

A Church and Its Money

READING

Matthew 6

Malachi 3

Ecclesiastes 5

Don't hoard treasures on earth where moth and corrosion make them disappear, and where thieves dig through and steal. But hoard treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor corrosion make them disappear, and where thieves neither dig through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

I read recently that the Mormon investment arm has \$100B in assets. "To be used sometime in the future when the Lord tells us what for."

Hasn't he already told you?

Look after widows and orphans.

Look after the poor.

Send missionaries.

Educate your church.

I'm sure I could spend all of that on things Yeshua would be happy with.

How about your church? Probably you don't have \$100B, but most churches seem pretty well off these days. And it's good for a church to be financially stable, but it's not there to build a massive business empire bigger than Elon Musk's.

One church I went to for a while was pastored by an ex-real estate mogul.

He was an ex because he lost all his money!

And now it seems he's running a defacto real estate company via the church funds.

He, (the church), has bought up several of the properties around the church.

Currently they're rented out to tenants, but his plan is that once his church of about 100 people has grown to 2,000 people in a few years time, he'll be able to demolish those houses and build a big enough car park so they all have somewhere to park their cars when they come to church. (Even though it's only a single block to a big shopping complex with several stories of free car parking).

The church has big mortgages, and it's a real strain on the budget.

Every year they run short of money and they're bailed out by wealthy members.

But along the way, all the contributions from "regular" people are spent on mortgage repayments. And his own, (generous), salary. (Which is fair enough, he's the CEO of a big real estate business).

That's God's money. Spent on mortgages.

To the point that they used to have a youth pastor who was really doing a great work with the youth of the church and the community. His salary was pretty small in comparison.

But it was too much for the budget.

Several hundred thousand dollars a year on the properties... nothing left for the \$50K a year youth pastor.

So he had to go.

Seem right to you?

BTW: How does that compare with where your money goes?

Property is very expensive in Australia.

Most houses in reasonable condition in a major city would easily be able to be sold for more than \$1M. But if they were bought 30 years ago they would have only cost a couple of hundred thousand at the most.

And it probably does happen, but I've literally never heard of anyone selling their house, downsizing, and giving most of the profit to God. Never.

I've also never heard of anyone inheriting a house like that and selling it and giving most of the money to God. Usually they use the inheritance to pay off their own mortgages and either upgrade to a bigger and better place for themselves, or buy an investment property to rent out for more income.

I did hear once of a prayer meeting where they were praying for a house for the pastor.

But they just couldn't afford one.

There was a knock at the door. One of their members was a farmer, and he had some news.

"I've just sold my farm for a lot of money, and I want to give the church a million dollars."

It does happen! Some Christians are generous to Yahweh.

Are you one of them?

Are you giving it away as you go, or keeping it for yourself?

Read those chapters we've recommended here.

Let the spirit speak to you.

Ask yourself, "Where is your heart?"

Follow the trail to the money, ... that's where your heart is.