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MAKING MONEY, LEARNING NOTHING

Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, once said:

"Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen? Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson-" (The Doctrine and Covenants 121:34-35)

It is a very profound statement, in that the more we concentrate on earning money, becoming successful, and worrying about our temporal existence, the less we learn about anything else.

For the past two months I have given up my first love-writing and thinking-so that I could pursue some worldly goods to help out those who think they are dependent on me. I say think, because each of them could do it by themselves, if they chose to, but I know it's much easier on them when I help them out. Thus fulfilling my ego, realizing there are those who depend on me and my temporal skills for their happiness.

I was able to make over \$10,000 in two months to help Jackie get a home, fix it up for her, and establish myself a little better to help Marcee and Vicky if they'd let me. I mention these three only because I feel a responsibility toward the children I helped produce. However, I would help anyone in need, if I could.

For most people it is hard to make \$10,000 in two months, for me it was very hypocritical and hard. Not that the physical labor was hard, but I had to go against all the moral principals I believe in to accomplish it.

The easiest way to earn money is to sell a product or service for much more than it is worth to you for whatever someone will give for it. This is called supply and demand. I bought some property and sold it for more than I bought it for, thus making a huge profit on a few hours of paperwork. What a joke. Why didn't I just let the perspective buyer know how much I bought the property for, and let them have it for just \$5 per hour for however long the paperwork takes me? Most laborers make only five bucks per hour, then why not me? Am I that much better than they? Instead, I got greedy like everyone else, even though my desire to earn the money was to help out someone else, and made about \$1000 per hour doing the paperwork for the real estate transaction. I justify my greed by knowing that had I not done the deal, some other greedy investor would have.

After getting the money, I put into Jackie's house. Finally, after seven years of following me from state to state, home to home, Jackie has her own house that I can not make a decision with. Legally we are not married, and at anytime she could kick me out of her life and live happily with a big piece of property and a small, but comfortable house. She deserves it.

Marcee had gone to Californian to stay with Vicky for a while until she figured out what she wanted to do. I knew Vicky was in desperate need of a car, and with Marcee there, the necessity was even greater, so I bought a brand new one on credit that I could take to them in California. I bought a new one, because I knew how important a car would be with lots of children, and a new one was much less likely to have mechanical problems than an older model. Jackie has an old station wagon which I fixed up to get around in, but Jackie seemed okay with the idea that Vicky and Marcee should have the newer car, because they didn't have me around to fix up an older model if it broke down.

Marcee didn't last long at Vicky's, but I took the new car to Vicky anyway. Then Vicky did the thing that I had hoped she wouldn't do. She gave thanks to her God for providing her with a new car. Now, I have nothing against Vicky pursuing her religious beliefs, but I in no way want anything I do perpetuating a religious faith that creates arrogance and bigotry in an individual. The Mormon church is helping Vicky both emotionally and financially, and she has reunited herself with this sect; and the Mormon faith is the epitome of pride and arrogance. I figured that the best lesson that Vicky could learn, is that God has just as much to

do with the rape and killing of innocent women and children in Bosnia, as he does with the blessing of receiving a new truck for free. In other words, he, or she, or it, for that matter, does not do good anymore than he does evil.

It is important to me to instill in any who listen that the consequences of life come from the choices made by those involved in mortality. It is foolish to think that a God would do one of his children good by providing it with a good home, family, plenty of food, and love, when he allows another to suffer tremendously without. Individuality can only come through total, unaided free agency; anything less than this would mean we are not individuals, but puppets of a grand puppet master, and are therefore, unaccountable for the good or bad we do. One of the biggest causes of our problems in the human race is unaccountability. Everything that happens to us we want to blame on someone or something else. We're even hiring attorneys to sue the someone or something for doing to us what we caused ourselves.

We have to eliminate the illusion of God; not that we should not be a moral people, but that we become responsible to ourselves, and then we can begin to solve some of the problems which cause misery in our lives; which problems are usually caused directly or indirectly by ourselves. Perhaps then, we will stop looking forward to some great being to come from the sky, solve all our problems for us, and change our characters instantaneously into loving, caring, and unselfish creatures. Oh, how I wish God were real!

Most of the last two months have been spent remodeling Jackie's house. I've had no time to write, study, or think, because my brain has been focused on making Jackie's life more comfortable. I am hoping that I can somehow make Marcee's and Vicky's life more comfortable too. However, I must admit that it is very hard on someone like me to dedicate so much time to worldly comforts when I would rather live in a bus.

Anyway, my life continues to be very interesting and exciting. I am working on a book which explains my dealings with the American legal system and how I lost all of my parental rights to Brittany and Joshua. I am hoping to get it done by winter and get it to a publisher. I write Brittany and Joshua to let them know I love them, but I doubt they are given my letters. It seems Brittany has been so brain washed by the Ladenburgs that she wants nothing to do with me. She came down to go to Disneyland with Mike and Teena, Paula's sister, with a strict condition that she was not to see me. I am told that the Ladenburgs were going to let the kids come see me, but they got angry because of a letter I wrote. They are convincing everyone that the letter was so bad, that they didn't want Brittany and Joshua to have anything to do with me. Since many of those involved have taken the Ladenburgs side without seeing the letter, here it is:

February 14, 1994

Dear Brittany and Joshua,

Hello kids! Chances are that you will not see this letter, because your mother and Carl will intercept it and keep it from you. I will always keep a copy of the letters I send you, so that when you older, you will have a copy.

Even though Carl and your mom have changed your name to Ladenburg, they can not change the fact that your real father loves and misses you. I know that they tell you that a Judge has taken you away from me, but this is simply not true. Carl does not want you to see me, because he knows that you will love me as your father and this will take away from him. When you are old enough to investigate the truth for yourselves, you will uncover the lies and falsehoods that Carl and your mom have told you about your situation with your father. It is sad that they are doing this to both of you.

I will not stop trying to contact you. When you are a little older, I will go to Montana and see you, and I hope you find me when you want. I chose not to fight Carl and Paula in court because I didn't want to bring anymore pain on you both, who have been through so much.

Brandon, Caleb, and Sariah miss you guys. They still remember the wonderful time we had together last summer. When all you kids grow up, I am sure you will get together and get to know one another. Then you can ask your other brothers and sisters about your dad and get to know me too. They will tell you both what kind of person I am and how much I missed seeing you grow up.

I hope you both are well. Everyone here is doing just fine. I am writing a book especially for the both of you. When you are older, you can get a copy. I think you will enjoy it.

I love you both very much and regret that the Ladenburgs won't let you see me.

Love Always,

Paula and Carl,

No doubt you have intercepted this correspondence and will not let the kids read it. How long do you both think you can keep the truth from these kids? No matter how they feel now, they will one day want to investigate the real reason why they can not see their father and they will find out that it has nothing to do with a judge, but all to do with the vindictive personality of their mother, and the macho-ego of their step-father.

What you are doing is wrong, and it will surely affect the children for the rest of their lives. Paula, you have lied on numerous occasions to protect your image to the kids and to others. You lied in open court and said that you talked to my brothers by phone and that they said you should have the kids and I shouldn't. It was only because I chose not to fight you in court that allowed you to take away my rights as a father. Your attorney and the judge, who by the way has never even met me, decided the case based on your attorney's hate for me, and your lies. Why do you do these things? Do you not realize what you are doing to the children, and more especially what they will think of you when they learn the truth? Stop thinking more about your hate for me and Carl's ego than you do about what is best for the children.

You have based everything you have done on speculation of what kind of person I am. No doubt, I believe and live differently than most, but does that make me a bad person? What have I ever done to you that would cause you to act so maliciously toward me? I drove to Montana in March of 1991, and met with you and Carl to explain that I was wrong in my decision to keep the children from you, and that I wanted you to see them if you would only have the kindness to respect what I believed to be right for me and my family. What are you going to say to the children when they talk to their other brothers and sisters and find out their father has always been a kind, lovable man who wants the best for everyone. A man who is humble enough to admit he makes mistakes, but tries to improve each day. What are you going to say when they find out that your hatred for this man was the real reason you and Carl took the kids away from their father? You and Carl are going to lose the respect of the children someday because of your actions.

If I wanted, I could overturn your bogus adoption in the Supreme Court of the state of Montana, and sue you for perjury, owing to the lies you said in open court during the visitation hearing. Why don't I? I now have at my disposal an attorney, who hates what you have done to me as much as your attorney hates me. Jody has offered to help overturn the whole mess. Why don't I proceed? Because I think more about the tender feelings of the children than I do about my want for vengeance against you. However, I will always attempt to tell the children the truth regarding what you and Carl have done. There is only one thing you can be telling the kids to keep them from wanting to be with me. You are lying and telling them that a judge decided it was the best thing for them. This is a lie. At anytime you and Carl could give me back my rights as the father of the kids and let the kids visit me. The court will only make a decision based on what you have asked them. The only reason I lost in court, was because Oleson had ties with the judge behind close doors, and I had no attorney to represent me.

Paula, you once told me that you made the decisions for the kids. Do you not realize what would happen if you and Carl got a divorce? Do you not realize that you would be forced to sue him for child support for Brittany and Joshua as well as his own natural children? Perhaps you are so naive as to think that you will never divorce Carl. For your sake, I hope you never do. I believe Carl is the instigator behind most everything that has happened. You allowed him to manipulate you into accepting to let him adopt the kids, so I would not have any rights to them. You are easily manipulated by the man you love, and in this case, you have made the wrong choice.

I would be more than willing to forget the whole mess, if you both allowed Brittany and Joshua to know and visit their father. What are you afraid of? Are you not afraid that they will long to be Nemelkas instead of Ladenburgs? Carl, are you not afraid that you will lose the illusionary respect the kids have for you when they compare you to me? What's your problem?

I do not expect a response from you, for you probably feel you don't need to. However, Paula, as you hold a crying Joshua in your arms when he longs to see his dad again, how can your heart be so cold as to not want to let the poor child? Why do all your decisions benefit you and Carl and have no consideration for our children?

I regret that my words cannot penetrate the hard shells that you two have surrounded yourselves with. All I ask of you is that you stop your lies and tell the truth. Please!

Sincerely,

Chris

Yes, I admit that the letter was a little emotional on my part and ridiculed the Ladenburgs a lot. I know that they believe they are doing what is best for the children. However, they think more about their own needs than those of the children. I really do care about the Ladenburgs, as I do all people. But, I will never let them believe that what they did to me was okay. I apologized long ago to them for my own foolishness and ego, and tried hard to be their friend and work something out for the children's sake. They, like most humans, refused to see beyond their own bigotries. Oh well, I am really fine with my life and what has happened and is happening in it, (though I make it seem in the letter that I am very upset), I know Brittany and Joshua will make what ever conclusion they want to from the whole mess. But, gee, it was sure fun experiencing a divorce and its problems.

My family really bothered me (for about two hours) when they invited Brittany down to Salt Lake, invited everyone to a special dinner for her, except Alesa and Leslie, who they knew would have had the respect for me to either let me know or not participate in the deception. I spoke to Jody, who seems to be one of the few, besides my cousin Scott and his wife, who I can talk to, and let him know my distraught feelings about the secret dinner with my daughter. He assured me that he had nothing to do with its planning and that he did feel a little uncomfortable with the situation. I let him know that adults would have advised me of the meeting, and let me know that they just wanted to let Brittany know she was still a Nemelka, at which I would have wholeheartedly condoned the whole thing. Alas, there are too few adults.

My brothers and parents try to put on the act that they love me and accept me into their family, but their religion prohibits them from really meaning it with sincerity. They really think I am deceived, because I left their religion. I understand them, however, because if I am right, they are wrong, and their beliefs would become illusions and ruin their lives. For this reason I am not close to any of them, and find them to be very uneasy when I attend any family function, which I am seldom invited to anyway. I find that most people are not concerned about finding truth or changing their traditions, as long as their lives seem to be meaningful and happy. I have no intention on ever changing anyone's illusions. I say, the more we can dream and hope, the easier life will be to handle. However, I did have an experience, which whether it was an illusion or not, gave me reason to believe that if we hope in something that is not real in mortality, death will sting our ego. (This experience will be described in a subsequent issue of *Reality Quest*.)

I do lead an exciting life, and can't believe more humans don't pursue the same path. At times I let my ego convince me that I am the smartest man alive. However, my quest for reality puts me in my place when I realize that everyone thinks they are the smartest. I do believe that there are very few people with the open-mind that I have; and I contend, that if more people thought and acted as I do, the world would be a lot better place. However, it also would be a boring place.

Remember, when everyone thinks alike, there is not too much thinking going on.

LIFE, LOVE, AND EGO

Arthur Schopenhauer, a 18th century philosopher who influenced the thinking of Neitzche, Fried, and other prominent philosophers, points out that when you reach an advanced age and look back over your

lifetime, it can seem to have had a consistent order and plan, as though composed by some novelist. Events that when they occurred had seemed accidental and of little moment turn out to have been indispensable factors in the composition of a consistent plot. So who composed that plot? Schopenhauer suggests that just as your dreams are composed by an aspect of yourself of which your consciousness is unaware, so, too, your whole life is composed by the will within you. And just as people whom you will have met apparently by mere chance became leading agents in the structuring of your life, so, too, will you have served unknowingly as an agent, giving meaning to the lives of others. The whole thing gears together like one big symphony, with everything unconsciously structuring everything else. And Schopenhauer concludes that it is as though our lives were the features of the one great dream of a single dreamer in which all the dream characters dream, too; so that everything links to everything else, moved by the one will to life which is the universal will in nature.

So it is with my life, as I ponder its meaning and purpose. Is my life a dream that will end at the wake of death? Or is it the beginning of an existence which is eternal?

The plot that plays out daily in my life has never been one of boredom or monotony. It seems as if each day was written by an unseen hand- a playwright whose intent is to experiment with the curiosity of the ignorant and humor himself with the improvisations of the actor.

As an actor, I find my career enhanced and succeeding by the numerous parts I play on the great stage of life. I see so many other actors acting out the same parts in the same play, day after day. They know no other way to act, and their acting careers are stagnant. Yes, they know their lines well; perhaps much better than me. However, I have acted in their plays, and because they only act in one play, they do not have the acting skills necessary to learn other parts to other plays.

Am I a better actor? Not necessarily; only a more experienced one.

I am very misunderstood by my peers, and more especially my family. They do not understand why I must act in so many plays. They are satisfied with the play that each of them acts in day after day, and think I am foolish. I have few friends which understand me and a very small mortal audience watching my play. However, I am happy with my life and choices, and this selfish happiness is what all of us pursue.

An ego is defined as the self distinguished from others. Each of us have an ego which propels our life and the choices we make. I like to refer to the ego as the spirit, though I do not want to be misunderstood by using this word, for too many relate the spirit with a religious emphasis, and the way religionists look at the spirit is far from what I intend it to be.

One of my favorite things to do is to sit in a crowded place where there are lots of people walking by. I analyze the faces and idiosyncrasies of many of the people who pass me by. Each individual appears to believe that the universe starts and ends with them. They look out the corners of their eyes believing that everyone else is staring at them. Their individual dress says a lot about them; even their haircuts whisper secrets of their personality. They are totally selfish and self-centered.

Then reality hits me and I finally figure out the human ego. Though humans are very selfish, individualistic creatures, they are deeply dependent on each other. They need to be needed. As long as they feel that others need them, they are able to continue living happily. We act in ways that make others need us. We want to look beautiful to others, because all of us like to look on beauty, therefore being beautiful assures us that others enjoy looking our way, thus needing us. In any garden it is the flowers which catch our eye, and what we look for, not the weeds.

Our life seems to be happy and meaningful when others are in need of our existence. The more one needs us, the more we enjoy being around he or she. Yes, the more we love them.

Love is a word which can only be defined by the person experiencing it. Many have tried to explain exactly what love is, but fail to give a definition which fits every situation of love. Love is being needed.

Why is it that we love some humans; such as, our spouse, family, and close friends, and yet have none of these same feelings for others? It's because we feel that these individuals need us. When we fight with our loved ones, it is obvious that they don't need us, because they wouldn't be fighting us if they did. In the heat of the filial battle, or just there after, our love for our opponent is gone, no matter how strong the love for the individual was before the fight. However, our love returns when we realize that we are still needed by our loved one. If our opponent continues to harbor bad feelings toward us, it doesn't take long before all filial love is lost and the relationship ends in divorce, family breakups, or a stronger hatred and disgust than there was love.

Love is a part of our ego. Love seems to feed it and make it grow. We search for it, and without it, we feel lost and hopeless. Many suicide victims perform the act because they feel like their life is useless, or that they are not needed by others. If they felt needed, their ego would be sufficient for them to make the decision to continue living. Most suicidal individuals have created the illusion that they are not needed. The father who takes his own life, because he is unable to care for his own family, does not understand that just his presence gives something to his family. The teenager who takes his or her life, because life seems useless, does not realize that being a son or daughter fulfills the ego of the parent. Attempting suicide is a way of calling attention to the fact that the individual needs to know that they are needed. Police officers and psychologists who handle suicidal persons are trained to negotiate with the individual by caressing their ego with praises and love, thus attempting to convince the person that they are needed.

We do not love those who give us nothing. The more we get from an individual, the more we love them. We get nothing from a child except belligerence, crying, and taking. Yet, we know the child needs us or it would die. It's this "being needed" that makes us love the child.

We love our partners because they give us what we need, and we also feel that we give them what they need. When one of the two partners feels unneeded in a relationship, he or she will seek this "love" somewhere else, usually through having an affair. A husband, for example, can be very dependent on his wife emotionally, but because the relationship gets monotonous, it can get boring, and the man soon looks else where to fulfil the needs of his ego. The mistress gives him the accolades that every man desires, which he did get at one time from his wife. The wife, however, has become more of a habit, a tradition, which is hard to break, and if possible, the man will continue to have his ego trip with the mistress, as long as the stable wife is fulfilling his need of security at home. The mistress feels needed by the man, and therefore feels loved. It doesn't bother her that he depends on his wife for security, because she knows that he needs her just as much to remain happy.

I feel there is only two things that keep most men and women faithful to one partner: religion and security. If a man believes he will be cast to hell and burn forever if he is unfaithful to his wife, you can bet his faith will keep him faithful. In the Mormon faith a man is promised more than one wife if he is faithful to God's commandments while on earth. This promise of celestial, God ordained infidelity, gives the man the necessary hope that one day his ego will be fulfilled with many women, thus making it easier to remain faithful while mortal.

Most religions have convinced their followers that there awaits a great punishment for all adulterers, and this is a major reason why a spouse remains faithful to his or her partner.

Security is very important to all humans. Knowing that there is at least one other human that loves and needs us gives us a good reason to hang on to our partners. When work fails, our friends leave us, or we feel as if no one else in the world understands us, good ol' "honey" is there to sweeten our life. Financial security is just as important to most relationships as the emotional security. If a partner really wanted to find out whether their "better half" really loves them and enjoys being with them, they would get rid of religion, and let the partner know that if they split up, both parties will take only what they have contributed to the partnership. (There are many men who would love to leave their wives, but they would lose half or more of all the financial success they have accumulated.) This fact is proven by the much higher divorce rate among the lower-class, who have less to lose than the well-off. The rich are usually those, however, who have the means to carry on relationships outside of their partnership without getting caught, therefore, hanging on to the financial security, while getting their emotional needs met.

Love and relationships are part of life. I have loved in many ways, and tried many different types of relationships. From these I have learned many things which can only be understood by the actor who played in the play. No other actor could ever understand a role in a play he or she has never acted in.

Life is a dream that ends in death. (Now, I am saying that the dream ends, not the life.) The relationships, emotions, and material things which we acquire in this dream will end with it. Why, I continually ask myself, do we put so much emphasis on our dream? Perhaps our dream is one of a larger one. Perhaps our dream is part of someone else's, or vice versa. Or perhaps our dream is a product of what we want it to be—a play written by ourselves, acted by us, and applauded only by ourselves.

