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THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS MONEY II

D. B. KNOX

"THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

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In considering the Christian use of money it is important to realise that we must act responsibly in the use of the money under our control. The first principle that we may mention is that we must be willing to share our money with those in real need whom God's providence brings within the orbit of our life. It is not as though we have to go without in order that others might have affluence, but rather that we might share our blessings with those who have need of our help.

There are two great obstacles to sharing. The first is greed. We want more and more for ourselves. Greed is self-centred, and can only be cured by God. We must call upon Him in prayer to give us His Holy Spirit so that our attitudes to life may agree with His character. God Himself is a giving God. He gives us everything to enjoy fully. He has given us His Son to be our saviour. When we love God we will be able to love our brother, so we will rise above greedy and the selfish use of our money and share our resources with those who have real need. Greediness grows if encouraged - we may be surprised how greedy we have become without noticing it. Of course, gambling is essentially greed and an individual or a community that indulges in gambling (and it doesn't matter how small is the sum), will become more and more greedy and, therefore less and less inclined to help one another in times of need. Gambling has this effect even if the sum is small because its motive is just as much greed as if the sum is large. It is sad that the Government is encouraging this vice of greed in order to obtain taxes. For it will undoubtedly have an evil

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effect on community living and community response in times of crisis. Moreover, the greedy person is not a happy person. He is never satisfied with his self-centredness.

The other obstacle to sharing our money is fear. We are frightened that we will leave ourselves short if we give it away; not short perhaps in the present, because we can estimate that, but in the future with all its uncertainties. The answer to this sort of fear is faith in God's faithfulness in the future. It is He who has given us our present possessions and He has promised that, if we seek to do His will, He will give to us what we need when we need it. God is in control of every event in our world, including the business world, and the world of our own private life. He has promised us heaven and a wonderful heavenly inheritance and Christians should live in the light of that promise. He has promised us provision for the rest of the life that is this side of heaven, and we should live in the light of this promise as well. So when you are tempted to hesitate in helping other people in their real need as you come across the need, remember God's promise to be faithful. He who has given us life will give us the means to sustain life and not only our life, but the life of our children too. Indeed, as St. Paul says, the love of God is such that we have no grounds for fear. He wrote "God who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not freely with Him give us everything". We have a great inheritance in the future. Christ has provided it through His death and we have already begun to enjoy it through His Spirit. If we keep our thoughts on this inheritance we won't clutch to ourselves what God has given us in this life

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but will share it with generosity. Sharing is the first great principle in the use of our money.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
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