

A good Bible reading for today – **Isaiah 55:1-13**

“Some Buying to Do!”

Some people love shopping. I’m not one of them. I love giving, but the decisions about what to get – that perfect gift – is not one of my desirable activities. I love seeing one of my grandkids play in delight with the toy or game I bought, or beam with joy because they like the garment I bought. But my grandkids seem to have everything, and their interests and tastes are sometimes foreign to me. Hmmm – what to get? And buying is not my thing. It’s not because I’m stingy. I like to think that I am generous. What’s bad is having an uncontrollably bigger desire to give that you have money to pay for. Credit card companies thrive on that.

In this text we read today God told ancient believers to go shopping – **“without money and without price”**.

My thoughts go to the church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22) who smugly felt they were rich and needed nothing, but whom Jesus described as **“wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked”**. Then Jesus immediately told them to buy from Him their gold, garments and medicines. Now how could they do that?

Isaiah made it abundantly clear that the monetary unit or medium of exchange in spiritual things is not the dollar, the euro or any ancient or modern gold coinage. God has no need or desire for our money. The things of value to Him are listed in Isaiah 55:6-7. **“Seek the LORD while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.”** (NAU)

The great wealth in the economy of the city of Laodicea was in three products, minting gold coins, a high quality black wool, and an eye-salve. Christ’s message to that church was about their spiritual need. Gold suggests pure untarnished character. The garments they need were white robes, representing righteousness. Their eye issues could only be healed spiritually too. The monetary unit God wanted in exchange for these spiritual products, the **“money”** God valued, was faith and repentance.

God has never been impressed with people’s riches. What is that to Him? Nor has He ever been persuaded to give His favors to the generous giver to churches, TV ministries, or welfare organizations. Generous giving is good for us and is an act of obedience. But what God really wants is you – your faith, your heart and your life.

I love the way Isaiah 55:7 ends – **“He will abundantly pardon.”** The various translators have said it well – **“freely forgive”**, **“forgive generously”**, **“He is rich in forgiveness”**, **“freely pardon”**. You can’t buy that with dollars. You can’t earn it with good living. Jesus already paid for that in full. All we do is respond in repentant faith. Then we are truly rich. Then we have **“bought”** what God is trying to **“sell”** us.