

The Love of Money and Its Cure

In his sermon, the preacher explained “The tavern keeper makes all of the money. Who has the [most expensive] car in town? The tavern keeper. Whose wife has the finest clothes? The tavern keeper’s. Whose wife sits around the house all day, eating chocolates? The tavern keeper’s. Who pays for all this? YOU DO”. A couple after the sermon spoke to the preacher. “Preacher, thank you for helping us make up our minds”. “Ah, so you are going to give up strong drink, are you?” “No, we’re going to buy a tavern”.’

Looks to me like this couple has made up their minds to love money, rather than God. This may shock us, but, in reality, it really shouldn’t. For in our day, perhaps more than any other time that we alive today have ever witnessed, the power of money to make people go crazy and insane has never been greater or more patently obvious for all to see. It seems like, that for a great majority of people inhabiting the corridors of political power, they follow money around like a lion hunting its next meal. They’re insatiable and never stop. They never have enough. Out of all reason, it truly seems that their sole reason for being alive is to accumulate more and more money. And because they’ve lost their minds, they end up committing ever more dastardly deeds

and operating ever more evil enterprises all so they can get more of that money that ever so briefly gets them a psychedelic high. And woe to anyone who might threaten any of their ill-gotten gains. Like evil leprechauns who will do anything to anyone to defend their mythical pots of gold hidden at the ends of rainbows, these people will stop at nothing to gain ever more. For, in their minds, if they didn't, they would simply stop living. If they're not getting more, they'll die. It's all a matter of survival. A matter of life and death. Stop getting more money and they die. So, in order to stay alive, they must keep getting more money. Thus, why would anyone condemn them for simply wanting to stay alive?

Now I speak solely of the most extreme cases. But there are all too many who very closely fit this bill. And in order to feed their insatiable hungers, they become ever more criminal, sinful, and divorced from God. Ecclesiastes 7:7 reveals the results: "Extortion turns wise people into fools, and bribes corrupt the heart". Many people have foolishly stated "Money makes the world go round". No, God makes the world go round. And it is also God who gives us the ability to earn money and create worldly wealth so that people can live abundant lives, undistracted by the worries of seeking enough food, clothing and shelter for the next day, and the next. But when God has provided us with abundance, nearly all of us gradually forget that all we have is from God, and begin to somehow think that our own strength, intelligence and skill has produced the enviable lifestyles we enjoy. And then, as Solomon

observes, God must needs remove the abundance in our lives so that we see our unending need of Him and turn back to His will and work, acknowledging that we are but finite creatures after all, and not gods ourselves. Yet those who have been so blessed by God with abundant and overflowing wealth, who've been given this wealth so they can spread it around to help their fellow human beings live better, more comfortable lives themselves, well, it seems like most of these people never read God's memo.

Like the Pharisees the Lord Jesus roundly criticized, who were so fond of their wealth, thinking that it proved God loved them more than other people, that they were thus better, more righteous, more virtuous, more high-quality people than all the lowlifes around them upon whom they depended on for their highfalutin ways, most wealthy people of our day also just want to show off to their equally wealthy friends and neighbors what they've got that somebody else doesn't have. And when they do give any money away, it's in full view of reporters and other adoring fans at lavish galas where they all splurge on the most expensive and rare delicacies while they pledge some large sum to benefit this or that "good cause".

Like all those uber-good people in Martha's Vineyard who throw their arms open to welcome all people, but when "the help" in the form of illegal immigrants show up in their streets, those folks call in busses to ship them off to "somewhere else", declaring that the 50 folks Florida Governor DeSantis flew up there con-

stituted human trafficking, creating a humanitarian crisis. And this where a mere handful of people, say 3-5 people inhabit houses, vacation homes, most vacant now that summer has passed, many with tens of thousands of square feet each. But you see, they have a housing shortage in Martha's Vineyard. There's just not enough room for any more people up there!!

I don't believe King Solomon realized it, despite his immense God-given wisdom, that all too often, great wealth warps the mind such that a form of insanity takes over. Thus so many people of immense wealth lose their minds, lose touch with reality, lose touch with truth, lose touch with God Who is truth. Which is why our Lord Jesus would tell us in Matthew 19:24, Mark 10:25 and Luke 18:25: "I'll say it again—it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!" Solomon was arguably the richest person on earth when he was alive, and perhaps, of all time. Of course, he lacked many of the creature comforts afforded us today because of our advances in technology and mechanization. But how many of us could afford 1,000 wives? He himself said in Ecclesiastes 7:26: "I discovered that a seductive woman is a trap more bitter than death. Her passion is a snare, and her soft hands are chains. Those who are pleasing to God will escape her, but sinners will be caught in her snare". And then in verse 28, "Only one out of a thousand men is virtuous, but not one woman!" Doubt his statistics? Well, he had a thousand wives and more to research,

and he came up empty! But men weren't much better. Out of a similar thousand, only one is virtuous! But even that virtuousness is limited and lacking, for Solomon admitted in verse 20: "Not a single person on earth is always good and never sins". Sounds exactly like the Apostle Paul's statement in Romans 3:23: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God".

So, then, should we shun wealth? Of course not. Wealth, when God grants it to us, is to be used to advance Christ's kingdom. Wealth is to be used for God's glory. In ways that truly help people, according to God's will and God's direction. Without God's direction, wealth will be wasted and not only come to nothing, but even make problems worse and worse. Doubt me? Just look at San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Chicago, New York, and the list goes on and on. Tremendous sums have been thrown at all sorts of social maladies, real and imagined, which end up only exacerbating the problems. Because the money and plans are thought up by humans not only not seeking Holy Spirit's direction; and by rejecting Him, they necessarily utilize the devilous plots and plans of the devil. No wonder in America's richest places, the human suffering, of both rich and poor, is the worst.

One of the most visible and ubiquitous images of wealth, celebrity and fame, is of Kim Kardashian. Commentator Candace Owens recently said of Kris Jenner, Kardashian's mother: "A mother sat down and decided to sell her daughter's body for fame and money, and she was successful". Owens went on to speak of

Kim herself: “Kim Kardashian is a corpse; she's a body without a soul”. Yet, no one is past redemption. God is working. James Lasher writes, “It is encouraging to see someone of Kardashian's renown begin to realize that all the wealth, fame and power that comes from serving the world amounts to nothing without God”. Kim explained regarding her future, “But I think my next route will—I feel like I have to do something, like go to different places. Clearly, it's not working, whatever I'm doing”. We must needs pray for her and her family! Lasher concludes, “Someone of Kim Kardashian's fame coming to Christ and confessing Him as her Savior and Lord would change generations. If Paul, who called himself the chief of all sinners, can be used of God so effectively, so too can Ms. Kardashian”, she who has such a huge fandom.

If people can be lured away from the myriad of distractions of this world for even just a little while, even for a few hours like those at Martha's Vineyard, people come face to face with the truth, if only a glimpse. But that glimpse can be enough to move people to realize that something's truly missing. And no amount of money will ever fill it. If they take that moment, and honestly seek the truth, God will reveal Himself to them. And if they accept His invitation to accept His love, not only will their lives be changed, but so will the world's. And that's what the devil most hates and fears.

Pour out thanks to Savior Jesus that by Holy Spirit, He has led us to the truth, which gives us abundant life, for all eternity!

