

By Russ Gressett

FIRST LAW OF ECONOMICS

In the world system's economy, and in the study of economic theory in general, one of the first and foundational precepts or laws is this: As income goes up, consumption goes up.

This is one of the primary predictions or building blocks proven out over time that modern economic theory counts on to be true. Without that precept operating, the rest of the world system's economic theory would fall apart ... and it would do so at a very high rate of speed.

We see this precept working everywhere and even in our own lives. A person will think, "I have what is required to get that or to do that, so I am going to get it or do it. If I can, I will. If I want to, I will. We only live once, right?" Yes, as believers we only live once, but that one life is everlasting. The result is that eternity matters. Eyesight toward eternity matters. A thought life that always has eternity running through it is important and it matters. Intimate relationship with our Father, who just happens to own everything, matters.

I am not saying that operating similar to that first law of economics precept is wrong in every particular instance. It's not. God loves for us to have nice things. He is a God of abundance in every way. He just wants us to have the abundance and not for the abundance to have us. He judges that by observing our hearts and our maturity and He releases his wisdom to us accordingly. Plus, the reality is that sometimes we go through seasons where things are extremely tight and where needed things, even necessities, end up being put off. We probably all have examples of times like this in our lives. Then, when more than enough flows, some of those things have to be attended to. God understands. However, do realize what this first precept of economic theory highlights in terms of people's decision making. The decisions that have produced that economic theory over time are generally being made by the same part of people as was true of the Rich Fool in Luke 12. The Rich Fool decided to build bigger barns when he saw a bumper crop coming in the field. His sight, his emotions, his soul, his fears and his lusts born from the flesh part of him drove the decision. Those decisions create the economic theory we started with above.

In the Kingdom's economy, things work different. The backbone, if you will, of the Kingdom economy is the king ... King Jesus. He owns everything. Everything has been placed under his authority. The Kingdom economy operates through relationship, faith, hope, love, obedience and grace ... like a family.

In the Kingdom economy, just because you can doesn't mean you can. And, just because you can't doesn't mean you can't. There is a leading by the Spirit of God for the sons of God. There is a calling of the things that are not as though they are based on having heard from God. There is wisdom and guidance that is to be heard, believed, spoken, and stepped out on. It's not based on what is seen, as in the example of the Rich Fool in Luke 12. Rather, it is based on what is heard but

not seen yet (the operation of faith).

It's important to stand back and take a look at what is going on in our economic life and our financial decision making. It's one of the primary areas that many Christians have the least depth of relationship with God in ... yet it's one of the most critical areas to have a deep relationship with Him in. Think about that.

We don't tend to think about this area of our lives as "ministry" ... meaning an area that God works and flows through us in on a daily basis. The truth is that it basically gets relegated to just budgeting or figuring out how to get by in our own strength and soulish reasonings. We work a few formulas and that is pretty much it. We don't tend to be regularly exercised in relationship in this area.

If we were to define "ministry", we might say it is God working through us to others. God flowing through us changing the world, reconciling all things. The direction of flow being God originated, flowing to us via relationship, then outward to touch others with His love, His agenda, His plans, His mercy, His power, His forgiveness etc. That is ministry. Doesn't matter if you are a pastor or a plumber. The bible declares that we are a kingdom of priests (Rev. 1:6).

The Kingdom economy works by love just like faith and it results in ministry. The bible says for us to go into all the world and preach the gospel ... the good news ... and make disciples. Well, part of the good news is that the Kingdom's economy is different and better than the world's economy. Why? Because the king owns everything and he is generous, loving and kind ... and we are his. It's why Jesus exhorted in Matthew 6 for us to not worry about our lives and all the stuff the world system and world economy says we have to worry about. Servers of mammon have to worry about that stuff. Servers of God are commanded in no uncertain terms not to.

So we have this major area of all things economic and financial that needs to be viewed in light of ministry and relationship, but forever we have mostly relegated it to simple formulas that really don't require any more of a relationship with God than the typical Hebrew believer had with God in the old covenant before the "born again" advantage was even possible. This is not God's best. There are much higher levels and realms of operation in the Kingdom economy for us to walk in. There is always another glory even on this side of the second coming.

God's Grace and the Kingdom Economy

Grace is God's way of making things easy/easier/possible for us when there would be no way to do so in our own strength, our own power or our own reasonings.

It's like a mother and father and how they make things easy/easier/possible for their kids. A child doesn't have to worry about where he's going to sleep or where he's going to get his next meal. He doesn't have to worry about how he's going to get to school or get his next pair of shoes. His mother and father provide. They have a plan and a way. This is "grace" to him or her. It literally makes it possible when it

would not be were he not under their care, guidance, provision and ownership.

That same child, were they to make a decision to go against the will of their mother and father and do something like run away from home or make some decision that he or she knew would not be pleasing to their mother and father, would place themselves outside the grace of his mother and father. Trouble would likely come and it could be immediate. If we are the mother and father, what are we doing in such cases? We are working and praying diligently that the child respond with correct decisions based on our conversations and relationship with them.

It's similar with God. We make decisions that are in line with the will of God through relationship and through appropriated wisdom and knowledge from His word. We activate or continue the activation of His grace in our life and it makes things easy/easier/possible with His power and His ability working. It doesn't mean there is never trouble, or resistance, or persecution or that everything is a cake walk, but it does mean victory will come. Same goes for the child in the example above.

As it relates to the Kingdom economy, as alluded to earlier, there is the concept of "just because you can doesn't mean you can, and just because you can't doesn't mean you can't." Decisions are to be based on relationship and the leading of the Spirit of God. This is totally different from the way the Rich Fool was being led in the Luke 12 example that Jesus used for teaching.

We may have the ability to buy something just because we want it and because we've got the money to do it (as income goes up, consumption goes up). However, it may not be something that God wants us to have at the time or it may be something He knows we do not need or are not ready to handle. Our desire for it may be unhealthy and may be driven by a fleshly lust or desire. It's paramount that we have relationship when it comes to the Kingdom economy that God wants us operating in and that, like the child, we operate within the will of our father via relationship.

On the other hand, "just because we can't doesn't mean we can't". Has God ever spoken to your heart to do something yet your bank account was screaming "we can't!"? Just because that child cannot go out and work and earn a wage that would provide for his food and shelter doesn't mean he can't have food and shelter. By the grace of his mother and father he can have it even though on his own he couldn't. Faith is born where the will of God is known and it breeds expectation in our lives. It causes us to say, "Ok Father, what is the first step?" instead of "I can't!" Subsequently, more relationship and communion follows. Obedience follows. Speaking and stepping out follows. Risking getting into water that is over our head where our feet can't touch the bottom follows ... and manifestation of what God said follows.

Jesus said in the same chapter of Luke 12, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." The Kingdom economy does not work on the basis of coveting.

However, the world system's economy works strictly on that basis ... "as income goes up, consumption goes up". In the Kingdom Economy, "as income goes up, ministry goes up". Our God is a God of increase. He doesn't operate under the thought process of a sum zero game like the world system where somebody wins and somebody loses. In the Kingdom economy there is always more. His resources are limitless. Everyone wins.

Which economy are we really living in?

Note:

If you are a business man or woman and you stumbled onto this site and just started reading ... maybe you have found yourself a bit intrigued to hear economic things mingled with spiritual. If that is you, let me ask you something and leave you with a few thoughts. As your life spent in this world's economy goes along and the years start piling up along with all the dollars you have made, what happens when you are staring at eternity and this vapor of a life is all but over? What happens when you can't buy anymore health, can't buy any more "feel better"?

I can tell you the answer. In the first breath after your last breath, you'll find out that the Kingdom economy is still in operation ... that it is standing forever and was available all along. Only thing is, entrance into that economy can only be received freely, not earned. Like I said before, it is different and better. It's good to have time operating in it in this life time ... really good. However, its never too late because the price for the free gift of entrance has already been paid for you and me and everyone else. Why not meet the King and step into the Kingdom's economy today?

It just requires a "yes" and you are in business. Simple. No debt, no bankers, no payroll, no background checks. Just forgiveness, new life, clean slate and "lets get started".

Think about it. Family is always better than the employer/employee relationships of the world system economy.