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The Economy after Covid19 – opportunity to birth an alternative co-conscious community.

ENVISIONING AN ECONOMY THAT TAKES THE COMMANDMENT TO 'LOVE GOD AND LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR' SERIOUSLY.

The Covid-19 crisis contains a brief window of opportunity for system change that is premised on community and the serving only of the common good. This must be on many different scales. Change must occur in each of the inter-locking intimate, corporate and global aspects of our enlarging new planetary sensibilities.

We must look for marks of community such as are known in the spread and consequences of early Christianity itself, as people perceived the 'basilica' as a realm subject to the rule of a universal Christ in everyday incarnations. Yes, in our daily actions as we live our lives 'in Christ'. A contemporary community-minded people will recognise this key to working together.

All that's needed is a global willingness to share rather than to possess. Are we examples in expanding that togetherness?

Now let's face the two prime eco-words, ecology and economy. The first is the planetary context for the second. Eco-ology has been ignored with increasing indifference for some centuries now. Eco-onomy has raced on in human arrogance as an exponential path into many forms of exploitation.

This divergence must be challenged on two parallel, interlocking paths. One is of our personal habits related to consumerism and individual autonomy, 'living more simply, that others may simply live'. The other is examining the premises on which contemporary and globally dominant economic practice is founded, the assumption of 'money making money' and the right to 'the theft of the Commons'. That is a critical contradiction of the premise that 'money is a measure of exchange' [eg Aristotle] and that God is embarrassed by possession. Love is a gift. Our genuine economy must express that.

So, the decelerating of the Covid-19 pandemic offers us all, in a concerted effort at relearning and of new applications, the opportunity to accelerate our acceptance that we are:

ECONOMISTS ONE AND ALL

Start at home,
where we each are part-home-holders;
house-keepers to some degree.
Then, by covenantal planetary
tenancy, we are earth- or eco-orderlies,
stewards or jobbing economists.

Still at home, playing our part,
but now in context of an earthly habitat,
upon which we all depend for sustenance,
we act as the future's generators of eternal life,
imbued with our nurturing
of God's endless creativity.

Once we each accept our housekeeping stewardship in the context of new outreaches in community, we can begin to imagine the vital part Christian insights must play in the remodelling of the structure of our integrated societal-political-economy. Those prophetic insights are challenging as much to ourselves as to all others we would hope to persuade. The best advocacy being our own example; that is in a form of servant leadership.

Our contribution may be small, but by each bold example enlarged contribution flows through our community. Our actions, our questions, our votes, our sheer informed enthusiasm, spreads, just as we receive more inspiration from each other. Our community itself can become a jobbing theologian, a jobbing economist. Even a jobbing polymath curiously trying to see how all the great specialists' studies contribute to our growing understanding of an emergent realised 'kin[g]dom of God', a realm of mutually honouring communities serving the common good as an integrated part of the ever evolving symbiotic planet earth.

We all have a tendency to sideline the past as impertinent to the present, only to rediscover how central it is in understanding the driving forces of our world and harnessing them again to the natural forces of nature as indigenous peoples did. With no other manmade economy to distract them. That is true of the core message of all the great faith traditions indigenous in origin. Loving God and loving every neighbour through every act and word.

At this stage we will all, in our different levels of participation, need to get behind the really tough challenges to the old political economy. Some of the most challenging of which are touched upon in the following poetic summary of the work of a humble voluntary association, the Christian Council for Monetary Justice.

LET WISDOM OF ANCIENT DAYS DETERMINE MONEY MAKING

Justice would be, oh, so simple,
Though it may take eight creative 'days'
if citizens would vote
for transformation, step by step,
of the monetary system;
that steeps us all in exponential debt.

First, redeem
credit by renewing the requirement
of investment collateral,
for all that's lent, that is,
return to 100% money.

Second, create
a public service banking system,
the crown in action for its people,
issuing money free of debt into the economy,
stemming compounding interest's
strangulation of us all.

Third, invest
in everyone with citizens' basic income,
the first call on a nation's wealth
being the dignity of a freely contributing
society, gifted not categorised,
into space to work,
every skill engaged in just wealth creation.

Fourth, multiply:
currencies that generate economic activities,
social trading of human skill and spirit,
at many levels,
building in the process
local trust, partnership
and community.

Fifth, explore
the ancient wisdom of secular and religious
traditions,
almost everywhere,
that 'money making money' is prostitution
of Aristotle's great economic notion,
'money is the means of exchange
not the mother of interest;
usury must end.

Sixth, revisit
fiscal polices and apply eco-, uni
and land-value- taxes too,
as keys to the sustainability,
of a vast population thriving on the earth
and the intrinsic value
of nature's sustained creativity itself.

Seventh, in the interim
apply a tax to the awesome immorality
of currency speculation,
which flourishes in the overweening vanity
of those who prosper
while, even in a new millennial era,
millions die in want and desperate indignity,
all across the face of an abundant planet
plentiful in a true economy.

Eighth, rest
and looking on a just socio-, politico-eco-nomy of justice and dignity for all, say, yes, that, that is good.

This poem first appeared in Faith in Business Quarterly, Spring 1999 Mission Catalyst by BMS World Mission

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ENVISIONING AN ECONOMY THAT
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any are awakening to the knowledge that a community is a safe place. By protecting and nurturing the dignity of its members the community is sustained, even when challenged by the bewildering threats of external forces. Working together in faith, we can build on this realisation that new life, hope, and dignity can now be fashioned for both our individual and our corporate selves, in the heightened sense of one symbiotic planet, earth.

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