



QA: Is It Wrong to Make a Profit? by [John T Polk II](#)

All Scriptures and comments are based on the **New King James Version**, unless otherwise noted.

QUESTION: Is it wrong to make a profit and have things?

ANSWER: No, because Jesus used business principles, without condemnation, to illustrate spiritual lessons.

1. **Labor Contracts, Matthew 20:1-16:** "A landowner" hires day-laborers for the 12-hour workday on the 1st, 3rd, 6th, 9th and 11th hours of the day, each agreeing "for a denarius a day" wage calling it "whatever is right I will give you." When the 11th hour workers were paid the same wage as those "who have borne the burden and the heat of the day," "they complained against the landowner."

"But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?'" (Jesus, in **Matthew 20:13-15**)

Sellers Crain rightly interpreted the landowners' position by commenting:

He no doubt felt compassion for the men hired last. If he only paid them for one hour, the men would not have enough for their families' needs. (p. 190, **Truth for Today Commentary, Matthew 14-28**, Resource Publications, 2205 S. Benton, Searcy, AR 72143, @2011) [*This 2-volume commentary on Matthew is the most thorough, yet easily understood commentary on the Book of **Matthew**, jtpII*]

- a. **It was not wrong** for the landowner to own land and be blessed with the ability to hire workers for his own labors;
- b. **It was not wrong** to pay each worker according to that worker's agreement;
- c. **It was not wrong** for the landowner to compassionately pay the last hired workers the same day's wage as others had also agreed upon;
- d. **It was not wrong** for the landowner, as he said, "to do what I wish with my own things." **Private possession is NOT wrong, except in "evil eyes," i.e. a selfish, covetous, envious attitude.** Such is the attitude of "thieves and robbers," who Jesus said "does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy" (**John 10:10**).
- e. **Sellers Crain points out concerning the term "landowner,"** "Often, in parables, it refers to Jesus or God (**[Matthew] 10:25; 13:27; 20:1; 21:33; Luke 13:25; 14:21**)." (p. 185, *op. cit.*). **God, or Jesus Christ, would NEVER be portrayed in any parable as violating, or contradicting, good morals,**

because, as Jesus said, “No one is good but One, that is, God” (**Matthew 19:17**).

2. **The parable is explaining how we who are baptized into Jesus Christ** (**Romans 6:3-5**) may receive the same salvation as those in the 1st Century who were persecuted (**Acts 8:3**).

— *jtp11, August 6, 2023*