

Being
Rooted in
Love is
Economic

Some Experiences with
God and Money

W. Thiessen
St. Croix Church
Feb. 4, 2024



Not much money
But rich in culture



Economic Principles from Ancient Judaism

- Sabbath
- Stewardship
- Tithing
- Sabbath Years
- Prophetic Justice



Love those
prophets!

Sabbath (REST! IT'S ENOUGH)

- “Therefore the Israelites shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign forever between me and the Israelites that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.” – Exodus 31.16-17

Sabbath

- From *Sabbath* by Abraham Heschel:
- “There is a realm of time where the goal is not to have but to be, not to own but to give, not to control but to share, not to subdue but to be in accord. Life goes wrong when the control of space, the acquisition of things of space, becomes our sole concern.”
- “Man is not a beast of burden, and the Sabbath is not for the purpose of enhancing the efficiency of his work.”

Sabbath

- From *Rest is Resistance* by Tricia Hersey:
- “...when you slowly begin to believe and understand your inherent worth, rest becomes possible in many ways.”
- “You were not just born to center your entire existence on work and labor. You were born to heal, to grow, to be of service to yourself and community, to practice, to experiment, to create, to have space, to dream, and to connect.”

Stewardship

- “The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers.”
 - Leviticus 25.23
- Ethical demands (obedience) are the bottom line for the land

Tithes and Offerings

- Communal responsibility to make culture and faith and festivities available to all
- To provide a tangible response of gratitude (a recognition that we receive with gratitude and not entitlement)
- A token (reminder) of stewardship – and at least a portion of our giving should be based on communal discernment

Sabbath Years and Jubilee

- A balance of freedom and restoration of opportunity (a re-set)
- Every 7 years the land rests, and after 7 x 7, a year of celebration and full restoration of opportunity to everyone
- Land is redistributed and debts are forgiven
- A clear stance against accumulation of wealth and economic disparity

Prophetic Justice

- Prophets were passionate and outspoken about economic justice
 - don't over-accumulate, "don't join field to field"
 - don't exploit others (poor) "trample the heads of the poor into dust"
 - if you're really wealthy you are exploiting others, "Woe to those who lie on beds of ivory"
 - Priority of care for the "widows and orphans" and "strangers"

Economic Principles and Jesus

- Ditto (Jesus emphasized all the above)
- Freedom and Responsibility (No Law but Love – Golden Rule)
- Radical Trust (Sabbath x 10)
- Give all (stewardship/tithe x 10)
- Blessed are the poor (justice enhanced by solidarity)
- We know it was meant “literally” because early church sold all they had and lived in common

Economy of Jesus:

RADICAL

TRUST – LOVE – SOLIDARITY

Why have Christians made so little impact?

1. Actually lots of impact but mostly negative – wedded to Empire and Power
 2. Forgotten: “Cannot serve God and Wealth”
 3. Powerless against the biggest idolatry of our era
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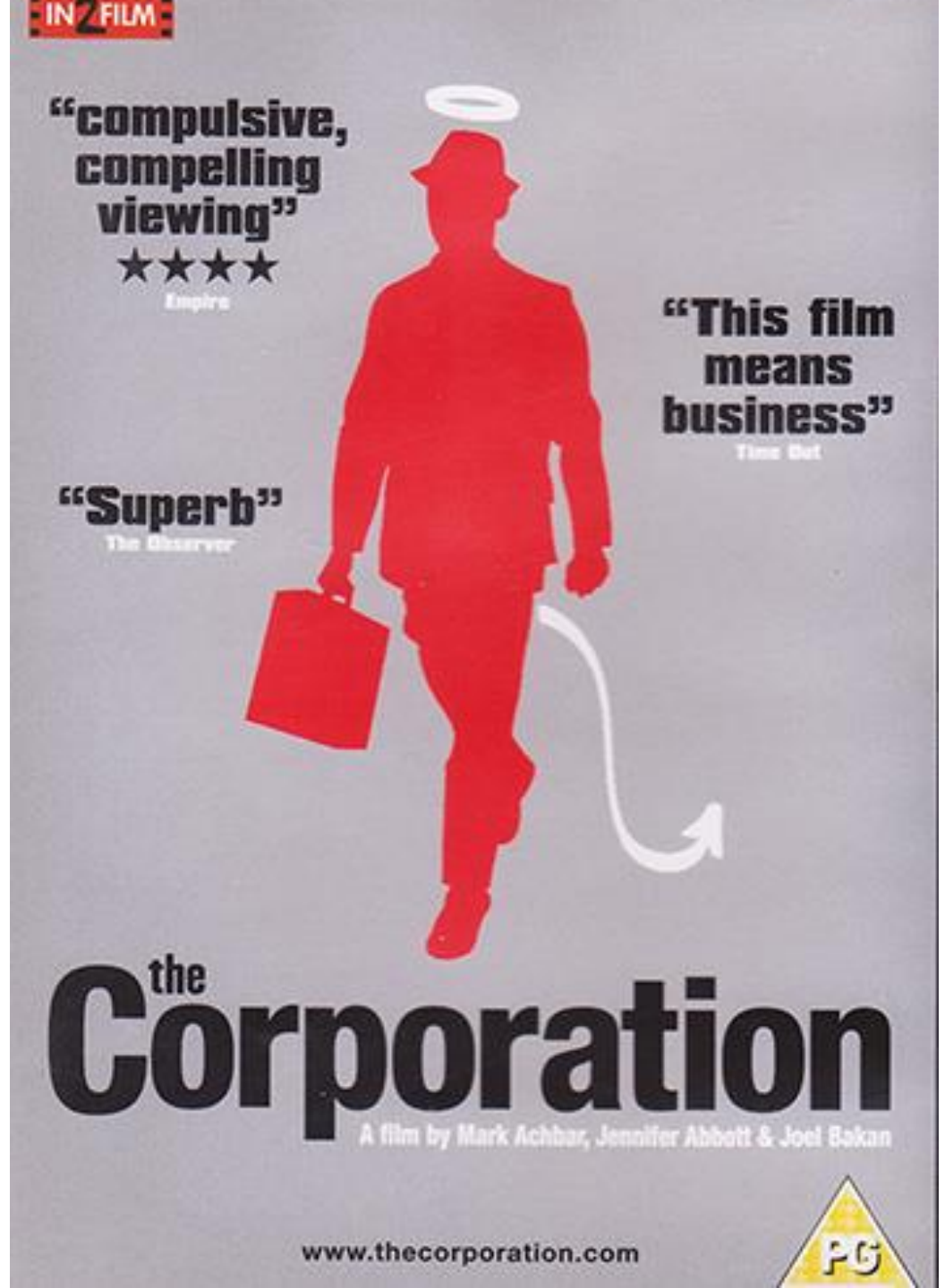


We worship “Financial Security” like an idol

- Instead of unmasking it as the Tool of Satan
 - The biggest lie that is destroying humanity and the Earth (but it looks so innocent and responsible – and it’s so systemic)
 - There are the more obvious darker sides: violence, exploitation, colonialism, etc.
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Corporations are
inherently evil
psychopaths



We all support and defend evil because

- Society tells us that all of our wealth needs to be insured
 - We believe we must accumulate a huge retirement fund
 - CPP does it when we don't
 - (7% investments related to Israeli war crimes)
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**WE HAVE MET
THE ENEMY
AND HE IS US**

Walt Kelly
Aphra van Hesse



Paul Kingsnorth

- In the Kingdom of humanity, the seas are ribboned with plastic, the forests are burning, the cities bulge with billionaires and tented camps, and still we kneel before the idol of the great god Economy as it grows and grows like a cancer cell. And what if this ancient faith (Christianity) is not an obstacle after all, but a way through? As we see the consequences of eating the forbidden fruit, of choosing power over humility, separation over communion, the stakes become clearer each day. Surrender or rebellion; sacrifice or conquest; death of the self or triumph of the will; the Cross or the machine. We have always been offered the same choice. The gate is strait and the way is narrow and maybe we will always fail to walk it. But is there any other road that leads home?

The entirety
of my
professional
songwriting
career...



Don't Worry about Tomorrow

Words and Music by Walter Thiessen, Copyright © 1985

What will I eat;
What will I drink;
What will I wear?
Will I have enough for tomorrow?
Will I be cold;
Will I be filled?
I seem to need so much.
I'm just worried about tomorrow.
I'm just worried about tomorrow.

Look at the birds in the sky:
They don't sow or reap;
They don't store their food in barns.
And yet your father in Heaven feeds them;
They don't worry about tomorrow.
They don't worry about tomorrow.

So seek first the Kingdom of God;
And your relationship to him.
And he'll take care of all of your needs;
You don't have to worry about tomorrow.
Don't you worry about tomorrow
Don't you worry about tomorrow
Don't you worry about tomorrow.

