

THE CHRISTIAN & HIS MONEY - III

by

D.B. Knox

"The Protestant Faith"

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In considering the Christian's use of his money, another principle to be remembered is that no-one, whether Christian or non-Christian, should ever have as a primary aim, the aim to make money. This is because such an aim, when it is the primary aim, is self-centred and we should never be self-centred in our actions towards others. The use of money, whether in business or in any other way, brings us into contact with people and all our contacts and relationships with other people should be with the object of serving them. This is the principle on which human life has been made by God. This is the principle exemplified by Jesus Christ, the Son of God "who is among us as one who serves". If we aim primarily at making money when we are in contact with other people we aim at something selfish, we are looking to our own self interests rather than the interests of those with whom we are in contact, and this remains true whether we expand the concept of self into self and family, or into religious objectives in which we are interested.

Consequently, in our use of money, whether we are conducting a business or developing a property or investing in shares, our primary aim and motive must never be to make money but rather to see how we can serve other people with the money God has put in our control. This applies to all people but especially, of course, to Christians and the Christian church.

For example, if we have a block of land which we wish to develop it must not be primarily to make money from it but we must ask ourselves whether through the development we are serving the community. Similarly, if we are landlords we must, in conducting our business with our tenants, not primarily aim to make money out of them but rather to serve them, since we have been put

by providence into this position of serving them as landlords. We are not to get rid of our tenants because we find serving their interests inconvenient. If we are businessmen our business must be conducted to confer benefit on our customers, and similarly directors of public companies must not be primarily interested in the size of the profit which they are able to announce in their annual report to the shareholders but they must be primarily concerned with the people their Company comes into contact with through its business. All this does not mean that we are not to make money. Of course we need to make a profit if we are going to maintain our home and family, and if we are going to have money to invest for the better development of the communities resources, but the primary aim and motivation of our actions when we are in relation to other people must not be to make money but rather to serve these other people within the perimeters that the need to maintain the service through having enough to live on and develop our resources requires. In a word, no-one, Christian or non-Christian, in using his money, should have as his primary aim the making of money, or even the conserving of his equity, but his aim should always be that which Jesus had, namely true concern and service for his neighbour.

The money under our control, or the property which we own, is simply that part of God's creation which we have the responsibility for using. And we must use it in accordance with the character of God, its creator. Our using it will bring us into contact with people. This means that we must serve them in our using it, for serving other people is the true motive for actions in our relations with other people.

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29.8.75

35/76

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is broadcast every Sunday at
8:25 p.m. over Radio 2CH

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