation in plunder is a **perversion** of the law:

STOP! Before doing Part 3 below, discuss your answers for Parts 1 and 2 with your partner/group!

Part 3: Answer these True/False questions about plunder and the perversion of the law:

1. “If it’s legal, it must be just.”
2. “The safest way to make laws respected is to make them respectable.”
3. “The law can be used to do the opposite of its proper purpose.”
4. “The proper purpose of law is to protect persons, liberty, and property.”
5. “Plunder happens when the law takes from one and gives to another.”
6. “If the law sticks to its proper purpose, politics becomes less intense.”
7. “Only greedy people support plunder.”
8. “The law should make charity mandatory.”
9. “When plunder becomes a way of life, people invent theories to justify it.”
10. “A law can be unjust even if it was passed fairly.”