



FINANCIAL PRESENTATION

THE HECKLER

Opening notes

Heckler needs some props and some children and/or adults with sufficient space to line up and be seen by the congregation. The treasurer will need to use the calculations from the case statement in order to provide the answers to the questions asked by the Heckler.

The preacher and Heckler will either need radio mikes or have good voices for projection.

A rehearsal is useful, although the children shouldn't be rehearsed when the interplay between the preacher and heckler is going on- it will spoil the element of surprise, the Wardens and sides-people should know something is going to happen so that the Heckler doesn't get ejected by accident!

The sketch is good fun and a very good way to reach the 'fringe' who are often surprised at the sums involved. Children also get the point very readily that sharing is a Christian act and necessary for the good of the church, the world and Christians themselves

THE HECKLER

Epistle: James Ch 2 v 14- 24

The Gospel: Matthew Ch 25 v 31 - 45

Opening Prayer:

Speaker *(in Pulpit)*

Today's readings are both about using money for good. In the Gospel using Time & Money to feed the hungry, and thirsty; welcome strangers; visit prisoners and clothe the naked. In James' letter the very nature and value of faith is questioned without good works to the poor and needy. Both readings testify how we use money is important as God's people for God's work. For money is a very important and very spiritual issue.

Heckler *(shouting from the congregation)*

Oh no it's not.

Speaker *(looking very surprised)*

I'm sorry, but it is, money is very spiritual.

Heckler *(shouting again)*

No, you shouldn't be talking about money in church on a Sunday.

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- Speaker** But of course you can.
- Heckler** *(walking to the front)*
No you can't, its wrong.
- Speaker** Don't you know, that in the Bible, there are more than Two thousand, three hundred verses on 'money'.
- Heckler** Well of course, that'll be the Old Testament. They were always going on about it.
- Speaker** No. Jesus talked about money, and how we use it, or the power it has over us more than anything else. Just think about all those well known stories such as 'The Widows Mite' and the Rich Young Man
- Heckler** *(slowly)*
Oh, Yeah, He had a right go at those Pharisees then, didn't He?
- Speaker** Yes, that's right.
- Heckler** Yeah, He had a lot to say about rich people didn't He? Camels and needles and all that sort of thing.
- Speaker** Yes. And yet, He wasn't saying it's wrong to be rich. Remember, Him saying "So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"
- Heckler** So actually, He doesn't mind us having money, as long as we are sensible and trustworthy with it?
- Speaker** Yeah, I think that's about it.
- Heckler** So how can I use my money as Jesus would want?
- Speaker** Well, I think Jesus wants us to be honest and not to hoard our money, and not be mean with it, use it to help others in need
- Heckler** But, we are to use it to look after ourselves, aren't we?
- Speaker** Oh yes. Because after all God has given human beings this whole world and everything in it, in order that we can be, fed and warm, have homes for shelter. He gives enough for the whole world, but the problem is, we don't share it out very well do we? Most of us in this country have too much to eat. Many people in some other parts of the world just don't have enough.

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- Heckler** So you think its about sharing do you?
- Speaker** Yeah, Yes I do think it's about sharing. I think its about looking after our family and also looking after our neighbours.
- Heckler** Well, when Jesus was thinking about neighbours, He wasn't like, just thinking about Mrs Jones at No.6, and my other neighbour Mr. Smith at No.2 was He?
- Speaker** Well, what do you think He was thinking about?
- Heckler** Well, I suppose He was thinking about those people who Don't have any homes, like I see those people selling the 'Big Issue' in Liverpool. And I suppose He was also thinking about those homeless and starving people I suppose everyone's our neighbour really aren't they?
- Speaker** Yes, I suppose they are.
- Heckler** Well then, whom else should we share our money with then, apart from those who need it, and our family?
- Speaker** We also need to share it with our church.
- Heckler** Gerroff...with...you. Our churches don't need money !!
- Speaker** I'm afraid they do.
- Heckler** But I thought churches had 'loads...money'. Those people in London, the Church Commissioners.
- Speaker** Well, they used to have a lot of money, given by very rich and generous people in the past. But, since then, we have started to pay our clergy enough to live on and paying them a retirement pension as well. Now the interest from the Church Commissioners is not enough. But Liverpool, our diocese, still does very well. And we still get well over three quarters of a million pounds each year from the Church Commissioners - because we are a poorer Diocese. In Liverpool, some churches pay more to help other churches where few people work.
- Heckler** Well what else does a church need money for then?
- Speaker** We've the cost of the clergy
(put a dog collar on a child)
And the cost of their home
(give a picture of a house to hold)

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Right, we've got the cost of training new Vicars.

(put L plates and dog collar on a child)

And, we have also got the cost of heating and lighting the church

(give a torch)

We need to pay for repairs

(give hard hat)

We've also got the cost of insurance.

Heckler Does the church have to pay insurance? Doesn't God look after that?

Speaker All churches pay insurance, and so those with misfortune are helped by those who haven't had an accident or damage.

(briefcase)

Then we have to pay for the services - like the organ, worship books and candles.

(candles & hymn book)

We also have the administration - like the photocopier.

(paper & pen)

We've got the Sunday School

(Sunday School book)

The cost of the Hall

(Mop & Bucket)

Finally, sharing with the poor - both for their physical needs like food and water and the good news

(begging bowl and bible)

Heckler **(Looking along the line of children with props)**

Goodness me! That seems an awful lot of expense. How much does that cost?

Speaker Well don't ask me. Ask the Treasurer.

(Shouts out to Treasurer, who answers £.....)

Heckler Wow! And where does all that money come from?

Speaker **(Asking Treasurer)**

Do we need some more children to act?

Treasurer Yes please.

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- Speaker** Firstly, we get the money from fees don't we? Could we have somebody to be a 'Bride & Groom'?
- (Bouquet)*
- Secondly, we have the Church Fayres
- (Tray of cakes)*
- Mmmmm.... they look nice.
- (15 cakes)*
- Money from the Groups using the Hall
- (Toddler, Toy)*
- Magazine
- (Magazine)*
- Special Donations
- Legacies & Investments
- (Angel Wings & Money Box)*
- Heckler** But that leaves a huge gap. Where does the rest of the money come from?
- Treasurer** Well, from people who are members of the Church.
- Heckler** So.....How much do the people who are members of the church have to pay Mr Treasurer?
- Treasurer** Well, if it doesn't add up to £..... amount of money each year, we are in trouble.
- Heckler** *(Exclaims !!)*
- That's a lot of money! how much per person per week?
- Treasurer** £.....
- Heckler** *(Repeats the amount of money - and says)*
- So, £..... is what it costs. So if we all give that amount of money every week we'll be OK- like a club subscription.
- Speaker** *(Jumps in quickly)*
- But, we are not a club. And its very important that we realise we are not a club. It would be really wrong to ask everybody to give the same.
- Heckler** WHY?
- Speaker** *(sighs)*
- Well, let all the children sit down. Thank you children - do take a cake for later.

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- Heckler** Why don't we run like a Club then? We could have tickets couldn't we?
- Speaker** No, No, No. Because the story about the Widows Mite and the Pharisees, was just meant to say that. Don't you remember it? The Pharisees and the priests were wrong to ask the widow to give everything she had. We mustn't ask people who haven't got enough money, to give what they can't afford. People who have, more, should give more and those who don't have much shouldn't be asked to give much.
- Heckler** Well, ok then, no subscription! But how on earth do we decide how to share?
- Speaker** The thing to do is to look at how much God gives to you - if its a salary, a pension, or pocket money. Then we look at setting aside a proportion of that money to share for God's work in the church and the world, just like we set aside some for caring for our family and our needs.
- Heckler** So you look at how much you've got and then how much of that to share?
- Speaker** That's right
- Heckler** Ok, I'll do that - but what you've been talking about is not about money as much as faith! I can see now why it is important to the church and other people that we share our money to help run the church and give to others in need. But is it important to us, to share?
- Speaker** Yes it is. Because it is part of our worship of God. So, when we put money into an envelope, or when we give money to the homeless, we are actually saying 'Thank you' to God and we are actually helping His will to be done. Its no use praying the Lords Prayer 'Thy will be done' - unless we help to make it happen.
- Heckler** It's a bit like putting your money where your mouth is really, isn't it? Worshipping with our money as well as our hymns and prayers.
- Speaker** Yes - you've got it.
- Heckler** Ok, thanks - you can carry on with your sermon now !!
- Speaker** There's no point now - we've covered everything I was going to say.