**Back to the Gold Standard!**

1. **Challenge from the Bible**
   1. The problem of the church …

“Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.” Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, “Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, while this house lies in ruins? Haggai 1:3,4

*That is certainly the church’s experience …*

* 1. The people’s problem …

Now, therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts:

Consider your ways.

You have sown much, and harvested little.

You eat, but you never have enough;

you drink, but you never have your fill.

You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm.

And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.

Haggai 1:5,6

*Is this your experience?*

* 1. God’s challenge

“Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord. You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? declares the Lord of hosts. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house.

Haggai 1:7-9

*Are you seeking first the Kingdom of God?*

* 1. The solution

I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts.

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts.“ Haggai 2:7,8  
*Do you recognise the true gold standard – that it all belongs to God?*

1. **Leaving the Gold Standard**
   1. Nixon announces leaving gold standard (1971) … after decisions by the UK central bank and then Roosevelt to expand the money supply ..
      1. Money used to be backed by gold reserves … Now only using Fiat money – paper money backed only by credit of the nation and the promises given by the banks …
      2. Has become a matter of faith
      3. Could work if the nations and banks were honest and trustworthy …
      4. The past 50 years has brought us much welfare but also to greed, speculation and manipulation through leveraging with other people’s money has led us to loss of faith in banks and politicians.
      5. Leading to devaluation on printing more and more money and spiralling debt through buying with ‘easy money’
   2. Consequences of leaving the standard of what is God’s
      1. Faust

““To whom it concerns, may you all know, This paper’s worth a thousand crowns or so”

Such paper’s convenient, for rather than a lot of gold and silver, you know what you’ve got.

You’ve no need of bartering and exchanging, Just drown your needs in wine and love-making.”

Johan Wolfgang van Goethe Faust part 2,

(1832)

* + 1. With his constant companion Mephistopheles, Faust attends the Emperor's court. The empire is in financial ruin through the extravagance of the court, but Mephisto and Faust offer a solution to these problems. Till now the currency of the empire has been Gold, but there is not enough to support the extravagant spending.

Mephisto suggests an easy answer - since there is undoubtedly much gold as yet undiscovered beneath the land, which belongs to the Emperor, then surely a promissory note can be made for the value of such gold. He showers the Court with the new paper money. The foundation of the empire has been moved through Mephisto's cunning from the solidity of metallic gold to insubstantial promises on paper.

* + 1. The issuance of paper money does not solve the emperor’s spending problems.

Instead the ruler and his court become even more extravagant, knowing they can always print more paper money to cover their ever-growing expenses.

* + 1. Second, the devil has subtly but fundamentally changed the basis of the empire’s currency. Instead of being rooted in the solidity offered by a tangible and valued asset, the currency is now based on flimsy paper promises.

Thus long-term monetary stability and powerful restraints on extravagant government spending are sacrificed for short-term gain.

* + 1. Nietsche

What induces one man to use false weights, another to set his house on fire after having insured it for more than its value, while three-fourths of our upper classes indulge in legalized fraud . . . what gives rise to all this?

It is not real want — for their existence is by no means precarious . . . but they are urged on day and night by a terrible impatience at seeing their wealth pile up so slowly, and by an equally terrible longing and love for these heaps of gold. . . .

What once was done "for the love of God" is now done for the love of money, i.e., for the love of that which at present affords us the highest feeling of power and a good conscience.

Friedrich Nietzsche, The Dawn of Day, 1911, pp. 209-210.

* 1. The spirit, the genie is out of the bottle! …   
     1. Mammon unmasked

“No one can serve two masters,  for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.  You cannot serve God and money.”

“Mammon has demonically usurped the role in modern society which the Holy Spirit is to have in the Church.”

Thomas Merton,

Quoted by Richard Foster in Money, Sex & Power

1. **Returning to the Gold Standard of God’s Ownership means to acknowledge Gods ownership and accept my role as manager**
   1. Give to Caesar …
      1. What belongs to God? Everything!
      2. What belongs to Caesar – really nothing – all his rights and power belong to God – he can only use that which God allows in His work of allowing rulers to be appointed … …
   2. Giving to Caesar is giving to Caesar for God’s sake … because he wants us to …
   3. Everything belongs to God!

- “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it…” Ps 24:1

- “Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me.” Job 41:11

- “You are not your own, for you were bought with a price…. 1 Cor 6:19

* 1. Who brought the pie? video
  2. Enjoying God’s economy
     1. Lordship
     2. Stewardship
     3. Generosity

1. **Characteristics of a good and faithful steward…**
   1. Lives a controlled life
      1. Under Lordship of the Spirit
   2. Lives an examined life
      1. “Consider your ways…”
   3. Lives a sacrificial life
      1. Seeking Gods Kingdom first
2. **Back to the gold standard? – the true standard is love!**
   1. in the Bible gold is a symbol of love. And not just any old love. Gold symbolizes higher loves than, say, love of food and drink or love of fresh air and sunshine—as good and wholesome as those loves are. As the most precious metal known in Bible times, gold represents the most precious kind of love.
   2. What is the most precious love, from a spiritual perspective?
   3. Gold, in the Bible, represents *heavenly* and *spiritual* love, which is the love of God and the love of our fellow human beings. These are the loves that Jesus tells us are central to human life:
   4. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” (Matthew 22:37–39)
   5. If we truly love God and our fellow human beings, we will spend our lives doing good things for them. And even though we cannot do good things for God directly, Jesus tells us that if we do good things for other people, we are doing good things for God.
3. **Returning to the Gold standard is**
   1. Acknowledging that God owns every thing
   2. I am His steward to manage His property faithfully
   3. Money has to be used for relational purposes to love

God and People