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Stuff that matters to Wayne

What Equity Should a Child of God Focus On?

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Someone I know shared this text message conversation about a business decision really got me thinking:

Person A: What do you have to give up to get their \$?

Person B: I don't care what I have to give up as long as I get a small piece of a much larger pie. I've learned success is largely about the team.

Person A: If all you need is capital, don't sell your equity - huge mistake...

In the past I would have agreed completely with Person A, however, as I started thinking, this sentence kept rolling around in my head which I couldn't ignore:

"What is equity?"

Immediately after sentence began circulating I decided to look up the etymology of the word 'equity' because, from my time in the Bible the only usage that I could remember was in terms of 'justice' or 'fairness' such as in the following quick example:

But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. (Isaiah 11:4)

So how did such a great and righteous word like equity become synonymous with owning a piece of a corporate pie? I did further searching online and could not come up with an excellent answer that satisfied. There were many posts, links and sites pointing to the term equity in terms of law, but nothing that I could find related to this common practice of calling ownership in a company 'equity'. I have heard people recently use the term 'brand equity' which further proves that the term is shifting or has shifted from it's original meaning of 'fairness' to this current meaning of 'asset' or 'ownership'. Almost every day we hear a sentence like this 'He is building equity.' Unfortunately, I must, due to a severe lack of time, throw in the towel of finding the answer to my question in the root or history of the word itself. I will appease myself by making up this historical assumption that "The word equity must have come from the fair, or unfair division of business or real estate assets amongst people and it's relation to the courts use of the word 'equity'". In short, there were probably many unequitable deeds done in business by predatory and greed sociopaths so that the term 'assets' and 'equity' became synonymous. There. Good enough. But... it got me thinking spiritually as well. At the same time I wondered what the word itself meant and where it was rooted, I also remember very clearly that Jesus taught about assets and ownership of things in this world. Here are some bullet points:

- But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Mat 6:33)
- Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Mat 6:19-21)
- Go to now, [ye] rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon [you]. 2 Your riches

are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. 4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. 5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. 6 Ye have condemned [and] killed the just; [and] he doth not resist you. (Jas 5:1-6)

And there are more. The crux of the matter is this:

- Whereas ye know not what [shall be] on the morrow. For what [is] your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. (Jas 4:14)

But wait, there is a bigger crux:

- The earth [is] the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. (Psa 24:1)

And the summary is this:

1. The earth is the Lord's. We didn't make it. We can't take it with us. We can't own it. It's not ours. We are tenants here for a short time.
2. You can't own anything. You think you own a house or a business but ask yourself this very simple yet clearly forgotten question: Can you own _____ forever? The answer is an obvious and child-like 'No'.

So then, what's wrong with selling 99% of your equity if your 1% can provide for the needs of your family, build a bigger, better, and more ethical company, and spread life and abundance to the world instead of death and destruction? Isn't it just a matter of who is on your team, not the size of your pizza slice that dictates all this? Maybe I'm naive and maybe I'll get hurt again because of it but life is a vapour regardless so I'm going to keep on the narrow path while I'm here.

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