

MAKERS AND TAKERS

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"Makers" and "Takers"

by Jim Jordal

If you see the oppression of the poor, and the violent taking away of justice and righteousness in a district, don't marvel at the matter: for one official is eyed by a higher one; and there are officials over them. Moreover the profit of the earth is for all. The king profits from the field. He who loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase: this also is vanity. When goods increase, those who eat them are increased; and what advantage is there to its owner, except to feast on them with his eyes? The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not allow him to sleep. There is a grievous evil which I have seen under the sun: wealth kept by its owner to his harm.

Ecclesiastes 5:8-13, WEB

You've all heard the expression: Some people (the rich and powerful) are the Makers while others (the poor and unemployed) are the Takers. And many of you have accepted the "truth" of the statement. But the actual truth is somewhat different than the common perception.

What Makers gloat over is that they sit atop the pyramid of power pulling the strings and reaping financial gains from the labor of others. They claim to be producing goods and services necessary to people's well being. But in reality most of what they "produce" leads to further human unhappiness and even disaster as the financial empires they build collapse repeatedly into debacles costing millions their jobs and financial security.

Most of the Making class actually makes nothing of substance. They manipulate money to gain profits for themselves and their compatriots, but money (as the Native American proverb goes) cannot be eaten or worn and is therefore of no intrinsic value. Manipulating money has largely replaced the production of goods and services as the major source of income for this group.

The real Makers are those who labor over machines, tools, implements and other productive resources to turn out goods and services needed by people to live and thrive. But they get little or no credit for their blood and sweat because they are viewed as mere factors of production to be hired as cheaply as possible and discarded on the rubbish heap of lost dreams when no longer needed.

And then we have the Takers who are seen by the Makers as lazy, ineffective people existing on social safety net programs paid for by others. So they take from others in order to live. But why are they thrust into a survival mode? Mostly it's because the so-called Makers take gigantic subsidies, tax breaks, and other benefits that can only be described as corporate welfare. So the Makers are among the biggest Takers, although they almost never admit it openly for fear of the backlash that may arise should the public gain such knowledge.

When you put it together most Americans appear to be Takers of some kind. If you get any aid from government beyond what you paid in you are profiting from the taxes paid by others. That some profit more handsomely than others from government programs is because they have more social and political clout and better representation in legislatures due to the armies of lobbyists they hire to represent them.

If you see anything wrong with this situation, you perceive something not commonly understood by vast numbers of citizens. Government exists to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. When masses of people face destitution due to the greed and hubris of corporate America, they need government to provide social safety nets. What they don't need is to be labeled and scorned as Takers when in reality most of the real Takers reside at the top of the income pyramid.

In the above biblical account, Solomon saw clearly the futility of accumulating wealth as a goal of existence. Such wealth destroys people and nations. "The profit of the earth belongs to all" is God's plan for human betterment. Why not act on it