

Avarice ✨

AVARICE, GREED, concupiscence, and so forth are all based on the mathematical truism that the more you get, the more you have. The remark of Jesus that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35) is based on the human truth that the more you give away in love, the more you are. It is not just for the sake of other people that Jesus tells us to give rather than get, but for our own sakes too.

Caiaphas ✨

THE HIGH PRIEST Caiaphas was essentially a mathematician. When the Jews started worrying that they might all get into hot water with the Romans because of the way Jesus was carrying on, Caiaphas said that in that case they should dump him like a hot potato. His argument ran that it is better for one man to get it in the neck for the sake of many than for many to get it in the neck for the sake of one man. His grim arithmetic proved unassailable.

The arithmetic of Jesus, on the other hand, was atrocious. He said that Heaven gets a bigger kick out of one sinner who repents than out of ninety-nine saints who don't need to. He said that God pays as much for one hour's work as for one day's. He said that the more you give away, the more you have.

It is curious that in the matter of deciding his own fate, he reached the same conclusion as Caiaphas and took it in the neck for the sake of many, Caiaphas included. It was not, however, the laws of mathematics that he was following.

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