

Davy Crockett is Dead!
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The Christian's duty to help the widow and orphan is clearly stated in the Bible.

James 1:26-27 "26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

Beside the clear command to help the helpless, God's Word equally and emphatically forbids stealing - even if it is to help the poor. Yet there are some professed Christians who believe that stealing is a virtue so long as it is done in the name of "social justice." They advocate political programs to feed the hungry, house the homeless and clothe the naked. But governments, like all human beings and institutions, are subject to God's law, and are specifically commanded not to steal.

In a recent segment on The O'Reilly Factor, the host, Bill O'Reilly asked his guest, Mr. Bernie Goldberg to comment on a statement made by the Lord Jesus.

Mr. Goldberg interrupted O'Reilly by saying he didn't care what Jesus said. He went on to explain that if Jesus was here in the flesh today, he would be a liberal democrat. His basis for this comment was the liberal and progressive belief of "spreading the wealth" which he maintains would have

appealed to and was the same message helping the poor as taught by Christ.

This idea appears to prevail in the minds of millions of America's today who call themselves Christians. They reason, Jesus said to help the poor and the new healthcare law does just that, therefore, Jesus would approve of Obamacare and countless other social programs.

Let me say here and now that I could not disagree more with this belief and I believe it runs antithetical to what Christ taught as revealed in the Bible and here is why. Taxing one group of people and giving that money to others is stealing.

In the name of compassion, congress forces others to give to their favorite charities. And this not only creates an atmosphere of vote buying, but it is a clear violation of the eighth commandment and, get this, the Constitution of the United States.

That this is wrong on numerous levels, I want to share with you an invent that took place in Congress in 1828 and an appeal on the House floor by then congressman Col. Davy Crockett.

In the House of Representatives, a bill was taken up appropriating money for the benefit of a widow who was living in poverty. Her late husband had been a distinguished naval officer. Several beautiful speeches flowing with compassion had been made on the house floor in support of the \$10,000 appropriation. The Speaker was just about to put the question to a vote when Congressman Crockett arose:

Mr. Speaker - I have as much respect for the memory of the deceased, and as much sympathy for the sufferings of the living, if suffering there be, as any man in this House, but we

must not permit our respect for the dead or our sympathy for a part of the living to lead us into an act of injustice to the balance of the living.

I will not go into an argument to prove that Congress has no power to appropriate this money as an act of charity. Every member upon this floor knows it. We have the right, as individuals, to giveaway as much of our own money as we please in charity; but as members of Congress we have no right to appropriate a [single] dollar of the public money.

Some eloquent appeals have been made to us upon the ground that it is a debt due the deceased. Mr. Speaker, the deceased lived long after the close of the war; he was in office to the day of his death, and I have never heard [from anyone] that the government was in [debt] to him.

Every man in this House knows it is not a debt. We cannot, without the grossest corruption, appropriate this money as the payment of a debt. We have not the semblance of authority to appropriate it as a charity. Mr. Speaker, I have said we have the right to give as much money of our own as we please. I am the poorest man on this floor. I cannot vote for this bill, but I will give one week's pay to the object, and if every member of Congress will do the same, it will amount to more than the bill asks.

Col. Crockett then took his seat. Nobody replied. The bill was put upon its passage, and, instead of passing unanimously as was generally supposed, and as, no doubt, it would but for that speech by Col. Crockett, it received but few votes, and, of course, was defeated.

Later, when asked by a friend why he had opposed the appropriation, Crockett gave this explanation:

Several years ago, on a cold Washington evening, I was standing on the steps of the Capitol with some other members of Congress, when our attention was attracted by a great light over in Georgetown. It was evidently a large fire. We jumped into a hack and drove over as fast as we could. In spite of all that could be done, many houses were burned and many families made houseless, and, besides, some of them had lost all but the clothes they had on. The weather was very cold, and when I saw so many women and children suffering, I felt that something ought to be done for them. The next morning a bill was introduced appropriating \$20,000 for their relief. We put aside all other business and rushed it through as soon as it could be done.

The next summer, when it began to be time to think about the election, I concluded I would take a trip around my district and speak to some of the boys.

I had no opposition there, but, as the election was some time off, I did not know what might turn up. When riding one day in a part of my district in which I was more of a stranger than any other, I saw a man in a field plowing and coming toward the road. I gauged my gait so that we should meet as he came to the fence. As he came up, I spoke to the man. He replied politely, but, as I thought, rather coldly.

I began: "Well, friend, I am one of those unfortunate beings called candidates..."

The man interrupted me before I could get another word out of my mouth,

"Yes, I know you; you are Colonel Crockett. I have seen you once before, and voted for you the last time you were elected. I suppose you are out electioneering now, but you had better not waste your time or mine. I shall not vote for you again."

The Col. was shocked and dismayed to say the least. He had noted the rather cool reception, but now to have this said by this man whom he did not know was devastating. He begged the man to tell him why? What had he done to deserve such a treatment?

"Well, Colonel," the man responded, "it is hardly worthwhile to waste time or words upon it. I do not see how it can be mended, but you gave a vote last winter which shows that either you have not capacity to understand the Constitution, or that you are wanting in the honesty and firmness to be guided by it.

In either case you are not the man to represent me. But I beg your pardon for expressing it in that way. I did not intend to avail myself of the privilege of the constituent to speak plainly to a candidate for the purpose of insulting or wounding..."

I intend by it only to say that your understanding of the Constitution is very different from mine...I believe, Col. you to be honest..... But your understanding of the Constitution is so different from mine I cannot overlook, because the Constitution, to be worth anything, must be held sacred and rigidly observed in all its provisions. The man who wields power and misinterprets it, is more dangerous the more honest he is."

Crockett answered,

"I admit the truth of all you say, but there must be some mistake..., for I do not remember that I gave any vote last winter upon any constitutional question."

The man explained,

"No, Colonel, there's no mistake. Though I live here in the backwoods and seldom go from home, I take the papers from Washington and read very carefully all the proceedings of Congress. My papers say that last winter you voted for a bill to appropriate \$20,000 to some sufferers by a fire in Georgetown. Is that true?"

Somewhat startled that this man perceived the event important enough to call it a constitutional question, and was sure the man misunderstood the issue upon which the vote was taken, confident that if he could explain himself the man would see it his way, Col. Crockett answered,

"Well, my friend; I may as well own up. You have got me there. But certainly nobody will complain that a great and rich country like ours should give the insignificant sum of \$20,000 to relieve its suffering women and children, particularly with a full and overflowing Treasury; and I am sure, if you had been there, you would have done just as I did."

The man's answer put Crockett on his heels,

"It is not the amount, Colonel, that I complain of; it is the principle. In the first place, the government ought to have in the Treasury no more than enough for its legitimate purposes. But that has nothing to do with the question. The power of collecting and disbursing money at pleasure is the most dangerous power that can be in trusted to man--particularly under our system of collecting revenue by a tariff, which reaches **every man** in the country, no matter how poor he may be; and the poorer he is **the more he pays in proportion to his means.**

What is worse, it presses upon him without his knowledge where the weight centers, for there is not a man in the

United States who can ever guess how much he pays to the government. So you see, that **while you are contributing to the relief of one, you are drawing it from thousands who are even worse off than he.**"

That thought hit Col. Crockett upside his head like a tomahawk. In all honesty, he never consider it. And here was this man, this poor farmer who understood that the civil magistrates must be careful and diligent examining all sides of an issue.

The man continued,

"If you had the right to give anything, the amount was simply a matter of discretion with you, and you had as much right to give \$20,000,000 as \$20,000.

"If you have the right to give to one, you have the right to give to all; and, as the Constitution neither defines charity nor stipulates the amount, you are at liberty to give to any and everything which you may believe, or profess to believe, is a charity, and to any amount you may think proper. You will very easily perceive what a wide door this would open for fraud and corruption and favoritism, on the one hand, and for robbing the people on the other."

"No, Colonel, Congress has no right to give charity. Individual members may give as much of their own money as they please, but they have **no right to touch a dollar of the public money** for that purpose."

He then put this to Crockett,

"If twice as many houses had been burned in this county, (meaning the county the man lived in)...neither you nor any other member of Congress would have thought of appropriating a dollar **for our relief**. There are about two

hundred and forty members of Congress. If they had shown their sympathy for the sufferers by each contributing one week's pay, it would have made over \$13,000. There are plenty of wealthy men in and around Washington who could have given the full \$20,000 without depriving themselves of even a single luxury of life."

"But our congressmen chose to keep their own money, which, if reports be true, some of them spend not very creditably; and no doubt, the people about Washington, applauded you for relieving them from the necessity of giving - **by giving what was not yours to give.** The people have delegated to Congress, by the Constitution, the power to do certain things. To do these, it is authorized to collect and pay moneys, and for nothing else. Everything beyond this is usurpation, and a violation of the Constitution."

By his own account Crockett was somewhat embarrassed. He stood there in a daze while being scolded by an unlikely critic. He continued to listen as this man explained why he would never vote for him,

"So you see, Colonel, you have violated the Constitution in what I consider a vital point. It is a precedent fraught with danger to the country, for when Congress once begins to stretch its power beyond the limits of the Constitution, there is no limit to it, and no security for the people. I have no doubt you acted honestly, but that does not make it any better, except as far as you are personally concerned, and you see, [this] is why I cannot vote for you."

Crockett later reflected on that moment.

"I tell you I felt streaked (meaning marked). I saw if I should have opposition, and this man should go to talking, he would set others to talking; and in that district I was a gone fawn-

skin. I could not answer him, and the fact is, I was so fully convinced that he was right, I did not want to. But I [knew] I must satisfy him, and I said to him:

"Well, my friend, you hit the nail upon the head when you said I had not sense enough to understand the Constitution. I intended to be guided by it, and thought I had studied it fully. I have heard many speeches in Congress about the powers of Congress, but what you have said here at your plow has got more hard, sound sense in it than all the fine speeches I ever heard. If I had ever taken the view of it that you have, I would have put my hand into the fire before I would have given that vote; and if you will forgive me and vote for me again, if I ever vote for another unconstitutional law I wish I may be shot."

The man laughingly replied: "Yes, Colonel, you have sworn to that once before, but I will trust you again upon one condition. You say that you are convinced that your vote was wrong. Your acknowledgment of it will do more good than beating you for it. If, as you go around the district, you will tell people about this vote, and that you are satisfied it was wrong, I will not only vote for you, but will do what I can to keep down opposition; and, perhaps, I may exert some little influence in that way."

As if to drive the point home and seeing now that in this man he may have a friend and an ally Col. Crockett said again, well "If I don't [keep my word] I do wish I may be shot; and to convince you that I am in earnest in what I say - I will come back this way in a week or ten days, and if you will get up a gathering of the people, I will make a speech to them. Get up a barbecue, and I will pay for it."

The man responded,

"No, Colonel, we are not rich people in this section, but we have plenty of provisions to contribute for a barbecue, and some to spare for those who have none. The push of crops will be over in a few days, and we can then afford a day for a barbecue. This is Thursday; I will see to getting it up on Saturday week. Come to my house on Friday, and we will go together, and I promise you a very respectable crowd to see and hear you."

Somewhat excited Crockett answered,

"Well, I will be here. But one thing more before I say good-bye. I must know your name."

"My name is Bunce."

"Not Horatio Bunce?" asked Crockett.

"Yes," the man responded.

"Well, Mr. Bunce, I never saw you before, though you say you have seen me, but I know you very well. I am glad I have met you, and very proud that I may hope to have you for my friend."

Crockett later explains,

"It was one of the luckiest hits of my life that I met him. He mingled but little with the public, but was widely known for his remarkable intelligence and incorruptible integrity, and for a heart brimful and running over with kindness and benevolence, which showed themselves not only in words but also in acts."

"He was the oracle of the whole country around him, and his fame had extended far beyond the circle of his immediate acquaintance. Though I had never met him before, I had

heard much of him; and but for this meeting it is very likely I would have had opposition, and probably would have been beaten."

Crockett continues his narration,

"At the appointed time I was at his house, having told our conversation to every crowd I had met, and to every man I stayed all night with; and I found that it gave the people an interest and a confidence in me stronger than I had ever seen manifested before."

"Though I was considerably fatigued when I reached his house, and, under ordinary circumstances, should have gone early to bed, I kept him up until midnight, talking about the principles and affairs of government, and got more real, true knowledge of them than I had received all my life before.

"I have known and seen much of him since, for I respect him--no, that is not the word--I reverence and love him more than any living man, and I go to see him two or three times every year; and I will tell you, sir, if every one who professes to be a Christian lived and acted and enjoyed it as he does, the religion of Christ would take the world by storm.

Reflecting on Mr. Bunce's Christianity Col. said,

"I have told you Mr. Bunce converted me politically. He came nearer converting me religiously than I had ever been before. He did not make a very good Christian of me, as you know; but he has wrought upon my mind a conviction of the truth of Christianity, and upon my feelings a reverence for its purifying and elevating power such as I had never felt before. As a Christian by both word and deed, Horatio Bunce understood the depravity of the soul of man as taught in the Bible."

But to return to the event Crockett explains, "the next morning we went to the barbecue, and, to my surprise, found about a thousand men there. I met a good many whom I had not known before, and they and my friend introduced me around until I had got pretty well acquainted--at least, they all knew me. In due time notice was given that I would speak to them. They gathered up around a stand that had been erected. I opened my speech by saying:

"Fellow citizens--I present myself before you today feeling like a new man. My eyes have lately been opened to truths which ignorance or prejudice, or both, had heretofore hidden from my view. I feel that I can render to you now, a more valuable service than I have ever been able to render before. I am here today more for the purpose of acknowledging my error than to seek your votes. That I should make this acknowledgment is due to myself as well as to you. Whether you will vote for me is a matter for your consideration only."

Crockett then goes on to explain about the fire in Georgetown and his vote for the appropriation bill. He then explained why, in retrospect he now believe that his vote in the affirmative was wrong. He concludes his speech with these words,

"And now, fellow citizens, it remains only for me to tell you that most of the speech you have listened to with so much interest was simply a repetition of the arguments by which your neighbor, Mr. Bunce, convinced me of my error."

Crockett explained that all of the wisdom in his speech is due to this man. Proclaiming,

"... he is entitled to the credit for it. And now I hope he is satisfied with his convert and that he will get up here and tell you so."

At this point Crockett stepped down and Mr. Bunce humbly took the stand.

"Fellow citizens" he started, -- "It affords me great pleasure to comply with the request of Colonel Crockett. I have always considered him a thoroughly honest man, and I am satisfied that he will faithfully perform all that he has promised you today."

Mr. Bunce stepped down. His words were short and to the point. Perhaps Crockett was hoping for more, but then again, knowing the Christianity of this man, perhaps he, later realized the application of Ecclesiastes 5:3, "And a fool's voice is known by his many words."

But what happened next shocked the Col. to his core. Crockett explained that after Mr. Bunce had come down of the stand, "...there went up from that crowd such a shout for Davy Crockett as his name was never called forth before."

"I am man not much given to tears", stated Crockett, "but I was taken with a choking and then felt some big drops rolling down my cheeks. And I tell you now, that the remembrance of those few words spoken by such a man, and the honest, hearty shout they produced, is worth more to me than all the honors I have received and all the reputation I have ever made, or ever shall make, as a member of Congress."

"Now, sir," concluded Crockett, in response to the man who had asked why he opposed the appropriation bill for this widow, "you know why I made that speech. There is one thing now to which I will call your attention. You remember that I proposed to give a week's pay. There are in that House many very wealthy men--men who think nothing of spending

a week's pay, or a dozen of them, for a dinner or a wine party when they have something to accomplish by it."

"Some of those same men made beautiful speeches upon the great debt of gratitude which the country owed the deceased--a debt which could not be paid by money ...particularly so insignificant a sum as \$10,000, when weighed against the honor of the nation."

Regrettably, but in typical fashion of most congressman, even after his passionate plea for members to donate one week of their own pay to give to this poor widow, and though the appropriation was voted down, no one, not a single Congressman accepted Davey Crockett's challenge to give to this woman out of their own pocket. He excoriated them, saying,

"Money with them is nothing but trash when it is to come out of the [pockets of other] people. But it is the one great thing for which most of them are striving, and many of them sacrifice honor, integrity, and justice to obtain it.

Original source quote: Edward Sylvester Ellis, *The Life of Colonel David Crockett*

As most of you know Col. Davy Crockett was killed during the Texas Revolution on March 6, 1836 at the Alamo.

His death marked not only the passing of a great man, but also the passing of the belief that Congress is limited by the Constitution, especially when it comes to the unlawful practice of appropriating monies out of the public treasury.

Col Crockett understood, as a result of his encounter with Mr. Horatio Bunce, that the public treasury is not Congresses personally piggy bank. And to take money from one citizen

and giving it to another was not only a violation of the Constitution, but it was stealing plan and simple.

The principles upon which Col Crockett based his tenure in congress appears to have died with him.

Voters today cast their lot, not for the one who will uphold the Constitution, but for the candidate who will take from one group and give it to another; usually with themselves as recipients of the latter.

To say it another way, the prevailing cry of the electorate seems to be "what's in it for me?" The more of other peoples money you promise to give, the more likely they will be to vote for you.

Regrettably, most children who attend government run and funded schools are totally unfamiliar with this event in the life of Davy Crockett and for good reason.

Past generations have been programmed not to ask the right questions. Congress continually discusses the need for cutting or eliminating certain federal spending programs. From beginning to end, the discussion centers on whether the programs are effective and/or aimed at a worthwhile goal.

However, there seems to be little or no discussion of whether the programs are in the legitimate province of the federal government.

As usual, the conversation, by both conservatives and liberals, misses the point. The fact that a thing is worth doing or show compassion does not make it right or lawful.

And what is most troubling about this you-owe-me mindset? The Christian Church has fallen into the same trap. The founding fathers of this country attempted to break free from the lordship of government and of Kings who believed they were above the law.

In our country today we see the tendency of the masses to look to the state, to be our savior and provider.

As a result, Horatio Bunce's prediction has come true with a vengeance. In 21st century America the state has grown to "behemoth" proportions.

And instead of rejecting this humanistic notion of statism, most Christians call on this man made god to provide their every need and desire.

Christians may be critical of the government complaining that it is too big, spends too much money, taxes the citizens to the hilt and so on, but this one fact remains true; as goes the Church, so goes the culture.

And if we truly lead, even by default, it should not be a surprise that this blatant idolatry has captured the minds of the secular population. But it is a mystery to me as to how the church can turn to a humanistic government rather than the self-contained Triune God as their savior and provider.

Examples of irresponsible governing can be found everywhere and transcend political party lines. Democrats were held to a particularly high standard the 2010 election cycle because they were in the driver's seat the last two years.

But here is a reality check; Democrats, unlike Republicans, have been fairly honest about their intentions to move more

rapidly to government control of the means of production and the spread the wealth agenda.

In fact, when asked point blank, President Obama was quite clear in his response to Joe the Plummer. However, those quiet critics on the other side of the isle, the GOP, have been equally cooperative in the effort to buy votes through earmarks and increase spending.

The only concern the GOP has had of late is not the constitutional question raised by Mr. Bunce, but the pace, we, as a nation move towards massive government takeover and control of the private sector.

As Pogo famously observed, "we have looked at the enemy, and he is us."

But all is not lost. The Christian can still repent of the sin of idolatry. A modern reformation of the Church is what we need and this reformation, like in times past, can and will defeat the march of the tyrants. Tyranny cannot stand when the Church exerts its Biblical mandate of authority over all of culture.

How do we do this? The Christian must turn to the Lord Jesus, read and study His Word, apply it to all areas of life, accept no behavior that he has not had the light of God's holy infallible Word shined upon it, learn the Constitution, stop depending on government to provide any need, vote out of office anyone, be it a democrat or republican who believe the public treasury belongs to them, and, most importantly take up his responsibility to care for the "widow and orphan."

Let these words from 2 Chronicles 7:14 burn into your minds and the minds of your children "...if My people who are

called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Thank-you and God Bless!

Jerry Johnson
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