

God and Greed: A Contemporary Case Study

Pastor Steven Furtick's "House from Heaven"

"If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . he is conceited and understands nothing . . . [and] has a morbid interest in controversial questions . . . out of which arise . . . constant friction between *men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth*, **who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.**" Paul to Timothy, 1 Timothy 6:3-5, NASB, Emphasis added. [1]

Introduction—A Contrast

Early the morning of February 10, 2014, 12:00 am, *Fox News* aired *The Fox Files* which contained a segment reporting on *Samaritan's Purse's* relief work in various parts of the world, focusing especially on helping the tens of thousands of refugees who have fled war torn Syria to seek safety in northern Iraq. In interviewing *Samaritan's Purse's* President Franklin Graham and its chief operating officer in Boone, N.C., and in traveling to Iraq to observe and report first-hand on the relief organization's efforts there, Greta Van Susteren brought the heart of the ministry up-close and personal to viewers.

Syrian refugees were shown walking across a make-shift pontoon bridge over the river dividing Syria from Iraq, their only possession being the clothes they were wearing. The scene then shifted to Boone, N.C., where big semi-trucks and cargo planes were shown being loaded with food, water, medical and relief supplies (tents, heaters, water, shoes and clothing, etc.) to be flown to northern Iraq. Little children were shown as they were given their Christmas shoe boxes, the reception of which changed their countenances from the sadness of despair to smiles of delight. *Fox Files* reported that in most instances *Samaritan's Purse* is the first to respond to disaster and refugee crises around the world. At times, it is the only responder. The news program authenticated the ministry of *Samaritan's Purse*, the importance of which is crucial in light of recent attempts on the part of the U.S.'s Internal Revenue Service to make life uncomfortable for 501C(3) tax-exempt charities and organizations.

Anyway, my heart was moved to tears as I observed the squalid living conditions of the refugees and the ways in which *Samaritan's Purse* was trying to help them, giving something to those who possessed nothing. I point to this legitimate ministry to contrast it with reports that have surfaced over the last months about another ministry in North Carolina located about a hundred miles to the south.

True to the "prosperity-gospel" tenet that God wants his children rich—they are after all, the King's Kids—a young mega-church pastor (he's 33 years old) is building a 1.7 million dollar mansion, with reportedly five bedrooms and seven and one-half baths, in an exclusive neighborhood on multiple acres of land. Steven Furtick is the hip, flamboyant and youthful communicator who leads *Elevation Church* in Charlotte, N.C., a growing 14,000 member congregation with several campuses, even one in Toronto, Canada. Amongst his followers, who claim to be evangelical, he's not just a rising star, but a risen one. And befitting his stardom, the

stylish Furtick is no pauper. His self-indulgence has caused many, mostly outside the realm realm of his followers, to question his ministerial motives in building the extravagant house. Jesus may have promised us a "mansion" in His Father's house (really the sense is more of an "apartment"), but for the prosperous young pastor that day can't wait (John 14:2, KJV). He wants the mansion now. So he's building it with the money received from other of the King's Kids.

He claims the capital for building the house is coming from "gains" derived from the *royalties* of book sales and from the *honorariums* of speaking engagements. In a classic case of conflict of interest, from his influential platform the young pastor promotes his books to thousands of followers. Yet there's no way of knowing if these royalty/honorarium sources of money are covering the 1.7 million cost of the house because no outsiders are privy Furtick's compensation package from the church.

Though *Elevation Church* has a governing body, it does not consist of elders, but rather of a "hand picked" Board of Overseers of other mega-church pastors (Wonder who does the "picking"?). Thus, as Furtick, the church's CFO James "Chunks" Corbett, other of the church's administration team and "the Board of Overseers" ("overseer" can mean "bishop") remain secreted regarding the church's finances, neither the financial integrity nor accountability of the organization can be verified. Furtick promised *Elevation* "would always be a ministry of integrity." [2] Yet the message being left amidst all the hazy financial reporting is, "Trust us!" So when the controversy initially surfaced regarding Furtick's almost 2 million dollar building project, the young pastor apologized the next Sunday to his 14,000 plus followers that he was sorry for any "uncomfortable conversations" they had to have over "his mansion" under construction. [3] Some evangelical celebrities, and there's more than just Furtick, seem to be imitating lives of the rich, the famous and sometimes, even the naughty.

Now this scandal can be added to the long list of other scandals that hangover the pale of the evangelical movement in America, both present (Doug Phillips of *Vision Forum*, and Bill Gothard of *Institute in Basic Life Principles*) and past. [4] There will be scandals, I guess. Anyway, evangelical Christianity's losing of credibility appears to be in a free fall. By in large money, sex, and power have corrupted the movement (See 1 John 2:15-17.).

My intention in drawing attention to the controversy over Furtick's house-scandal is because what's happening with him and *Elevation Church* are symptomatic of what is going wrong in evangelicalism. As a whole and for the most part, excepting, of course, *Samaritan's Purse* and many other good and godly missions and ministries, the evangelical movement does not have a good reputation among outsiders. As far as the movement's PR is concerned, rotten apples are spoiling the whole, and millions of followers are allowing it to happen. So it becomes incumbent that these wealth-gospel ministers and ministries be held up to the scrutiny of Holy Scripture to see how God's word indicts their obvious and blatant financial shenanigans.

Yes, pan-evangelicalism has lost credibility amongst John Q Public. From what has happened, outsiders know something "stinks." But those same unbeliever-outsiders might be surprised to know that Scripture also indicts the legitimacy of much of what passes for "ministry" today. Though many outside the church detect the odor emanating from evangelicalism, how is it, we

are forced to ask, that so many in evangelicalism can't smell the smell? Maybe they've just gotten too use to it.

So to determine why evangelicalism has become odious, even to some of us who might be categorized as part of it, we need to perform a simple test—"follow the money." So let us look at the "money trail" and together survey some of the biblical warnings about money's corrupting influence, especially as regards the "wealth gospel," whether that false teaching is being peddled overtly or covertly, brazenly or subtly. To critics of discernment in general (Oh, discerners are unloving and way too judgmental.), I would say that *silence is compliance*. But about cases like Furtick's, Scripture is neither silent nor compliant. Please follow the Bible's "money trail" with me. We begin with . . .

The Love of Money is the Root of All Evil

These well known words, incidentally taken from the Bible, are not to be understood as referring to corporate America, but are a warning to ministers and churches, especially those in which ministry has become an industry (1 Timothy 6:10a). Paul's words to young Timothy warn ministers and ministries regarding the influence of affluence, of becoming mesmerized by money. Let's read them.

"But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires . . . 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 . . .**" (Emphasis added, 1 Timothy 6:9-10).

If Furtick is a rising star in evangelicalism, then he could become, if he's not already, a *wandering one* (Jude 13). In these verses Paul warned that already in the apostolic era there were "money-grubbing" church leaders who had strayed from "the faith"; meaning that their chasing after money caused them to wander away from the truth of God's Word. Invariably, greed spawns heresy as leaders, captivated in their pursuit of wealth, attempt to excuse the inexcusable in contradiction to Jesus' plain teaching. Jesus said:

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. **You cannot** [I think "cannot" means "cannot"] **serve God and wealth**" (Matthew 6:24).

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (KJV). How can one reconcile any "prosperity gospel" with Jesus' clear statement? In serving Christ and like oil and water, greed and God don't mix. Take your choice. Jesus said it's either/or. To Jesus, love of money is the litmus test as to where our loyalties really lie, as to whether we're serving God or our own bellies (Romans 16:18). To run after lucre involves walking away from the Lord and His truth. It's just that simple. And most of us know the Gospel record of how Jesus with scourge in hand overturned the tables of the money changers in the temple as he uttered these words: "My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Matthew 21:13, KJV). The Lord cleansed His Father's house of the "business" on two different occasions, one near the end of his ministry

and another at the beginning (See John 2:13-17.).

"Godliness" merits Prosperity

Previously in this chapter and context, Paul warns young Timothy (and Furtick too is young) that to justify money grubbing, Jesus' plain words must be turned upside down. So to excuse the inexcusable, adherents of the wealth gospel must adopt a self-serving thought process to justify the ruse. They must think or imagine that their religious pursuits deserve reward (Greek, *nomizonton*, 1 Timothy 6:5b). Of this "supposing" (KJV), one commentator notes that it refers to a corruption of mind in which,

"It seems . . . to point to thinking that has settled into an assumption. It is a pattern of thinking that is unexamined because it is presumed true. The present tense sees this as an ongoing and uninterrupted pattern of their thoughts." [5]

Any presumption of prosperity on the part of many evangelical Christians, no matter how engrained in their mental processes the idea is, does not agree, as Paul stated, with Jesus' "sound words." The apostle wrote:

"If anyone advocates a different doctrine [like a "wealth gospel"] and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain." 2 Timothy 6:3-5, Emphasis added.

As regards the interpretation of this verse, English translations vary slightly. What do the heterodox teachers suppose? What is so engrained in "their group think" that it goes unquestioned by them and their followers? The NASB translates the Greek phrase (*nomizonton porismon einai tnv eusebeian*) as men "who **suppose** that godliness is a means of gain," and the KJV as "men . . . **supposing** that gain is godliness" (KJV). In the former sense, heterodox teachers think that they *accrue wealth though godliness (using God)*; in the latter sense, they *explain wealth as the reward for godliness (excusing gain)*. [6] Either way, "the buck stops" with God! God either owes me wealth or gives me wealth. But regardless of the phrase's emphasis, by it Paul communicates that such monetary machinations are feigned scams, and when scams hit the public fan, they become scandals. Peter knew that when he wrote of false teachers that, "many will follow their sensuality" and therefore "the way of the truth will be maligned" (2 Peter 2:2). Even a liberal theologian was quite terse in his opinion of Furtick's house. "It's just vulgar. It's an offense to the Gospel" he is quoted to have said. [7] So what has been severely downgraded amidst the evangelical scandals, both past and present, is the very credibility of the Gospel. And this is just as Peter predicted would be the case.

The financial and moral (the former invariably affects the latter) improprieties being exhibited and tolerated (Remember, silence is compliance.) within the evangelical nation insult the

common-sense-virtue of people both inside and outside the church. But there remain those who continue to blindly follow the cause célèbre, the cult of the personality. As Peter said, "many will follow their sensuality." Nevertheless, perceptive onlookers are compelled to ask, "Hey, what's the deal, what's the real scandal going on here?" Is it the manipulative use and abuse of powers and dollars by Christian celebrities, their publicists and publishers, or the ignorance of the masses who uncritically and unswervingly indulge the growing cult of the personality? Why do so many continue to "drink the punch" of the imposters?

People who follow unrepentant leaders who continue to scandalize the Christian faith stand as implicated in the scandals as those who perpetuate them. Let me repeat. Followers of charlatans are as guilty as the charlatans. Before God the deceived stand as guilty as the deceivers. For the moment, ignorance may be peace and bliss, but the peace and bliss will not last. To this point, Jesus' words give warning. Regarding *the Pharisees*—who by the way also loved money (See Luke 16:14.)—*and their followers*, Jesus told His disciples, "Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit" (Matthew 15:15). When following the wrong leader, religion has a way of becoming "the pits." Just ask recovering and disillusioned people whose lives have been ruined because they banked with the wrong religious leader.

Knowing of Jesus' statements about money and His example, Paul, unlike so many in both his day and ours, **never "peddled"** the Word of God for profit (2 Corinthians 2:17), **never "coveted"** anyone's gold, silver or clothes (Acts 20:33) and **never "flattered"** to camouflage greed (1 Thessalonians 2:5; See 2 Peter 2:3.). Paul understood that covetousness is "idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). It's against the backdrop of both Jesus' and Paul's attitude toward wealth that Furtick's excuse for his house must be evaluated.

As reported by the *Charlotte Observer*, the *Elevation Church* leader claims immunity from financial misconduct, from accusations of extravagance being leveled against him. In a typical "We-deserve-it!" explanation, he tells the folks,

"It's a big house, and it's a beautiful house, and we thank God for it . . . We understand everything we have comes from God." [8]

Regarding such an attitude and any like it, John Stott (1921-2011), in his day a noted pastor and expositor of Scripture, insightfully commented that, "The history of the human race has regularly been stained by attempts to commercialize religion." [9] Then he continued:

"Of course greed is itself a desire, selfish and even idolatrous [See Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5.], but it breeds other desires. For money is a drug, and covetousness a drug addiction. The more you have, the more you want. Yet these desires are *foolish* (they cannot be rationally defended) and *harmful* (they captivate and do not liberate the human spirit)." [10]

Greed breeds! Scandals arise for reason of covetous religious leaders who Paul states are

possessed of depraved and deprived hearts and minds (1 Timothy 6:5). The hubris of the exhibited depravity offends unbelieving onlookers, as justifiably it should. For reason of the offense, scandals become more scandalized as coveters attempt to mute their critics as they dupe their followers. Yet all the while, the whole conglomerate, leaders and followers, give every indication they're oblivious to the obvious as they excuse the inexcusable, as they indulge the lie. After all, how can it be so wrong when it feels so right? Because of pride the leaders won't admit to wrong in their leading, and because of pride, followers will not admit to wrong in their following. Religious con-artists will not admit to wrong in what they "have" even as their followers will not admit the wrong of being "had." Meanwhile, negative reports continue to surface as indicting pictures continue to circulate. But all of this is so opposite from the standards for genuine spiritual leadership set by the Apostle.

"Greedy After Filthy Lucre"

In his letter to Timothy, Paul also writes that one of the qualifications of spiritual leadership, even among young men (and Timothy was young), is that leaders "not [be] greedy of filthy lucre (from the Latin *lucrum*, "money or profits") . . ." (1 Timothy 3:3, 8, KJV), be "free from the love of money . . . [and not be] fond of sordid gain" (1 Timothy 3:3, 8). The character of the leader "must be above reproach." He must "have a good reputation with those outside the church" (1 Timothy 3:2, 7; Compare 3:10).

These qualifications of spiritual leadership do not demand perfection because nobody's perfect. But what the statements do teach is that when assailed, the charges against leaders prove false. Though not perfect, the leader's character ought to be Teflon-like. When charges are hurled, they do not stick. But at this juncture, the "filthy lucre" charges like those being leveled at Furtick and others of the "prosperity-group-think" are sticking. And when they stick, putting aside all their cheesy explanations for indulging extravagance, there is no obligation on the part of the foolish to keep following. But of this option, masses within evangelicalism seem to be mindlessly ignorant. But there's another leadership peril to be avoided.

No "Accountability"

The New Testament indicates that "bishops" (Greek, *episkopoi*, 1 Timothy 3:1) and/or "elders" (Greek, *presbuteroi*, Titus 1:5) are to govern local churches. The two designations are synonyms that refer to the same governing office in a local church. But in the case of *Elevation Church*, such a biblical office of government is absent. Presumably governing the church are the young lead pastor, personally hired church administrators and an appointed but un-local Board of Directors. In such a "set-up," the right hand—the *Elevation* congregation—does not know what the left hand—"Furtick and company"—are doing; so much for candor and openness. This self-invented method of church government ought to be a warning signal to the *Elevation* congregation that something is amiss.

No "Repentance"

Last fall when the report of Furtick's construction of his "mansion from heaven" surfaced in the media and the accusations began to fly, the young pastor told his followers he was sorry. Sorry for what, for the extravagance? No. He apologized to his 14,000 plus thousands of followers for any "uncomfortable conversations" they had to have over his big dig. Question: Why were the conversations "uncomfortable"? Were they "uncomfortable" because his constructing the

mansion is highly "questionable"? I guess this is the new version of repentance—being sorry to his followers that his big dig has become a big deal. Another question: Where is God amidst all this, other than Furtick's assertion that He approvingly has given him the house? But to the issue of materialism and ministry, the Old Testament also gives an example.

"Divining" for Dollars\$\$\$—Balaam and Big Bucks\$\$\$

Balaam was a Gentile diviner from Mesopotamia, someone who could be hired to prophesy for the right fee (Numbers 22:1-24:5; 22:7*), who could be hired to curse a nation's enemy thereby facilitating victory in war (Numbers 22:6, 17; 24:13). So Balak, the King of Moab, attempted to hire Balaam to curse the invading army of Israel as it threatened to take away his kingdom. But God would have none of it. He refused to allow Balaam do as both he and the king of Moab were want.

So with God's seeming approval, Balaam set out in the company of Balak's emissaries with the intention of speaking to and for Balak only what God had ordered him to speak (Numbers 22:20, 35). But somewhere along the journey, the double-minded and double-dealing prophet reneged upon his agreement with God. (Perhaps Balak's men influenced him to change his mind.) He decided he'd speak according to what Balak had bargained for him to speak; that is to curse Israel. He decided to double-cross God, but God would have none of it. So He intervened.

God sent "the angel of the Lord" to intercept the prophet on his mountainous journey to Moab. The angel blocked the narrow path the prophet was traveling on. With the narrow-walled trail obstructed, the prophet's own she-ass saw the angel causing it to balk and bray at the prophet's commands (just as Balaam was balking at God's orders). All of this frustrated the unseeing prophet and caused him to whip the donkey with increasing violence until the animal complained to the prophet for how he was treating her. On this point I see nothing odd about God, like a ventriloquist, filling the donkey's mouth with His prophetic word to rebuke the prophet. After all, God frequently audibly spoke in Scripture (See Luke 3:22.).

So suddenly, in an epiphanic moment, the prophet became aware of the angel, realized the error of how he was beating his animal, and was made conscious of his double-dealing intent to turn from God's word, give in to Balak and curse Israel. So again, he was forced to agree with the Lord to speak only what God commanded; and that was to bless, not curse Israel.

So meeting up with the Moabite king, they journeyed on three different occasions to three different high-altitude vantage points (heights where common pagan belief held that the gods dwelt) that overlooked Israel's camp and armies. From those heights, three times Balaam defied Balak and blessed Israel. Then the two parted company. But Balaam's failure did not deter him from his desire to do Israel harm. So he employed another strategy to defeat Israel. Instead of attempting to curse Israel by declaration, the mercenary prophet taught Balak how to corrupt Israel by deception.

The New Testament employs three expressions in reference to this incident: the *error* of Baalam, the *way* of Baalam, and the *doctrine* of Baalam. Jude warned the apostolic church that false teachers had arisen and "for pay" had rushed "headlong into the error of Balaam" (Jude 11). Peter drew attention to the hireling prophet, that his way involved loving "the wages of

unrighteousness" (2 Peter 2:15). But the Book of Revelation speaks of the false prophet's doctrine in which instead cursing Israel, he taught Balak how to corrupt God's people from the inside, to seduce them into eating "things sacrificed to idols" and committing "acts of immorality" (Revelation 2:14; Compare Numbers 25:1-9). The *error* and *way* of Balaam refer to the prophet's willingness to compromise standards of morality and truth to satiate his greed. Interestingly, in the cognate language of Arabic, Balaam (*bal'am*) means "glutton." [11] The *doctrine* of Balaam refers to the tactic whereby the false prophet attempted to destroy Israel by leading them into idolatry and immorality. Evidently, it worked (See Numbers 25:1-9.).

In light of the story, it becomes difficult to see how Balaam was a true prophet of God who became corrupted. Rather, the Mesopotamian diviner was a false prophet who, as did the witch of Endor (See 1 Samuel 28:3-25), had a temporary encounter with the true God who prohibited him from speaking a curse against His people. The whole incident shows that false prophets are not God's prophets. They are conflicted individuals who don't have a certain message. Scripture paints the whole situation to be ludicrous because engaging false prophets and teachers is ludicrous.

Prophets for Profit

Then too, Israel was besieged by false prophets who accommodated their messages for money. To quote a modern paraphrase, the Lord told Micah that, "My people are deceived by prophets who promise peace to those who pay them, but threaten war for those who don't" (Micah 5:3, TEV; Compare Ezekiel 13:19, "And will you profane Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread . . ." (NKJV).

Conclusion—"Cash Cows"

Money can, and most often does, have a corrupting influence upon ministry. Absolute money can corrupt absolutely. Society does scorn and ridicule the scandals plaguing evangelicals today who from many appearances, and in contradiction to Jesus' statement about serving, are putting money first and God second. But Bible believing Christians ought not to be intimidated by "success driven" churches. Wealth is no measure of spirituality.

Because believers understand that the Scriptures also condemn the versions of the wealth gospel being peddled today, whether blatant, as with certain charismatic charlatans, or subtle, as with hip communicator-corporate-type-exec-pastors who milk the cash out of their followers, they should be neither intimidated nor discouraged in their walk with the Lord. Some, I know, will accuse this writing as being unchristian. But to be silent is to be compliant. So the beginning of the article calls the scandal going on at *Elevation Church* a "case study" because it is but a cameo of the bigger picture of what's going on under evangelicalism's big tent, of what's passing for "ministry" these days. Yet few under the big tent are saying much about it. Secular media seem more sensitive in its reporting of the aberrations of evangelicals than evangelicals themselves. At least they call these scams for what they are . . . "scandals."

In today's American religious sub-culture, evangelical practices have for some become a "cash cow," which "is business jargon for a business venture that generates a steady return of profits that far exceed the outlay of cash required to acquire or start it." [12] Without a doubt, and whether fair or unfair, the IRS is gearing up to get its share of the "cash cow." If the flagrant and blatant corruption of religious ministry goes too far, and perhaps it already has, then loss of tax

exempt status for all churches may come, and I think it's fair to say that if and when it happens, mega-ministries-turned-industries will have invited it. The wanton monetary self-indulgence on the part of the self-aggrandizing few will have ruined it for the self-sacrificing many. And when the tax hammer falls, some will call it persecution. But really, to stop the nonsense and by God's providence, maybe a loss of First Amendment rights will serve to promote the genuine purity and charity of the true church. **[13]**

Much of what has been written here has been negative about ministry and money. But along with the warnings in Scripture about mercenary prophets and teachers, the Bible also contains instructions as to how congregations are to take care of their leaders and workers. They ought to be generous, not miserly. Paul told Timothy that those who lead local churches are worthy of the "double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching" (1 Timothy 5:17). Paul told believers in Galatia: "The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him" (Galatians 6:6). And the apostle also made the Corinthians aware that "the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:14). Congregations should not treat their leaders on the cheap. They should not pray, "Lord, you keep our pastor humble and we'll keep him poor!" But neither should they indulge them. Balance and moderation are key. Yet in all life's circumstances, God's people ought to bless God and be thankful for everything He gives and they have (James 1:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:18). We ought ever to live our lives in the knowledge of the words and example of the blessed Jesus Christ who in the presence of His disciples told a scribe who wanted to follow Him,

"The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Matthew 8:20.

ENDNOTES

- [1]** Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from the *New American Standard Bible: Reference Edition* (Anaheim, CA: Foundation Publications, 1996).
- [2]** Stuart Watson, "NBC Charlotte obtains confidential Elevation report," November 4, 2013, *NBC Charlotte* (<http://www.wncn.com/news/iteam/NBC-Charlotte-obtains-confidential-Elevation-Church-report-230557491.html>).
- [3]** "The Prosperity Gospel Of Elevation Church Pastor Steven Furtick: 'Everything We Have Comes from God'," *The Huffington Post: Religion*, October 29, 2013 (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/29/elevation-church-steven-furtick-prosperity-gospel- n_4173578.html).
- [4]** "List of Christian evangelist scandals," *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia* (<http://www.icyte.com/system/snapshots/fs1/3/8/d/4/38d4c9095c0f23e45e3b48941e9b6b6ddee07243/index.html>).
- [5]** John Kitchen, *The Pastoral Epistles for Pastors* (The Woodlands, TX: Kress Christian Publications, 2009): 259.
- [6]** Because the word "godliness" (Greek, eusebeian) is prefaced by an article (though not translated in the English, Greek τὸν), proper translation would be, "supposing that godliness is a

means of gain."

[7] Quoted in, *Huffington Post*.

[8] Ibid.

[9] John Stott, *Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996): 148.

[10] Ibid., 152.

[11] A. van Selms, "Balaam," *The New Bible Dictionary*, J.D. Douglas, Organizing Editor (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, MI: 1962): 129.

[12] "Cash cow," *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia* (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cash_cow).

[13] "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . ." *The Constitution of the United States*, Amendment I (Washington, D.C.: Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution, 1985-1992).