

Jesus Christ, Pirate



Guest post by Kevin Carson.

After reportedly feeding a crowd of five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, Jesus Christ of Nazareth was recently served with formal legal notice from industry trade associations, demanding that he cease and desist from what they charge is an illegal food-sharing operation under the terms of the Miracle Millennium Anti-Replication Act (MMAA).

Miracle-working rabbis like Mr. Christ, and their alleged property rights infringements, have been the center of controversy in recent years. They're the subject of a public education campaign by the Foodstuffs Producers Association of Galilee and Judea. Loaves and fishes producers argue that unauthorized replication of food, since it deprives them of revenues to which they are entitled, amounts to stealing. Sympathetic rabbis in synagogues throughout Palestine are reading FPAGJ public service announcements, aimed at countering public perceptions that "everybody does it" and "it's just a little thing," to their flocks: "Don't bakers and fishermen deserve to be paid?" Many Torah schools have adopted FPAGJ "anti-foodlifting" curricula.

In related news, the Wine Industry Association of Palestine has complained amid surfacing reports that Jesus, in another alleged act of illegal sharing, also replicated wine at a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee.

Physicians' licensing boards, likewise, point to alleged eyewitness accounts of Jesus practicing medicine without a license. This unauthorized medical practice, according to widespread reports, has extended to lepers, the lame, the halt, the blind, a man with a palsied hand, a woman with an issue of blood, and assorted victims of demonic possession. The medical industry denounces Jesus' actions as unfair competition. According to a spokesman for the Galilean Medical Association, "it's unfair to expect a licensed physician who spent years as an apprentice and who has to cover the overhead from office space to compete with some carpenter who just waves his hands around and heals people for free."

Although the Embalmers' Guild has also complained of rumored resurrections of the dead, legal experts say there is no actual statute defining that particular activity as a criminal offense.

On the other side, a small but growing movement of gustatory property opponents takes issue with the "piracy" label. They argue that copying food, as an inherently non-rivalrous activity, isn't theft; because the newly replicated food is created ex nihilo, nobody else's stock of food is diminished. Fisherman Simon Bar Jonah of Galilee and his brother Andrew agree. "Instead of trying to suppress competition, the fishing industry should replace its archaic business model. Opportunities are out there for anyone willing to innovate. We haven't lost a denarius because of Jesus' food-sharing."

But authorities aren't buying it. Pontius Pilate, Procurator of Judea, recently announced plans to crack down on gustatory property pirates like Jesus. "If you think I'm going to wash my hands of this Jesus guy, God love him, think again. Replicating loaves, fishes and wine is stealing, just the same as a smash-and-grab at Macy's. This is a big effing deal."