

Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is

by Hendrik Joubert

Put your money where your mouth is. This popular saying is used to test the commitment of an individual in a variety of situations – *To live up to one's words; act according to one's own advice.* It is often used in an idiomatic sense, but sometimes quite literally. Another familiar saying to express the value placed upon money is: *Money is not everything, but there is very little that you can do without it.*

Fines are another way to illustrate the value of money. It is considered an effective way to secure conformity and to penalize deviant behavior as you *hit him in the pocket, where it hurts most.* Ultimately the value of money lies in what it can get you – things, but also in the sense of power that goes with it.

We may think that the money thing is the product of the modern capitalistic society, however the good and the bad resulting from the value attached to it goes back a long way. *Money is the answer to everything.* Care to guess the source of this saying? Following is the complete quote with its source: ***Men prepare a meal for enjoyment, and wine makes life merry, and money is the answer to everything. Ecclesiastes 10:19***

The following proverb highlights its relative and temporal value of money compared to wisdom and knowledge: ***For wisdom is protection just as money is protection, But the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the lives of its possessors. Ecclesiastes 7:12.*** Here we find what may be considered the root of the power thing – money is protection. The rich man had no power and could not buy any protection after his death; therefore Lazarus was the true wealthy individual.

In his first letter to Timothy the apostle Paul warns: ***For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 1 Timothy 6:10.*** It is through Solomon that God informs us: ***He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance with its income. This too is vanity. Ecclesiastes 5:10***

This last saying addresses the sense of levels one may pass through. It would not be so easy to imagine Bill Gates or other such wealthy men being concerned about things. The power issue, the ability to affect the lives of others – for good or for bad – seems to be the primary motivation. There are those who may simply want to be recorded as the person who accumulated the most bucks, to the cent.

After explaining that the *love* of money and not money per se is the root of all evil the apostle adds: ***But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. 1 Timothy 6:10-11.*** Christians are to flee the evil often associated with wealth and money, and pursue the things of God.

When one is considered to serve as an elder in the church which God bought with His own blood, he should ***not*** be ***addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. 1 Timothy 3:3.*** We have in Judas an example of a man who loves money and who is put in charge of the treasury. A lover of money may not pilfer, but he may begrudge recipients of the benefits they may be able to derive from the treasury. **(Mark 14:1-11)** The work of the church may be hampered in more ways than one. Advertising is too expensive, we cannot afford this and we cannot afford that. We may not love money, but we may allow some of this to affect our thinking and therefore our actions.

The Hebrew writer exhorts: ***Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have;***... and then adds the aspect of putting your money where your mouth is, of trusting God to take care of you; ...***for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"*** ⁶ ***so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?"*** Hebrews 13:5-6

When I plan my giving, what are the thoughts which go through my mind? What are some of the reasons I decide that I would not be able to give bountifully? Am I putting in out of my surplus, or all I own, all I have to own? **Mark 12:44**. How highly do you value the work of the Lord? What value do you place upon the kingdom and spreading it? Remember the widow and **put your money where your mouth is**.