

SESSION 9. LET'S TALK ABOUT MONEY

Audio Transcript

Let's talk about money. Men and women have been concerned about money since the first coin was fashioned in Asia Minor about 700 B.C. You might say that money is like good health, in that we are concerned about it to the extent that we don't have it.

The purpose of this message is to get down to the basics – to clear the air surrounding the entire subject of money. To do this, I'm going to have to get absolutely elementary. And while you may already know most of the things I'm going to say, I think it's important that we remind ourselves just exactly what money is, how much of it is enough, and how to earn the amount of money we need to live the way we want to live, now as well as in the important future years.

To begin, let's dispel the old myth, once and for all, that money is bad or unimportant. It is not bad, and it is important – it is vitally important. It is just as important as the food and clothes it buys, the shelter it affords, the education it provides, and the doctor's bills it pays. Money is important to any person living in a civilized society. To argue and split hairs to the effect that it is not as important as other things is absurd. Nothing will take the place of money in the area in which money works. That's all there is to it.

What is money? Money is the harvest of our production. Money is what we receive for our production and service as persons, which we can then use to obtain the production and services of others. We can quite often accurately gauge the extent of our production and service by simply counting the amount of money we receive for it.

You will hear people say, "Money won't bring happiness." The earning and possession of money has brought a lot more happiness than poverty has. Money is a warm home and healthy children; it's birthday presents and a college education; it's a trip abroad and the means to help older people and the less fortunate.

We are not saying that just piling up a lot of wealth is important. What we are saying is that money is important because it's the only reward that is completely negotiable and can be used by everyone.

Look at it this way: A diamond is more valuable than a lump of coal is; yet that's exactly what a diamond was at one time. And just as a lump of coal can be transformed into one of the world's most valuable gems, a human being can vastly increase his own value to the world.

Try to remember this formula: The amount of money we receive will always be in direct ratio to the demand for what we do, to our ability to do it, and to the difficulty of replacing us.

In our economy, a highly skilled human being is worth more money than is a person who is not highly skilled and who can be easily replaced. This is not to say that one person is any better or more important than any other person. Remember that, in this message, we're talking about only money – nothing else.

A janitor is just as important, as a human being, as a brain surgeon is. But the amount of money they will earn will be proportional to the demand for what they do, their ability to do what they do, and the difficulty of replacing them. In a few weeks, a person can be trained to clean and maintain a building, and replacing the person is not difficult. A brain surgeon spends many years learning his profession – often at great personal sacrifice and at extremely high cost – and he cannot be easily replaced. As a result, the surgeon might earn as much money in an hour as a janitor might earn in a year.

Now, these are extreme cases used to show the relation of income to demand, skill, and supply. But this is as it should be.

There are few limitations on a person within his company and industry. But his income will be in exact proportion to the demand for what he does, his ability to do what he does, and the difficulty of replacing him. That's why the whole idea of trying to get something for nothing is ridiculous – and won't work.

In a year, a top jockey will earn a great deal of money, which will represent about 10 percent of the winnings of the horses he rides. You might say that riding a racehorse serves no useful purpose, but, useful or not, the demand for it is there. It's the same with a star in show business – his income will very accurately reflect the demand for what he does.

That's why preparation for life is so important. As we mentioned, luck has been defined as what happens when preparedness meets opportunity. A great opportunity will only make the unprepared, the unqualified, appear ridiculous. For every one of us, opportunities are all around us. Our ability to see them will depend, in large part, on how well we have prepared ourselves.

Now, how do you stack up in this regard? While this may sound elementary, you'd be amazed at the number of people who want more money but don't want to take the time and trouble to qualify for it. And until they qualify for it, there's no way on earth for them to earn it! It's like the person who wants a good-looking figure but doesn't want to change his eating habits.

To nine-tenths of the world's population, the average North American is already rich. There's a greater difference between the standard of living of most of the world's population and our average worker than there is between the standard enjoyed by our average worker and the richest person in our society.

Most of our working people have just about everything our wealthiest have – only on a smaller scale. They have a home, a car – often two of them – a radio, a TV, a savings account, and debts; they're just smaller. Their food is just as good and is just as plentiful in their homes. Their beds are just as comfortable. Their home is just as warm in the winter. They have exactly the same amount of time and just as much – maybe more – freedom. Their life expectancy at birth is about 75 years. For the rest of the world, on the average, it's less than 60.

With only a fraction of the world's population, we in the free world have half of the world's total money income. We have more than two-thirds of all the automobiles on the planet. So, in talking about money, let's understand that we're already rich, as people.

Now, how much do *you* want? How much money do you need to live in the way you want to live, to accomplish the goals you have established for yourself?

Most people think they want more money than they really do, and they settle for a lot less than they could earn if only they went about it in the right way. The world will pay you exactly what you bargain for – exactly what you earn – and not a penny more.

Do you remember the old poem that goes: “I bargained with life for a penny, and life would pay no more”? Well, that’s about it. We will receive not what we idly wish for but what we justly earn. Our rewards will always be in exact proportion to our service. If you don’t like your income, you must devise ways and means of increasing your service. Your service must come out of you – your mind, your abilities, and your energy.

A strong person cannot make a weak person strong; but a weak person can become strong on his own by following a specific course of action for a sufficient length of time. And a person who’s already strong can become a lot stronger....

People who refuse to do more than they’re being paid for will seldom be paid for more than they’re doing. You may have heard someone say, “Why should I knock myself out for the money I’m getting?” It’s this attitude that, more than anything else, keeps people at the bottom of the economic pile. They don’t understand that only as we grow in value as persons will we receive the increased income we seek. If we try to stand still in our work – and millions do – we’ll never know the rewards, or the joy, of accomplishment, and the personal satisfaction and peace of mind that come only to the person of unusual achievement.

There are two distinct steps we must take. First, we must decide exactly how much money we really want. Once this decision is made, the second step is to forget the money and to concentrate on improving what we now do, until we’ve grown to the size that will fit and naturally earn the income we seek.

Once we’re fully qualified for the amount of money we’ve decided to earn, we’ll soon find ourselves earning it. And we’ll also discover that with our new powers and abilities, it’s not more difficult – it’s perhaps even less difficult – than what we’re now doing for the money we’re now earning.

Ask yourself, “How much money am I perfectly willing to earn (realizing that the amount I earn will be in exact proportion to my skills, the demand for what I do, and the difficulty of replacing me)?”

There are really three amounts of money a person should decide upon: (1) the yearly income he wants to earn now – or in the near future; (2) the amount of money he wants to have in a savings and/or investment account; and (3) the amount of money he wants as retirement income – whether or not he ever retires from active work.

Now, it’s here that most people make a very serious mistake: They never decide on any of these three amounts of money.

If you will decide on these three amounts, and if you will write them on a card to carry with you, or to put somewhere where you can review it from time to time, you will automatically have placed yourself in the top 5 percent of people. You will have a plan for your future – a blueprint for future financial accomplishment. You will know where you are going, and if you are serious about it, you will most certainly get there.

You see, the trouble with people is not that they can't achieve their goals – they can do that, all right. The trouble is that they don't set goals. They leave their future to chance and find out, sooner or later and to their sorrow, that chance doesn't work – that they've missed the boat.

It's estimated that only 5 percent decide on the money they'll earn – and then grow as persons to earn the incomes they seek. Thus, they take their lives, their fortunes, and their futures into their own hands – as they should – and accomplish their goals, right on schedule, all the years of their lives. You can do the same thing, and you can do it starting right now!

Where money is concerned, there are two kinds of people: those in the majority who cut back on their wants to fit their incomes; and those free spirits in the minority who make their incomes fit their wants. Now, which is better for you? You must decide.

Ben Franklin gave us the secret to wealth. He said that the road to wealth lies in augmenting our means or diminishing our wants. Either will do. But the quickest way to wealth is to do both at the same time.

When you write down the yearly income you want to earn, you no doubt know whether or not it's average or above average for the work you're in. The chances are good that the figure you'll decide upon will be above average – perhaps quite a bit above average. That's good! Now ask yourself, "Who in my line of work is now earning that kind of money?" If you know, you'll have a good idea of what you have to do to earn it.

This is exactly how men and women move from the ranks into positions of top authority, with corresponding incomes.

I have no way of knowing your line of business. Regardless of the business you're in, it needs new leaders – men and women to come up in the years ahead. Everything is expanding, getting larger, and with the increase in size and scope, the most desperate need is for the dedicated, able person who can learn to lead – to *lead the field* – and to lead others as well.

Some of the top executives in the nation today were once accountants, shipping clerks, struggling lawyers, service-station attendants, salespeople in the field, salesclerks, mailroom clerks, stenographers, mechanics. You cannot think of a position from which people have not climbed to the top.

Understand what I'm going to say, and it will bring you and yours everything you want: It's not the job; it's the person. It's not your present circumstances that count; it's the circumstances you make up your mind to achieve that are important. The only limit on your income is you. And the income you decide upon can be achieved within the framework of your present work, or within the industry or profession where you already have a start and a place. If not there, it can be found somewhere else.

All you need is a plan – the road map – and the courage to press on to your destination, knowing in advance that there will be problems and setbacks, but knowing also that nothing on earth can stand in the way of a plan, backed by persistence and determination.

With the income that you intend to earn written down on a card, spend a part of each day thinking of ways in which you can increase your service, knowing that you have only to manage this, and the income will take care of itself. Since the amount of money you want to earn is more than you're now receiving, your part of the bargain is to find ways of increasing your service until the gap has been bridged – and more than bridged!

Look at your card with the three amounts written on it. By setting a financial goal, you are demonstrating faith in your future. You'll find that you'll begin to become what others call "lucky." You'll begin to get good hunches and ideas. You'll take far more interest in everything about your work and your company. You'll see opportunities in your work and environment that you've never noticed before. In fact, you'll soon discover that you're no longer the same person. You'll care less about how others are doing their jobs and concern yourself more with the manner in which you do yours. By your example, you'll inspire others to do their jobs better.

Have faith in yourself – and the quiet, firm, inner knowledge that you can and will accomplish your goals. Know that the answers you seek will come to you in their own time, if only you keep looking for them.

Above all, realize that money cannot be sought directly. Money, like happiness, is an effect. It's a result of a cause, and the cause is valuable service.

Keep money in its proper place. It's a servant – nothing more. It's a tool with which we can live better, see more of the world, give our youngsters the education they need and a good start in life. It's the means to a happy, carefree retirement in later years. Money is necessary to modern life, but keep it in its place. You need only so much food to enjoy good health; you really need only so much money to live comfortably, securely, and well. Too much emphasis on money reverses the whole picture; you then become the servant, and the money becomes the master.

As someone once put it: "It's good to have money and the things money can buy, but it's good, too, to check up once in a while to make sure that you haven't lost the things that money can't buy."

Every person should know happiness in his work and home, and prosperity. These things can and should be yours. Play this message as often as you can during the next week. Fix your plans firmly in your mind and relax. Keep cool and calm. Be as serene as you possibly can be. You have nothing to worry about.

Right now, you may have no idea at all how the additional income you seek is going to come to you, or how you're going to save the amount you want in a savings account, or how you can possibly arrange for the retirement income you've decided upon. That isn't important. Remember that the only really important thing is that you know what you want. If you do, you will become – you *must* become – what you think about.

Be realistic about your financial goals, for as you reach them, you can then set higher goals. Trying to jump too far too soon can often result in confusion, tension, and worry. Take your growth in sensible, logical steps, remembering that the big thing is that you know what you want, that you realize your rewards will match your service, and that you can devise ways and means of becoming the person who is worth the amount of money you have established for yourself.

A person may be worth more than he's getting – for a while – but the two will match up. They have to. In fact, unless a person is worth more than he's receiving, he cannot move ahead. He's receiving all he's worth.

It all gets back to the great law that controls everything in the universe: cause and effect. The cause must precede the effect, or the effect cannot occur. This is why people who try to get something for nothing are only fooling themselves and earning the disillusionment and frustration they must one day reap.

You can have what you want. You need only make up your mind.

Exercises — Write your answers in the space provided below.

1. How much money do you want? How much do you need to live in the way you want to live?

There are three amounts of money that you should decide upon: (1) the yearly income you want to earn now or in the near future, (2) the amount of money you want to have in a savings and/or investment account, and (3) the amount you want as retirement income.

Set your financial goals. _____

Yearly income: _____

Financial reserves: _____

Retirement income: _____

2. Who in your line of work is now earning that amount of money? (If you know, you'll have a good idea of what you'll have to do to earn it.)

3. Continue to make plans for increasing your service to others, for making yourself more valuable. The money will follow!