Is Bernie Sanders Right?

Dear Culture Contrarians:

Bernie Sanders is a Democratic Socialist. He advocates for the redistribution of wealth through the democratic process. The goal is equality. One person should not own more than the next. Some folks think the Bible teaches socialism. Wikipedia even has an entry titled “Christian Socialism.”

One passage used to support the Christian Socialist idea is 2 Corinthians 8:14 “but by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may supply* their lack, that their abundance also may *supply* your lack—that there may be equality.” The translation from the NKJV seems to indicate the Apostle Paul expects equal giving between churches from different areas of the Roman Empire.

But we need to examine the term translated “equality” twice in this verse. The rare term (ἰσότης isótē**s)**is only found in two places in the New Testament, here in 2 Corinthians and in Colossians 4:1. At that reference Paul commands, “masters give to the slaves what is just and fair” (my translation). The term translated “fair” is the same as the one in 2 Corinthians 8. Notice that there is no connotation of equality in Colossians. Masters do not become equal to the slaves. In light of the master’s accountability to the true Master, they should give what is right and appropriate. Paul’s point in 2nd Corinthians 8 is that it is not appropriate, fair, or equitable for the fiscally poorer Macedonian churches to be giving more to the Jerusalem churches than the richer churches of Achaia.

From each believer’s equity (a financial term that refers to the true value that remains after the debts are paid) the believer and his God determine the appropriate amount to share. From whatever God has assigned to the believer to manage, a portion is shared. God wants our sharing to be planned, generous, and cheerful.

Our God, who created everything, gives His creatures temporary ownership. Our culture has abandoned the Creator. It is no surprise the world disdains individual ownership, for ownership holds people accountable to the true Owner. How we manage His resources matters.

Bernie Sanders is wrong.

My Love to You All,