

Paying and Giving

By William Broadhurst

Christ had a lot to say while He was here on earth about money and its use. He kept hammering away that money was useful as a servant, but deadly as a master!

Money can buy you anything but happiness, and pay your fare any place except to Heaven!

As a small boy, I got my first impression of Heaven from the songs I heard sung in prayer meeting and class meetings. Those saints sang about the gates being made of solid pearl, and the streets all paved with pure gold! But if some gold-loving Methodists I know ever get to Heaven, I fear for the golden pavement.

Listen! If money becomes the measure of your values, said the Lord, then your soul will become metallic, and will be neither manly nor godly!

The wealth we have, the abundance that is ours, should be looked upon as a treasure, a gift from God!

It is high time that Christian people should deepen their sense of dependence on God, and increase their sense of humility! Many persons, even some church members, claim that their earthly possessions come as a result of their own power, and the might of their hands, and they can do as they please with their own wealth.

The Bible does not support that theory. Jesus called a man a fool who said he was going to build larger barns to hold "my grain, my goods" and take life easy. Jesus said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul will be required of thee!"

This sort of thinking leads to one of man's greatest sins — covetousness. There is more said in the Bible against covetousness than is said against drunkenness.

The word "covet" comes from a Greek word, which means "grasping for more." No matter how much a covetous person gets, he is always discontented.

Tolstoi told a story which illustrates the activity of covetousness. A peasant was offered all the land he could walk around in a day. So the man started hurrying to get around as much land as possible, but the exertion he put forth was so great that he fell dead just as he got back to where he started. He ended up with nothing.

The most dangerous thing about this sin of covetousness is that it is not generally regarded as being very sinful. Of course, we all have contempt for misers, but not all covetous men are misers.

Another thing to be noted is that it generally fastens upon the old rather than upon the young.

The Bible says that covetousness is idolatry and that no covetous man hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of God.

The Scripture says, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition."

Covetousness enticed Lot into Sodom. It caused the destruction of Achan and all his household. It was the sin of Samuel's sons. It left Gehazi a leper. It sent the rich young ruler away sorrowful. It led Judas to sell his Master and his Lord. It brought death to Ananias and Sapphira.

Oh, what victims covetousness has had in all ages.

I hear someone say, "How am I going to check covetousness?" Well, there is no difficulty in answering this question, because if you find yourself wanting to get everything you can in your possession, just start to scatter it!

Start giving and you will soon strangle covetousness and eliminate it from your disposition.

A wealthy farmer who had been miserly and selfish was gloriously converted. Soon after his conversion, a poor neighbor came one day to ask for food, since his

The King's Highway

family had lost everything in a fire that destroyed their home.

This young convert thought he would be liberal and give him a ham, but on his way to the smokehouse the devil said, "Give him the smallest one you have!"

"I'll give him the biggest one I have," retorted the man.

"Give him your biggest ham!" exploded the devil. "What a fool you are!"

But the young convert replied, "Listen, Satan, if you don't keep still I'll give him every ham I have in that smokehouse!"

If you find you are selfish — give something!

Don't give until it hurts, give until you get happy and rejoice!

You know, we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.

Mr. Durant, associated with Goodyear Rubber Company, was successful in establishing complete ownership in a patent that made him a very rich man.

Mr. Durant said the greatest struggle of his life took place as to whether he would let the money be his master, or he would be the master of the money—whether he would be its slave, or make it a slave to him.

At last he got the victory, and that is how a great college, known by everyone, Wellesley College for Young Women, was built and paid for by Mr. Durant.

There are joys in prosperity, but there are perils too!

What we get and keep for the sake of having, we lose, for we leave it all behind.

What we give away, for Jesus' sake and for helping humanity, we will find by and by that we have kept, for we have only sent it on ahead!

My money is mine only in trust. It belongs to God, just as I do. Money is stored-up human power, and God is counting on this money for His work. It is to build churches and spread the Gospel; to train workers and send them out to teach and heal and save His children; to help bring a new kingdom of righteousness and peace into the world.

Will you join me in a covenant with God? Here it is:

"I am going to put more religion into my business, and more business into my religion. So from now on, so long as I may live, I am going to tithe my income for the extension of the Kingdom of God."

In order to carry out such a covenant we must not only dedicate our money to God, but we must give ourselves.

This is exactly what the poor Macedonians did, of whom Paul spoke in his letter to the Church at Corinth—"Begging . . . for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints . . . but first they gave themselves to the Lord . . ."

This same love for God is expected of us today.

Remember, you can give and not love, but you can't love and not give!

* A sermon delivered in the Wilmore Methodist Church by Mr. William S. Broadhurst, Christian businessman of Tulsa, Oklahoma, a member of the Asbury Seminary Board.

COMMENDABLE RECORD

The minister of First Baptist Church, Tucson, Arizona, Dr. Richard S. Beal, recently celebrated his 45th anniversary as pastor of the church. During this time he has helped establish 12 new churches, published ten books, and sent more than 200 of his young people into the ministry or the mission field. —Selected