

Ordinary 18C - 2025

Comedian Jack Benny, from TV's Golden age, had a skit which illustrated how we place money ahead of everything. He is walking down the street when suddenly he is approached by an armed robber, "Your money or your life!" There is a long pause. Jack does nothing. The robber impatiently queried, "Well?" Jack replied, "Don't rush me, I'm thinking it over."

Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables of Jesus deal with money. One out of ten verses in the New Testament deals with that subject. Scripture offers about five hundred verses on prayer, fewer than five hundred on faith, and over two thousand on money. The believer's attitude toward money and possessions is determinative. (by John MacArthur, Jr.)

Fred Craddock tells the story about a missionary named Glenn Adsit, who - along with his wife and two children - was in China when the communists took over. The Adsit family was placed under house arrest, while the authorities figured out what to do with them. Finally, one day, the soldiers came and said, "You can return to America." Well, this was the greatest news they'd heard in a long time. Glenn and his wife were celebrating their good fortune when the soldiers informed them, "You can take two hundred pounds with you." Well, that put them in a quandary, because they'd been in China for many years. As Craddock tells it: "They got the scales and started the family arguments: two children, wife, husband. Must have this vase. Well, this is a new typewriter. What about my books? What about this? And they weighed everything and took it off and weighed this and took it off and weighed this and, finally, right on the dot, two hundred pounds.

The soldier asked, 'Ready to go?'

'Yes.' 'Did you weigh everything?' 'Yes.' 'You weighed the kids?' 'No, we didn't.'

'Weigh the kids.'

And in a moment, typewriter and vase and all became trash. Trash.

(by Fred Craddock from *Craddock Stories*, St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001, pp. 22-23)

The Dollars Are in the Way

Henry Ford once asked an associate about his life goals. The man replied that his goal was to make a million dollars. A few days later Ford gave the man a pair of glasses made out of two silver dollars. He told the man to put them on and asked

what he could see. "Nothing," the man said. "The dollars are in the way." Ford told him that he wanted to teach him a lesson: If his only goal was dollars, he would miss a host of greater opportunities. He should invest himself in serving others, not simply in making money.

That's a great secret of life that far too few people discover. Money is important. No question about that. But money is only a means by which we reach higher goals. Service to others. Obedience to God.

God comes to the rich man and says, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" The answer was clear. The rich man had put his trust in things. Now he was leaving these things behind. (by King Duncan from *Collected Sermons* on www.Sermons.com)

Money Is Like Sea Water

Someone asked John D. Rockefeller (of all people) "How much wealth does it take to satisfy a person?" He replied, "Just a little bit more." The Romans had a proverb: "Money is like sea water; the more you drink, the thirstier you become." (from *The Sign in the Subway* by Carveth Mitchell, CSS Publishing Company, 1-55673-056-X)

Three Kinds of Givers

There are three kinds of givers: the flint, the sponge, and the honeycomb. Which kind are you? To get anything from the flint, you must hammer it. Yet, all you get are chips and sparks. The flint gives nothing away if it can help it, and even then, only with a great display. To get anything from the sponge, you must squeeze it. It readily yields to pressure and the more it is pressed, the more it gives. Still, one has to squeeze it. To get anything from the honeycomb, however, one must only take what freely flows from it. It gives its sweetness generously, dripping on all without pressure, without begging or badgering. The honeycomb is a renewable resource. Unlike the flint or the sponge, the honeycomb is connected to life; it is the product of the ongoing work and creative energy of bees. If you share like a honeycomb giver your life will be continually replenished and grow as you give.

When we share, we freely give and we acknowledge that all we have is on loan and others have as much right to the things of God's creation as we do.

(by Keith Wagner from *But, I Need It!*)