

It All Goes Back in The Box

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Imagine a world. Imagine a world where one percent of the planet's population owned forty seven percent of the planet's wealth[1]. Imagine a world where twenty nine thousand children under the age of five die every single day from poverty and preventable diseases [2]. Imagine a world where polluting the environment will equate to higher profits [3]. Imagine a world where democracy essentially means you are voting between two people.

It's not just imagination. This is the world we live in, A world of greed and corruption. A world of pain and suffering. Now we may not notice all these things, because they don't directly affect us. However, they are happening all around the world every single day. What do all these things have in common? They are all byproducts of money. Now one could say money has always existed and so what am I talking about. But what I mean by money is not gold or silver, or trading commodities. But rather, a fictional currency that us humans created and decided to give value to¹. The lifeblood of all our establishments. The most needed thing on the planet that can't actually be used for anything practical. You can't build a house with it. You can't eat it. You can't drink it. Some of it magically has more value².

In 1965, Paul Harvey said in one of his famous speeches "if I were the devil, I'd just keep right on doing what he's doing" [4]. I'd like to take a glimpse at the modern money system we have and hopefully leave you with a new perspec-

tive to think about as you see how this is being used by Satan. I want to demonstrate how and why it causes so much suffering. To do so, I'm going to use an analogy.

Life can be compared to the game of monopoly. Now my older sister is a great person. She taught me how to play the game monopoly. She knew the name of the game was to acquire. She was ruthless, I couldn't beat her at it. One year I decided I wanted to be the best at this game. I played it over and over until I learned to win the game. I realized the only way to win was through a total commitment to acquisition, money and wealth. Consider I Timothy 6:10³ – "the love of money⁴ is the root of all kinds of evil." One day I sat down with my sister to play. I was ready to bend the rules to win if I had to. I destroyed her financially and psychologically. I watched her give her last dollar and quit in utter defeat. It felt great!

The love of money and the love of material gain leads to a craving. One who loves money is never satisfied until they have it all. they want more and more. Like me with my sister. Now how does this analogy affect us today? Why can we not love money? We need money for rent, we need money for food, we need money to tithe. What's so bad about it? If we have money, we can give it to the poor. If we have money, we can feed the hungry. Does it not seem like we should love money? Let's take a brief look at history and how the love of money affects us.

In 1689, John Locke published "Two Trea-

¹Hold up a dollar bill and say "this."

²Hold up a 5/10/20 dollar bill.

³Hold your place here in Timothy.

⁴filarguria: Can also be translated to avarice (extreme greed for wealth or material gain).

tises of Government” [5]. In these documents he argued that all men are created equal in the state of nature by God⁵. In this document, he outlined how private property should be distributed among people. He argued that three provisos need to be considered when dealing with private property. First, you must leave enough (and as good) for others. There was an inherent consideration for other’s. A love for neighbors⁶. Second, you must mix your labor with the property. This implied you were using it and making it your own. Lastly, you can only take so much as you can use before it spoils, for ”nothing was made by God for a man to spoil or destroy.” Back then, money was considered something with value you could trade, generally gold or silver. Gold and silver cannot rot, nor can any other precious metal or gem. Trading it for food can transfer the food around before it rots. Therefore, society can be dedicated to the protection of property. John Locke based his principles on that of protection and eliminating waste and destruction because he believed that God was the one who provides our resources.

However, after detailing this system that would support everyone and eliminate waste, he surprises everyone and states “the ‘one thing’ that blocks this is the invention of money, and men’s tacit agreement to put a value on it.” With modern money, there’s no longer consideration for if there’s enough left over for others. Money buys labor, and money buys property whether it goes to waste or not. With money there is no consideration of the well being of others. The goal is instead to acquire money and assets; to become the master of the board.

In 1776, Adam Smith published “An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,” which is one of the worlds fundamental works in classical economics [6]. This talks about supply and demand coming into equilibrium which is done by the ‘invisible hand of the market.’ This takes the argument of private property from God giving natural rights for ev-

eryone to instead being the system itself as God⁷. In this document, Mr. Smith states ”among inferior ranks of people, the scantiness of subsistence can set limits to the further multiplication of the human species; and it can do so in no other way than by destroying a great part of the children.” This is essentially saying that inferior people (which would be those in or born into poverty) will have their children destroyed because they can’t support themselves. In other words, it is their own fault, and this is all caused by the invisible hand of the market, which is seen as Gods doing. We can see all of the blame is shifted to God as it so often is.

These men who created the system knew exactly the ramifications of the system. They also knew how it could make them rich, which was the real purpose of implementing this system. For why else would a system based on preservation and balance be replaced? These men were drowning in greed and they figured out a great way to exploit others. An enlightening quote on the topic, from a documentary by Peter Joseph is this; “physical slavery requires you to feed and house people, but economic slavery requires people to feed and house themselves.” We are slaves to this system. We have to make money to live. We are living in this world controlled by money and possessions. But we cannot love money. We cannot let the love of material possessions become part of us. Though we live in the world, we cannot be part of it⁸. We do have to understand though, that built directly into the economic system we use today is destruction and suffering all due to the greed of the individuals that created it, and the love of money.

There’s a better way. The wisdom of God is much greater than any of us can comprehend. To me, it’s clear He saw all this coming. God knew what man would do to each other and how we would twist our economics. In fact, He left us a warning to not be the ones doing it ourselves. Look at I Timothy 6:9 – “But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare,

⁵Proverbs 22:2, Romans 2:11, Leviticus 19:33-34, Acts 10:34-35, James 2:1-4, Galatians 3:26-29

⁶Mark 12:30-31

⁷As Dr. John McMurtry puts it; a professor of philosophy who analyzed this text.

⁸I John 2:15, John 15:19

and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.” This says, desiring to be rich, perhaps for example by creating fictional currency with no real value, will drown men in destruction and perdition and create wrong morals and values. Not only does this apply to the self, but could this have a dual meaning applying to others as well? The Greek word for “men” here is *anthropous*⁹, which in other verses is translated as ‘others’¹⁰. I think we can see from the statistics I started with how true this is that the love for money can drown others in destruction.

When I beat my sister in Monopoly, I wasn’t just drowning myself in destruction by falling to greed, but this was also me drowning her in destruction. After that game, she had one more lesson to teach me. After I beat her, and took everything she had, she looked at me, and she said “Now it all goes back in the box.” All those houses and cars. All those utilities and railroads. All those titles and clothes. Even your body. None of it is really yours. The truth is, after we clutch and consume and hoard, we’re going to lose it all. And so, you have to ask yourself, when you’ve made the ultimate purchase, when you’ve climbed the ladder of success, when you’ve made it to the ultimate promotion, then what?

Consider I Timothy 6:6-8 – “Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.” What does this say? It all goes back in the box¹¹. And so, we must ask ourselves, what really matters?

Isn’t it better to imagine a world where there is no suffering from poverty? Imagine a world where no one is without food. Imagine a world where nothing spoils because we don’t let it. This could be the world if everyone chose to avoid the love of money, material possessions, and greed for power. Make the choice. Choose to not let yourselves fall prey to lusting after money but instead imagine the things that truly matter. My brethren, imagine The Kingdom of God. No, don’t imagine it, but make it a reality.

References

- [1] (Credit Suisse Research Institute Global Wealth Report - Oct 2018
- [2] <https://www.unicef.org/mdg/childmortality.html>
- [3] Joseph H. Bragdon, *Is Pollution Profitable?* – April 1972
- [4] Harvey P., “If I were the Devil.” 1965
- [5] <http://www.yorku.ca/comminel/courses/3025pdf/Locke.pdf>
- [6] <https://www.ibiblio.org/ml/libri/s/SmithA.WealthNations.p.pdf>

⁹*anqrwpoj*: a human being, whether male or female; generically, to include all human individuals.

¹⁰Mathew 5:16, Mathew 6:14-15, etc.

¹¹The Idea for this comes from the book “When the Game is Over: It All Goes Back in the Box” by John Ortberg