

Charitable Giving

ONE VIEW

Human beings seem to have an inherent need to matter in some way, and one such way is to feel depended upon by another. Nurturing parents need to be depended upon by their children. People generally like being depended upon by pets. In the same way, people give to charitable causes because it makes them feel depended upon by recipients of those charities. And, as a person's disposable income increases, many choose to give more to charitable causes. Disposable income increases to the extent that taxes are low.

When taxes go up, on the other hand, less disposable income is available to a person, but the impulse to matter still exists.

Many people therefore convince themselves that they are morally superior to others and that they care more about the disadvantaged, often virtue-signaling this "elevated" moral sense. They now feel better about themselves because they have found an artificial substitute for being depended upon; because of confiscatory taxation, they can still charitably spend, but it's other peoples' money.

Statistics support this logic. They show that those who favor less government tend to give more to charitable causes than those who favor more government.